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RUBEN SAFRASTTYAN

Armenian-Turkish Relations: From Interstate Dispute to Neighborliness

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Introduction

The Armenian-Turkish interstate relations at the end of the XX and at the beginning of XXI centuries were "twice unlucky": both the fact of reality and the fact of research. Let us explaining our idea.

In real life, the relations between Armenia and Turkey exist that is the two neighboring countries "recognize" each other's existence, from time to time official representatives of different levels, including the presidents and foreign ministers, have contacts, as well as negotiations are held. However, they have not been legally registered so far from the view point of the International Law, so, no diplomatic relations have been established, that is strictly speaking, they are not likely to exist in the system of the modern international bilateral relations.

One of the parties, Turkey, refuses from establishing diplomatic ties explaining it by several preliminary conditions. It one-sidedly carries out a factual economic blockade, as well as has introduced a special visa regime toughening it time from time, allowing some indulgence depending on the results of discussion of the problem of the Armenian Genocide by the parliaments of the third countries. The situation with the scientific research of the problem of the Armenian-Turkish interstate relations is not better. The authors of the majority of the existing works, first of all, solve the task of justification of definite narrow national and narrow party approaches to this difficult and multidimensional problem or, at the best, limit themselves to a simple account of facts in a chronological order. Unfortunately, the last case as well lacks any full research of the history of the Armenian-Turkish interstate relations; even their separate periods had no adequate reflection in the special literature from the point of view of the "bare" factual account. Factually, there are no works wherein they could be analyzed through the conceptual system used in the modern science on international relations, saying nothing of the monograph where a complex approach would occur. Instead, the practice of consideration of the Armenian-Turkish inter-state relations only in the context of studying the Karabakh conflict or the patterns of competition in the region has become widely disseminated. As a result, unilateral and facilitated approaches are more characteristic for the interpretations of the Armenian-Turkish interstate relations proposed in the special literature.

Our project (and this paper) first of all, pursues a goal of selecting the ways of complex study of the above problem, unlike majority of previous works, taking into account both its different levels and measurement and the differences in its interpretation by the two parties. The author is sure that only in this case it is possible to work out specific proposals to overcome the existing abnormal situation with the relations between the two neighboring states.

Of course, one cannot solve such an aggravated task within the framework of one article. It is possible only within the framework of a monograph. That is why in the current article the author only formulates his approaches and submits them for a discussion. The proposals and notes made in the course of the discussion will be taken into account when writing a monograph and finally formulating specific proposals on improvement of the situation with the Armenian-Turkish interstate relations to be included into the policy paper.

The Problem

The absence of diplomatic relations between the two neighboring states for already 12 years, the more so as they have not been established at all, as well as the closed boundary and lack of a direct rail and road communication more boldly manifests the whole depth of the contradictions between Armenia and Turkey.

However, the full spectrum of contradictions between them is much wider and embraces different spheres, beginning from geo-strategic priorities of these states up to the collective memory of the Armenian and Turkish people. Only a detailed study of these contradictions as well as the reasons and the ways of their origination will give an opportunity to fully characterize the very problem, the author thinks.

At the same time, the search of the ways towards normalization of the two neighboring states' relations supposes an exposure of the spheres the sides have opportunities in and a definite interest in the initiation of the given process. First of all, it is the trade-and-economic sphere, indeed. However, the author considers not less positive potential from the viewpoint of the relations' normalization such world events as strengthening of transnational trends in the international relations or improvement of the world climate in connection with occurrence of the anti-terrorist coalition consisting of almost all the super powers in the world led by the USA.

An important transitional result of the problem's analysis is its theoretical generalization and inclusion into the catalogue of cases the modern theory of international relations operate with, the author thinks. It will give an opportunity to more deeply study the problem of the Armenian-Turkish interstate relations from the position of different currents of theoretical conception in the sphere of international relations.

The work provides for consideration of the peculiarities of the domestic political discourse on the problem of the Armenian-Turkish relations as well. It is a necessary condition for elaboration of relevant specific proposals on softening of the conflicting situation between them. It was impossible to neglect the fact that the vectors of transformation processes, like those in Armenia and Turkey, have a single direction i.e. in the direction of democratization of these countries'

societies, which will create an opportunity for using the potential of the civil society structures forming there in order to create more favorable atmosphere in their relations.

It has become common in the works wherein the issues of the current Armenian-Turkish relations are considered to complain of the “burden of the history” preventing their normalization. However, the attempts to more concretely look into the core of the "burden" are rather rare in the literature. According to the author, the most important articles and past events are pointed out in the given article and then even more detailed in the monograph. These events left their sign in the collective memory of the two peoples and have their impact on the developments in our days.

The above approaches to the problem made the author use both synchronistical and diachronic methods of research.

Aspects of Problem

As we have already noted, the absence of diplomatic relations and the closed boundaries reflect the contradictions between Armenia and Turkey only outwardly. Their aggregate cataloging is necessary for a deeper understanding of the whole integrity of the problem we research.

The diplomatic agenda of the Armenian-Turkish relations and the list of the preliminary conditions for establishment of diplomatic relations fixed by Turkey allow easily determining majority of contradictions between the parties.

The problem of the Genocide must be put in the first place in the list of contradictions, in our opinion. The problem is that Turkey officially rejects the fact of the Armenian Genocide in 1915 by the Ottoman Empire, while Armenia obtains for its recognition and condemnation not only by Turkey, but also by the whole world community. This problem is connected with the deepest stratum of collective memory and identity of the Armenian people and is perceived as a struggle for restoration of justice. While in Turkey, the state in the sphere of “official history” (*resmi tarih*) has tabooed this topic during the whole period of the country's existence. As a result, majority of the country's population fully share the government's position in the issue. In 2000 the National Security Council of Turkey, factually, the highest authority in determination of the strategic priorities of the foreign and domestic policy of the country, considers it among those issues that touch the national interests of the country. Turkey permanently and rather insistently demand that Armenia refuses from the policy aiming recondition and condemnation of the Armenian Genocide, which the latter decisively rejects. At the same time, official Yerevan is for normalization of relations without any preliminary conditions.

The problem of the Armenian Genocide's recognition is closely connected with that of overcoming its consequences. Although the problem is rarely articulated by the two countries' representatives at an official level, however, it is one of the most debated issues in the domestic political discourse both in Armenia and Turkey. Its core is that in case of the Genocide's recognition Armenia may demand from Turkey compensation for both material damage and territorial loses. This point of view is rather familiar in Turkey: those in Turkey consider that

accusations of the Genocide by Armenians pursue just this goal. Armenian President Robert Kocharyan's statement that Armenia will further be satisfied with an official excuse, those in Turkey perceive as a diplomatic trick that masks the real goals of Armenia. It is noteworthy that this statement was harshly criticized by a number of influential forces both in Armenia and in the Armenian Diaspora. At the same time, as a main argument it was pointed out that before making such a statement, Robert Kocharyan should have been empowered by a certain not specified representative body representing the interests of Armenians both from Armenia and Diaspora.

Another demand of the Turkish side is also connected with the problem of the Genocide: Armenia must with a special statement recognize the invariability of the existing Armenian-Turkish boundary and confirmed its adherence to the Kars Agreement of 1921 that established the current boundary between the two neighbors. The Armenian representatives avoided it with a great persistence, arguing that there is no necessity in it, as being a member and signing basic documents of such organizations as the U.N., OSCE, the Council of Europe, Armenia hereby recognized the principle of the current boundaries' inviolability. It should be noted that in Armenia the Kars Agreement is perceived as unjust, forced by a third party (Soviet Russia) as a result of a secrete deal with Kemalist Turkey.

The Karabakh problem occupies rather an important place in the list of contradictions between Armenia and Turkey. Several researchers even advance it to the first place. One can say that in this issue, the sides' positions are contrary. Turkey fully supports Azerbaijan, which is ethnically close to it and comes out fore restoration of its territorial integrity i.e. for maintenance of Karabakh settled with Armenians as part of Azerbaijan. In contrast to Turkey, Armenia supports the Karabakh population's right of national self-determination.

Contradictions between Armenia and Turkey have also geopolitical and geo-strategic measuring. Among them are belonging to different, though not confronting, military-and-political organizations - NATO and Collective Security Treaty Organization, as well as differences in the traditional political orientation i.e. Armenia is oriented to Russia, Turkey to the West.

In our century of different displays of “clash of civilizations” one should not disregard also the fact of belonging to different religious and cultural-value systems: Armenians are Christians, Turks are Moslems with all the differences proceeding.

There is also a negatively described image of the neighboring people in the public opinion both in Armenia and Turkey.

In different periods during the last years, the hierarchy of the above contradictions underwent changes, though their totality was remained unchanged, on the whole. It gives us a possibility of characterizing the relations between Armenia and Turkey is an interstate dispute.

At the same time, in the first half of 90s Turkey several times officially threatened with application of forces against Armenia, which had a danger of provocation of an escalation of conflicting situation between them.

The trade-and-economic relations are, to some extent, an exception. In spite of the closed boundaries, the trade between Turkey and Armenia exists through Georgia and Iran. At the same time, influential business and partially political cycles (in Turkey these are mainly the representatives of the vilayets bounding Armenia) are for opening of the boundaries and expansion of the cooperation in the sphere. Though, to be fair, it should be noted that many people are against it both in Armenia and Turkey. Nationalistic political parties in Armenia are of the opinion that as long as Turkey rejects the fact of the Genocide, the large-scale trade-and-economic cooperation with it is inexpedient. There are also opinions that Armenia's weak market is not ready for a mass inflow of cheap goods from Turkey, as it will make a severe blow on the local producers. In the meantime, the arguments of the Turkish opponents of the boundaries' opening are different: it will be more favorable for Armenia, as it will activate its economy and will contribute to the stopping of large-scale economic emigration from that country. In the last several years, some activation is observed in the contacts of the Armenian and Turkish NGOs, journalists, parliamentarians etc, which, undoubtedly, contributes to improving the climate in the two neighbors' relations.

The factor of a third party plays rather significant role in the Armenian-Turkish relations. Among the main actors are the USA, Russia and the Armenian Diaspora. The last one is more significant, in our opinion. The Armenian community in the USA has the largest possibilities to influence the process of the Armenian-Turkish interstate relations due to the strong ethnic lobby in Washington, first of all, and to the not less financial possibilities. One of the two leading lobbying organizations represent the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) which is against establishment of the Armenian-Turkish diplomatic relations before Turkey's recognizing the Armenian Genocide. Another one, the Armenian Assembly of America, on the contrary, is a champion of establishment of diplomatic relations without preliminary conditions and immediate opening of the boundary.

Russia's role is determined by its influence on Yerevan's policy. On the whole, taking into account its geopolitical interests in the South Caucasus, it is not difficult to draw a conclusion that it is not likely to be interested in the normalization of the Armenian-Turkish relations. Unlike Russia, the United States has strong levers of influence both in Ankara and Yerevan. The USA has been for normalization of the Armenian-Turkish relations and opening of the boundary from the very beginning. In conditions of its growing interest toward South Caucasus, some aspiration of the USA to assume a role of an unofficial mediator in the Armenian-Turkish dispute is observed, which was reflected in the establishment of the Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Commission in 2001 under the secrete patronage of the Department of State. Summing up the results of our analysis, it should be noted that the positive factors in the Armenian-Turkish relations are considerably weaker than the negative ones, on the whole.

Genocide of Armenians becomes a factor in foreign policy of Armenia.

It seemed to many foreign observers that after gaining independence by Armenia, the struggle for the condemnation of Genocide and restoration of historical justice would have become one of the main directions of the foreign policy of the young state. It also seemed that this assumption was about to be approved by the fact that the Declaration of Independence, adopted by the

Parliament of Armenia, contained a special point, stating “ the Republic of Armenia stands in support of the task of achieving in international recognition of the Genocide of 1915 in Ottoman Turkey and Western Armenia.”

However, in fact, this provision was a result of compromise, achieved after hot discussions held by various political forces. Neither forces, grouping around the leadership of the Armenian National Movement, nor the traditional parties and the forces, adjoining to them, were completely satisfied by this point. The Armenian National Movement, adhering to the “exclusion of the third force” and “no eternal friends—no eternal enemies” concepts, was of the opinion that inclusion of the Genocide provision into the Declaration might have prevented the establishment of relations with Turkey, while the opponents of the ANM, on the contrary, were putting forward the thesis that it is necessary to include the point of compensation for damages, incurred by the Armenian people as a result of the Genocide.

Having established full control in Armenia, the ANM, in the person of President Ter-Petrosyan, started conducting the policy of giving up of both—the demands for the compensation for the losses, incurred as a result of the Genocide, and the struggle for the international recognition of the fact of the Genocide in 1915. This principal was used as a basis of relations with Turkey that remained completely intact until the departure of the President Ter-Petrosyan from the political scene.

This policy had come to a deadlock. On the one hand, almost all political forces in Armenia, except for the ANM, started bitterly criticizing this policy; general public, including the scientific community begun to put forward well-grounded counter arguments against it. As a matter of fact there appeared a complete disconnection with the historical past of the people, traditions of its political thought; and, at last, this policy had been in full contradiction with the mentality of the people. That is why this policy was doomed to failure.

On the other hand, there was a crash of all hopes for the “appreciation” by Turkey the “good-will gesture” and its willingness to establish diplomatic relations with Armenia, to lift the blockade and soften its position in the question of the Nagorno-Karabakh settlement and so on. Turkey considered the Armenian leadership’s position as a sign of weakness, and to the contrary of expectations, Turkey intensified its pressure on Armenia.

Beginning from the February 1998, when Armenia has passed through so significant changes, a revision of some aspects of its foreign policy has started. One may conclude from the program statements of President Robert Kocharyan and Foreign Minister Vardan Oskanian, meaning that the problem of the Genocide is becoming an important factor of the foreign policy of Armenia. At present the work on the foreign-policy doctrine of Armenia is coming to an end, and I think that there will be attached substantial place to this problem.

IDEOLOGICAL SUBSTANTIATION OF TURKEY'S REGIONAL POLICY

The concept of Eurasia has occupied an important place in political discussions in Turkey since the beginning of the 90s of the last century. It is perceived as one of the main concepts reflecting Turkey's geopolitical strategy, international relations and national security. The policy of Turkey towards Armenia is also partly influenced by this concept.

The term Eurasia in the political and ideological discourse of contemporary Turkey has rather a politicized interpretation than a scientific definition. Some political scholars and researchers consider Eurasia as a region settled mainly with Turkic peoples, including Turkey, the Balkans and part of the Caucasus, the former Soviet republics of Central Asia, the region of Volga in Russia, and Northern Afghanistan. Such approaches, which are nothing but "modernized" editions of the pan-Turkist ideology, were widely spread in various circles of Turkish elite, especially in the beginning of 1990s.

However, the definition based on this ethnic-and-linguistic principle, lost its priority in the middle of 1990s, and at present it is less disseminated than the other versions of "Eurasia", based exclusively on geographical or political conceptions. For example, the web site of Turkish Foreign Ministry presents a geographical definition of Eurasia as "a large landscape, stretching from Europe to Central Asia."^[i]^[1] The current Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul describes Eurasia as a "continent consisting of Europe and Asia."^[ii]^[2] In fact, it is an attempt to avoid possible accusations in politicizing the concept.

The definitions given by the representatives of various wings of Turkish political elite are more detailed and politicized. For instance, former president Suleyman Demirel considers the Balkans, Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East, Turkey, Iran, and Iraq as parts of this region.^[iii]^[3] Former Vice-Premier Minister and Chairmen of pan-Turkist Party of Nationalist Action (PNA) Devlet Bahçeli includes the Balkans, Caucasus and the Middle East into Eurasia.^[iv]^[4]

Nevertheless, our numerous meetings with Turkish diplomats for more than ten years allow us to conclude that in its everyday activity the Turkish diplomacy prefers not to rely on the official conception of Ministry of Foreign Affairs or statements of some politicians or scientists, but uses the very pragmatic, from their point of view, version limiting Eurasia with the eight newly independent states of the South Caucasus and Central Asia. It is worth mentioning that Suleyman Demirel, during his tenure as Prime Minister, had the same opinion. For instance, in November of 1992 he stated: "With the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Eurasia was born..."^[v]^[5] Many Turkish politicians share the same approach.

The problem of definition of Eurasian borders in the Turkish discourse, which raises just an abstract interest at first sight, has great importance for revealing the motives of Turkish foreign policy nowadays.

The concept of Eurasia, which is one of the central concepts of geopolitics, has been studied in Turkey quite recently as a result of tangible changes in the regional geopolitical environment. Using the Western classical geopolitical approaches regarding Eurasia (from H. J. Mackinder

and N. J. Spykman up to Z. Brzezinski), Turkish theorists tried to work out their own concepts. They are operating with such core notions of classical geopolitics, as Heartland, Inner Crescent or Outer Crescent.[vi][6] But in the meantime, their conclusions are very different from the Western ones. The most remarkable and complete geopolitical concept in this sense was recently worked out by Ramazan Ozey (Professor of Marmara University). It is entitled "The Theory of Center Domination by Turks." The main elements of Ozey's concept can be summarized in the following way: Anatolia is the "World Fortress" (Dunya kalesi in Turkish, or the Heartland in classical sense), and the ruler-country in Anatolia, Turkey, possessing this acropolis, has an opportunity to take control over the regions of the "Internal circle" (Ic Cember in Turkish, compare with Mackinder's Inner Crescent). According to the Turkish scientist, they are the Balkans and Eurasia. Turkey will govern the world (Dis Cember in Turkish, meaning Outer Crescent in Mackinder's concept) sooner or later, the author says in conclusion. [vii][7] Thus, Ozey legalizes Turkey's domination in Balkans and Eurasia considering it a natural result of that country's geography. Then, he considers Turkey's domination in Eurasia not an end in itself, but a method of achieving a bigger result – the World Domination.

Other publications by Turkish experts in geopolitics are not so frank and far-reaching, though majority of them support the ideas of Turkey's domination or priority in Eurasia applying "softer" wordings. Thus, for example, Mustafa Yilmaz (Professor of Hacettepe University) also describes Turkey as a "natural acropolis" situated in the middle of the Balkans, Caucuses and the Middle East, which allows it to apply a number of alternative economic, political and military approaches.[viii][8] To emphasize the priority of Turkey proceeding from the "natural" geopolitical conditions, another idea of "Central Empire" was put into scientific and political circulation in 1990s. According to one of supporters of this approach, Oral Sander, Turkey, yielding to a number of other countries by its power and being influenced by "world developments," at the same time, influences these developments due to its position of a "Central Empire." [ix][9]

In 1990s the Turkish left-wing and right-wing thinkers and politicians, as well as representatives of a number of pro-Islamic and pan-Turkist political forces, elaborated a model of Turkey's Eurasian policy, to become a complete alternative to the "traditionally" pro-Western foreign political strategy. This approach is based on the idea of cooperation of the most important powers of Eurasia, Turkey, Iran and Russia, against the "Western imperialism." Its authors condemn Turkey's foreign policy for its subordination to the West and ignorance of the country's basic interests.

In particular, it has become known recently that one of the country's prominent right-wing political figures, Husnu Dogan, even makes steps towards establishment of "Avrasya" (Eurasia) party.[x][10] Another supporter of the above view, veteran of the Turkish Socialist Movement Dogu Perincek, gave one of his books a very symbolic title: "Eurasia's choice - independent foreign policy for Turkey". [xi][11]

Nowadays, the political and intellectual elite of Turkey remains mainly adherent to the strategic preference of Ataturk. The representatives of this wing are pragmatic and well aware that Turkey is not ready to become the politically dominating power in Eurasia without the support of the West, either economically or politically. That is why, they consider the Eurasian direction of

Turkey's foreign policy subordinated to Turkey-West relations and try to coordinate their policy with the goals of the West, and, in particular, of the USA. At the same time, they consider the extension of Turkey's influence in the Eurasian region as an important trump card in bargaining with the West on such issues as Turkey' admission to the European Union or the Cyprus problem.

The study of geopolitical and geostrategical opinions of the modern Turkish high-ranking influential military concerning Eurasia shows that their approaches are shifting from hard-line Kemalist pro-Western orientation to diversified ones. They have much in common with the views of the aforementioned Western-orientated political elite. Even official military documents now speak of Turkey as a "country of Eurasia", committed "to retain and enhance the ties with both the West and the East."^{[xii][12]} In 1998, Minister of Defense Hikmet Sami Turk, making his speech at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, stressed the following: "Turkey has not only turned its face to the West, but also enjoys traditional ties with the Islamic World. She takes her roots from Central Asia, The Middle East, Anatolia and Europe. In short, Turkey is a Eurasian country."^{[xiii][13]}

The military traditionally consider Eurasia and, first of all, the South Caucasus, as an unstable region threatening Turkey's security. They are convinced that Russia's influence and military presence in that region is the main source of danger. Thus, it is obvious, that the attention of the military is mainly focused on the three countries of the South Caucasus. ^{[xiv][14]} At the same time, they, alongside with many Turkish politicians, think, that "Turkey is in the middle of the world." ^{[xv][15]}

Within the last two-three years, among the Turkish high-ranking military appeared a group protesting against integration into European Union. Its members consider Eurasia as an important geopolitical privilege for Turkey and not as a source of instability. Despite their pro-Western orientation, in that region they predict a strong competition with the European countries, especially with Germany. ^{[xvi][16]}

In 1999-2002, the period of the previous coalition government headed by Bulent Ecevit, the Foreign Ministry was controlled by the Democratic Left-wing Party (DLP), so the views of the party's leaders require a special attention. On the whole, they supported the pro-Western strategy of the Turkish foreign policy, though with some reservations. For example, in 1995, DLP leader Bulent Ecevit insisted on the "region-oriented foreign policy." He thought that the use of the European and Asian elements would enable setting up the integrity of the countries situated in the Eurasian super-region, certainly headed by Turkey. He even uses the term "Eurasiation" (Avrupalasma in Turkish) - to signify the process of integration between Europe and Asia. According to him, Turkey is occupying the central place in this process.^{[xvii][17]}

Foreign Minister of that period Ismail Cem, also the DLP representative, did not avoid rather openly speaking about prospective Eurasian plans in public. Thus, once he stated: "We shall, undoubtedly, join the European Union, but our perspective of vision is broader. Our goal is to become the decision-making center in Eurasia."^{[xviii][18]}

The program of the Justice and Development Party's (JDP) Government, which replaced Ecevit's coalition, points out that the goal of expanding relations with Russia is based on the aspiration for "cautiously expanding Eurasia's prospect." Meanwhile, before coming to power, this pro-Islamic party noted in its program that it would try to expand the "Eurasian direction" of the Turkish foreign policy[xix][19]. The latest steps of the JDP Government display the trend of strengthening the impact of the Eurasian concept on the Turkish foreign policy. The Foreign Ministry acts within the new framework redefining the priorities of the Turkish foreign policy in accordance with the Eurasian concept, which is indicated in the JDP's program and considered to be more suitable to the changing regional and global realities. The Ministry is establishing a new balance between national interests and those realities and is trying to improve relations with the neighboring countries.

Different interpretations of Eurasian concept are also present in official documents of other Turkish political parties. In particular, the Program of the Social-Democratic People Party (SPP), which had been playing an important role in the Turkish politics in the first half of 1990s, describes the "Wide Eurasian" region as a "territory of our life, our power, apple of the eye" for Turkey.[xx][20] Recently founded Party of New Turkey (PNT) considers Turkey as "The Power Center" of emerging "Eurasian Entirety".[xxi][21]

The concept of Eurasia is widely spread also among different circles of contemporary Turkish society. There are many research centers, think tanks, NGO's, foundations, and periodicals, the titles of which include the word "Avrasya" (Eurasia). Most of them are interested in advocating Eurasian trend in Turkish political, economical and cultural life. Only one example: a non-governmental Association of Cultural and Societal Development of Eurasia stands for strengthening various relations between Europe, Turkey and other Eurasian countries, especially, with the Central European ones. Its leaders are supporters of using the Eurasian direction of Turkey's foreign policy as a trump card in the EU accession negotiations. According to this NGO's program documents, Turkey has to play "major role" in Eurasia.[xxii][22]

The above examined theoretical approaches and opinions concerning Eurasia and the place and role of Turkey, that are widely spread in the modern Turkey's public and political life, testify that not only political elite of the country, but also military and scientific ones, as well as the segments of emerging civic society share the idea of Turkey's domination in that region, bringing different reasons and bases.

These concepts come from both – left and right wings of the political spectrum are serving as a theoretical substantiation for the Turkish foreign policy, one of the most important long-term objectives of which is becoming a dominating power in the region of Eurasia.

Theoretical Elaboration of Problem

Even through a short description of the state of the Armenian-Turkish interstate relations, their indisputable "value" as an object of a case study from the points of view different approaches of theory of international relations becomes obvious.

However, there are no such works, factually.

Thus, the Armenian-Turkish relations could serve as one of the main cases used for theoretical generalization when studying the ways and means of "non-conventional diplomacy" or, speaking specifically, as a research of bilateral relations between the states in case of absence of diplomatic relations. However, researchers ignore the experience of the Armenian-Turkish relation, on the whole. For example, the pioneer work entitled "Talking to the Enemy" by Professor of the Leicester University, G.R. Barridge, which initiated the research in the sphere, did not mention the experience of the Armenian-Turkish relations[xxiii][23]. Although, among cases when the presence at a well-known state figure's funeral is used to establish contacts between the leaders of the states having no diplomatic relations, the author mentions the visit of Armenian President L. Ter-Petrosyan to Ankara on the occasion of the funeral of Turkish President T. Ozal. In the meanwhile, consideration of the peculiarities of the Armenian-Turkish relations would allow the author not only to expand the list of the "key communication methods" applied by the sides by using Barridge's terminology, but also to more carefully consider the formal and essential circumstances that make their mentioning necessary.

The whole concept and the structure of the English scientist's book bases on a possibility that states can have no diplomatic relations as a result of not recognizing each other or breaking their diplomatic relations. Hereby, it puts the recognition of a new state and the establishment of diplomatic relations in a direct dependence on each other.

In any case, if a new state or a new government is not recognized because of some reasons, diplomatic relations cannot be established or if the recognition is cancelled, the existing diplomatic relations must be stopped, Barridge underlines[xxiv][24]. As a result, he factually rules out such a case when establishment of diplomatic relations are rejected during official recognition of a new state i.e. the very "operational code"[xxv][25] elaborated by the Turkish Government in respect to Armenia yet in 1991 and preserved by it up to now. Hereby, the field of the author's analysis is reducing to consideration of only two cases: non-recognition of a state and breach of diplomatic relations.

Meanwhile, the case of Armenian-Turkish interstate relations has some principal differences from those that proved to be in the focus of Barridge's attention. In particular, choosing such a policy, a state not only gets a considerable strategic advantage to "the new state" putting the establishment of diplomatic relations in dependence on the fulfillment of some preliminary conditions, but also, officially recognizes the existence of that "new state", by this preserving for itself a possibility of establishing "non-conventional contacts" at different levels, including the highest one, and using them to exert pressure on the state. In case of non-recognition of the "new state", the channels of "non-conventional contacts" would be considerably blocked, which would decrease the possibility of a diplomatic maneuvering and, at least, of the pressure on it.

On the other hand, the officially recognized "new state", which had no diplomatic relations, proves to be in more severe difficulties, than if the diplomatic ties were established unilaterally and only then were broken. Suffering rather a clear lack of experienced diplomats, such a state also loses an opportunity of collecting information through ambassadors and consuls, as well as of their society through establishing contacts with representatives of different sections.

All this leads to the fact that in case of supporting “non-conventional diplomatic relations”, this state has to operate “blindly”, which even more weakens its positions in disputes with the opponent party, which is always presented as a stronger and full-fledged country.

We drew the above dotted paradigm of relations on the basis of generalization of the experience of the relations between Turkey and Armenia. It has no analogues in the modern practice of diplomatic relations. The peculiarity of the Armenian-Turkish relations will become more obvious after a short review of an absence of interstate relations considered in the scientific literature. In our days, states mainly wage a policy of each other’s non-recognition or of a breach (or freezing) of diplomatic relations. The “classical” cases of unrecognized states in the period of the “cold war” were the separated states: Germany, Vietnam, and Korea. By now, majority of the Arab countries do not recognize Israel as a state. During the last ten years, a modified version of non-recognition has expanded: a ruling regime (government) is often not recognized and not a state. It was the USA that waged such a policy especially frequently; the same did its allies under its pressure. Thus, the USA had not recognized Beijing's regime as the legal government of China for long years.

At the same time, the practice of international relations shows that a breach of diplomatic relations with simultaneous maintenance “recognition” of the given state or even the political regime has become wider expanded recently. In conformity with a tradition codified by the Vienna Congress of 1815, a breach of diplomatic relations was perceived as a symbolic act of recognizing impossible the peaceful resolution of a conflicting situation between states and of beginning of military actions. The whole history of the period of the “European classical diplomacy” of the 19th century is full of such examples. In our days as well, time from time the action of breaking or freezing diplomatic relations is carried out immediately before beginning military actions. For example, Great Britain acted in a similar way in respect to Argentine in the period of the Falkland War. However, in modern period or in the century of “new diplomacy”^[xxvi][26] the breach of diplomatic relations often serves as an act symbolizing dissatisfaction with the given state's policy, and aims its isolation from the international arena, especially when it is applied by a stronger state in respect to a weaker one, or for propagandistic purposes. It should be noted that in the real diplomatic practice, both these goals are often combined.

For example, the USA's breaking of diplomatic relations with the government of Castro in Cuba, did not resulted either in a rejection of the Cuban state or of Castro's regime^[xxvii][27]. We think such an approach of the United States was accounted for by their aspiration for leaving the door open for further “non-conventional” contacts with representatives of the communist government of Cuba to achieve favorable changes. The factor of Cuba's geographically close position to the USA, undoubtedly, played an important role, which explains its special importance for such a super power as the USA is. It is noteworthy that during one of his speeches, the U.S. President of that period, D. Carter, implicitly justifying such a policy, even had to lie in public that the USA did not recognize Castro's regime.

Turkey's policy in the issue of diplomatic relations with Armenia proves to be close to the USA's policy towards Cuba, at the same time, having a considerable difference from it: Turkey refused from establishing diplomatic relations with Armenia from the very beginning, explaining their

establishment by a number of preliminary conditions referring other points of the agenda in the two countries' relations, wherein he failed to achieve Armenia's compromises satisfying its demands. Such an approach of the Turkish party was based on an opinion that Armenia is interested in the establishment of diplomatic relations more than Turkey, as it is a “new state” in conditions of an armed conflict with Azerbaijan, it has no outlet to the sea and suffers considerable economic difficulties. Thus, one can state that Turkey, factually, used its possible agreement to establish diplomatic ties with Armenia as a “means of influence”, in sense frequently used by James Davis, well-known specialist in the problems of international influence[xxviii][28].

However, some ten years have passed, but no diplomatic relations have been established between Turkey and Armenia so far. It means that they still have considerable discrepancies, and Turkey did not manage to achieve any tangible concessions from Armenia i.e. the first one failed to spread its influence on the last one.

In the broad sense, Turkey-Armenia relations are of a definite scientific interest from the point of view of further development of a theory of bilateral inter-state relations, which based on realistic approach to the international relations. This viewpoint proved to be on the periphery of researchers' interest in conditions of the recent strengthening of the influence of neo-liberal and mondial theories. Meanwhile, the analysis of the Armenian-Turkish relations in the context of such a fundamental concept of this theory as the “power of a state” and the methods of its implementation could contribute to its further development.

Here is a specific example: during the last years a number of researchers have arrived to a conclusion that in our days “agenda” of both bilateral and multilateral international relations has become of a great importance in the diplomatic practice. Hence, they point out the necessity for its detailed consideration[xxix][29].

However, specific methods of agenda's formation remain not enough researched. The experience of the Armenian-Turkish relations provides us with an interesting material for analysis this time as well. Thus, it turns out that even before the collapse of the USSR and the establishment of the independent Armenian state, the sides entered the struggle for formation of agenda of bilateral interstate relations, with the visit of Turkish Ambassador to Moscow V. Vural to Yerevan in the April of 1991 being an evidence of it.

During Vural's negotiations with the Armenia leadership became evident, that the sides had different approaches to the agenda's formation. If the Armenian party aspired for concentrating the agenda of bilateral relations on the economic issues, Ambassador Vural was interested, first of all, in the issues of the Armenian Genocide and the Armenian-Turkish boundary, as well as the problem of the Karabakh conflict's settlement and only then in trade and economic issues.

During and after negotiations, Turkey managed to force its interpretation of the agenda. Later, when recognizing Armenia's independence at the end of 1991, Turkey refused from establishing diplomatic ties with it, a new point on establishment of diplomatic relations was added into the agenda.

In 1992-1993 in the hierarchy of the agenda's points, such changes were made, again under the pressure of Turkey, which moved the problem of the Karabakh conflict's settlement to the first place. The struggle for the agenda was completed in 1993 by the victory of Turkish side, when it finally closed its boundary with Armenia after Azerbaijan's losing Kelbajar. Hereby, Turkey made Armenia to agree with a replacement of the trade-and-economic points of the agenda with an issue of opening the Turkish-Armenian boundary. During the following years up to now, the agenda of the Armenian-Turkish relations underwent no tangible changes, just the new leadership in Armenia, that came to power in 1998, focused on the problem of the Armenian Genocide's recognition, achieving changes in the hierarchy of the points in the agenda.

The above-described struggle for the agenda of the Armenian-Turkish relations casts no doubts on the fact that it is rather an interesting case from the viewpoint of more detailed examination of the problem of formation of the agenda of the bilateral interstate relations. In particular, Turkey's aspiration for controlling over formation of the agenda in the inter-state relations with Armenia testifies to its intention to expand its "power domain" by including in it the agenda as well. Such an interpretation of Turkey's policy bases on John Rothgeb's determination of a state's power as an ability to control over others[xxx][30].

At the same time, the changes in the hierarchy of the agenda's issues in 1998 caused by changes in Armenia's policy in the issues of recognition of the fact of the Armenian Genocide shows that a weaker country, in the given case it is Armenia, also has an opportunity not only to counteract a stronger country and ignore its demands, but also to achieve a definite advantage in the diplomatic counteraction, especially, when it refers the issues rooted in the historical memory. A group of American specialists studying prerequisites and conditions of succeeding through bellicose threats mainly has arrived to a similar conclusion[xxxi][31].

Consideration of the Armenian-Turkish relations seems to be more prospective from the point of view of an approach proposed by the well-known specialists in the sphere of international relations, Robert O. Keohane and Josef S. Nye, according to which the source of power and influence in the relations of states is in their tangible *asymmetrical interdependence*[xxxii][32]. Operating with the concept of *vulnerability*, they show that it can be used to carry out a policy of pressure with the object of expanding the sphere of influence.

The aforementioned operational code of Turkey's policy towards Armenia is fully within the frames of this concept. The same authors point out that such a policy is connected with the risk of provoking return measures, which in their opinion, are often of military nature[xxxiii][33].

However, the experience of the Armenian-Turkish relations showed that the response can be different: a use of a definite political problem (in the given case it refers the genocide's recognition) by a weaker country (Armenia) as a counterbalance to the policy of using vulnerability carried out by an economically stronger country with a higher fighting capability (Turkey). Thus, it is evident that Armenia carries out a peculiar policy of balance of power.

For conclusion, here is a short interpretation of the Armenia-Turkish relations through using the above developments in the theory of international relations. They are characterized as "non-conventional", and determination of the agenda of interstate relations is for great importance for

them. The “operational code” elaborated by the diplomacy of Turkey towards Armenia, which is characterized by the use of several non-traditional methods of coercion, was crucial for formation of such a paradigm of relations.

On the other hand, Armenia does not yield to the pressure and ignores Turkey's demands.

Thus, on the whole, Turkey's position can be interpreted with the use of conceptual system of “*offensive realism*”, Armenia's one with the use of “*defensive realism*”^[xxxiv][34].

According to an approximate assessment of an acknowledged Canadian specialist K.J. Holsti, over 90% of interstate relations base on the policy of a “simple persuasion” and not coercion. Thus, the Armenian-Turkish inter-state relations of the last ten years refer to the type of relations, which makes up less than 10% of the modern international traffic. It is for this reason that their experience and further generalization can contribute to determination of several concepts and notions applied by representatives of the realistic school of international relations today.

Recommendations

The task of leading the Armenian-Turkish relations to the level of at least normal neighboring states is rather difficult, not mentioning the good-neighboring ones.

However, a definite potential for overcoming the difficulties exists anyway.

In our opinion, its use is accounted for by, first of all, expansion of the role of the civil society institutions of the two countries in the Armenian-Turkish interaction.

With the frames of this approach, we make a proposal on establishment of a permanent *Armenian-Turkish Forum*, wherein public figures would be presented, as well as NGOs of both countries. Regular meetings of this forum are proposed to be held alternately in Armenia and Turkey, securing their maximum possible wide coverage by mass media.

These meetings can touch upon the issues of vital importance most of all leading to disputes of the parties. Hereby, we think that, it will be possible to achieve positive moves in the public perception of the neighboring people in the succession of time.

My advice to the Governmental structures include in it proposals on creation of *specialized mixed groups* consisting of both independent experts and diplomats. Exact tasks on elaboration of specific joint proposals on overcoming the conflicting situations in different spheres of the Armenian-Turkish relations must be set to these groups.

Turkey opening of its boundary with Armenia would have a great importance for launching the process of real settlement of the disputable issues between Armenia and Turkey, which would contribute to expansion of the contacts between the representatives of different sections of the population.

In the final result, all the measures we have proposed would contribute to normalizing the Armenian-Turkish interstate relations.

Armenian-Turkish Relations:
From Interstate Dispute to Neighborliness
Policy Paper

Summary

The absence of diplomatic relations between the Armenia and Turkey for already 13 years, the more so as they have not been established at all, as well as the closed boundary and lack of a direct rail and road communication more boldly manifests the whole depth of the contradictions between two neighboring states.

However, the full spectrum of contradictions between them is much wider and embraces different spheres, beginning from geo-strategic priorities of these states up to the collective memory of the Armenian and Turkish people.

The search of the ways towards normalization of the two neighboring states' relations supposes an exposure of the spheres the sides have opportunities in and a definite interest in the initiation of the given process. First of all, it is the trade-and-economic sphere, indeed. However, the author considers not less positive potential from the viewpoint of the relations' normalization such world events as strengthening of transnational trends in the international relations or improvement of the world climate in connection with occurrence of the anti-terrorist coalition consisting of almost all the super powers in the world led by the USA.

It is impossible to neglect the fact that the vectors of transformation processes, like those in Armenia and Turkey, have a single direction i.e. in the direction of democratization of these countries' societies, which will create an opportunity for using the potential of the civil society structures forming there in order to create more favorable atmosphere in their relations.

Background

The Armenian-Turkish interstate relations at the end of the XX and at the beginning of XXI centuries were "twice unlucky": both the fact of reality and the fact of research. Let us explaining our idea. In real life, the relations between Armenia and Turkey exist that is the two neighboring countries "recognize" each other's existence, from time to time official representatives of different levels, including the presidents and foreign ministers, have contacts, as well as negotiations are held. However, they have not been legally registered so far from the view point of the International Law, so, no diplomatic relations have been established, that is strictly speaking, they are not likely to exist in the system of the modern international bilateral relations. One of the parties, Turkey, refuses from establishing diplomatic ties explaining it by several preliminary conditions. It one-sidedly carries out a factual economic blockade, as well as has

introduced a special visa regime toughening it time from time, allowing some indulgence depending on the results of discussion of the problem of the Armenian Genocide by the parliaments of the third countries.

The situation with the scientific research of the problem of the Armenian-Turkish interstate relations is not better. The authors of the majority of the existing works, first of all, solve the task of justification of definite narrow national and narrow party approaches to this difficult and multidimensional problem or, at the best, limit themselves to a simple account of facts in a chronological order. Unfortunately, the last case as well lacks any full research of the history of the Armenian-Turkish interstate relations; even their separate periods had no adequate reflection in the special literature from the point of view of the "bare" factual account. Factually, there are no works wherein they could be analyzed through the conceptual system used in the modern science on international relations, saying nothing of the monograph where a complex approach would occur. Instead, the practice of consideration of the Armenian-Turkish inter-state relations only in the context of studying the Karabakh conflict or the patterns of competition in the region has become widely disseminated. As a result, unilateral and facilitated approaches are more characteristic for the interpretations of the Armenian-Turkish interstate relations proposed in the special literature.

Our research paper first of all, pursues a goal of selecting the ways of complex study of the above problem, unlike majority of previous works, taking into account both its different levels and measurement and the differences in its interpretation by the two parties. The author is sure that only in this case it is possible to work out specific proposals to overcome the existing abnormal situation with the relations between the two neighboring states.

Current Situation

The diplomatic agenda of the Armenian-Turkish relations and the list of the preliminary conditions for establishment of diplomatic relations fixed by Turkey allow easily determining majority of contradictions between the parties. The problem of the Genocide must be put in the first place in the list of contradictions, in our opinion. The problem is that Turkey officially rejects the fact of the Armenian Genocide in 1915 by the Ottoman Empire, while Armenia obtains for its recognition and condemnation not only by Turkey, but also by the whole world community. This problem is connected with the deepest stratum of collective memory and identity of the Armenian people and is perceived as a struggle for restoration of justice. While in Turkey, the state in the sphere of "official history" (resmi tarih) has tabooed this topic during the whole period of the country's existence. Turkey permanently and rather insistently demand that Armenia refuses from the policy aiming recondition and condemnation of the Armenian Genocide, which the latter decisively rejects. At the same time, official Yerevan is for normalization of relations without any preliminary conditions. Another demand of the Turkish side is also connected with the problem of the Genocide: Armenia must with a special statement recognize the invariability of the existing Armenian-Turkish boundary and confirmed its adherence to the Kars Agreement of 1921 that established the current boundary between the two neighbors. The Armenian representatives avoided it with a great persistence, arguing that there is no necessity in it, as being a member and signing basic documents of such organizations as the

U.N., OSCE, the Council of Europe, Armenia hereby recognized the principle of the current boundaries' inviolability. It should be noted that in Armenia the Kars Agreement is perceived as unjust, forced by a third party (Soviet Russia) as a result of a secret deal with Kemalist Turkey. The Karabakh problem occupies rather an important place in the list of contradictions between Armenia and Turkey. Several researchers even advance it to the first place. One can say that in this issue, the sides' positions are contrary. Turkey fully supports Azerbaijan, which is ethnically close to it and comes out for restoration of its territorial integrity i.e. for maintenance of Karabakh settled with Armenians as part of Azerbaijan. In contrast to Turkey, Armenia supports the Karabakh population's right of national self-determination. Contradictions between Armenia and Turkey have also geopolitical and geo-strategic measuring. Among them are belonging to different, though not confronting, military-and-political organizations - NATO and Collective Security Treaty Organization, as well as differences in the traditional political orientation i.e. Armenia is oriented to Russia, Turkey to the West. In our century of different displays of "clash of civilizations" one should not disregard also the fact of belonging to different religious and cultural-value systems: Armenians are Christians, Turks are Moslems with all the differences proceeding. There is also a negatively described image of the neighboring people in the public opinion both in Armenia and Turkey.

Objectives

The objectives of the policy recommendations included in our research paper are:
To encourage the representatives of the civil society to establish permanent dialog
To raise public awareness on the problem of improving bilateral interstate relations
To contribute to the improving of image of neighboring people in the public opinion
To provide the decision makers with the appropriate data
The major goal of research paper is to improve Armenian-Turkish interstate relations.

Recommendations

A permanent Armenian-Turkish Forum should be established, wherein public figures would be presented, as well as NGOs of both countries. Regular meetings of this forum are proposed to be held alternately in Armenia and Turkey, securing their maximum possible wide coverage by mass media.

These meetings can touch upon the issues of vital importance most of all leading to disputes of the parties. Hereby, we think that, it will be possible to achieve positive moves in the public perception of the neighboring people in the succession of time.

My advice to the Governmental structures include in it proposal on creation of specialized mixed groups consisting of both independent experts and diplomats. Exact tasks on elaboration of specific joint proposals on overcoming the conflicting situations in different spheres of the Armenian-Turkish relations must be set to these groups.

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In the final result, all the measures we have proposed would contribute to normalizing the Armenian-Turkish interstate relations.

Author's Related Publications During IPF Fellowship

Book and Papers

Safrastyan, Ruben (2003):

“It Is Impossible To Set Up Barriers Between Neighbors in the XXI Century...”: Armenia and Turkey in Regional Developments (Articles and Interviews of 2001-2003). Yerevan: Zangak-97 Publishing House (in Armenian, Russian, and English)

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Republican: The Republican Party of Armenia, 2003, N. 9, p. 24-29, “On the Problem of Ideological Substantiation of Turkish Foreign Policy: *The Eurasia Conception*” (article in Armenian) (http://www.hhk.am/pdf/hhk_n9.pdf)

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- [xvii][17] Avrasya Dergisi, II (<http://www.avrasya-tr.org>).
- [xviii][18] See Kaan Ogut, Avrasya Stratejileri Üzerine, in: Aydinlanma 1923, Sayi: 21 (on-line version). Cem means, surely, the official definition of Eurasia.
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