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ARMENIAN INTER-COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN LATE OTTOMAN SMYRNA

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Ottoman Armenians and non-Armenians in the mostly Greek Orthodox port city of Smyrna at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries were in close and multifaceted association.¹ From the seventeenth century onward, Smyrna had experienced a unique economic development because of its geographic location, and in the nineteenth century it benefited from the *Tanzimat* reforms in the Ottoman Empire, which tended to establish greater equality among all subjects of the sultan as well as to promise safety, religious, and educational freedom for all.² In Smyrna, intermingling across community boundaries alternated with strictly community-centered activities. A variety of sources is necessary in order to understand the population diversity and more precisely the situation of the Smyrna Armenians. In this regard, documents from the Centre for Asia Minor Studies (CAMS) in Athens are especially valuable.³ As for Armenian sources,

This paper is dedicated to my colleague Marc Aymes.

¹ The name *Smyrna* and not *Izmir* is used in this essay. In Armenian, the name commonly used in the later years of the Ottoman Empire was *Izmir*. *Zmiurnia* appears on the cover of *Arevelian Mamul*, the noted Smyrna Armenian periodical, but *Izmir* was the main form used, even in the articles published within the journal. I prefer to use *Smyrna* in order to make clear that the city being discussed was very different from today's *Izmir*. *Smyrna* was an Ottoman port city with a vibrant cosmopolitan life, whereas *Izmir* is a Turkish place, whatever the new dynamics and diversities this term may imply.

² Roderic Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963).

³ The documents of the Archive of the Oral Tradition were constituted by and are stored at the Centre for Asia Minor Studies in Athens. They are transcripts of interviews made from the 1930s to the 1970s among refugees and those exchanged from the Asian part of the Ottoman Empire who arrived in Greece between September

the major reference work remains Father Hakob Kosian's *Armenians in Smyrna and Its Surroundings*.⁴

Smyrna Armenians as Part of the Ottoman Social Fabric

The term "cosmopolitanism" in this chapter is used not only as the objective living side-by-side of diverse ethno-religious groups but also as the conscious self-perception of this situation and the strategies various social groups developed to adjust to their circumstances.⁵ Considered here are two sides of cosmopolitanism in a western Ottoman city like Smyrna: a secular Ottoman one and another one resulting from the growing Westernization of the port city.

The first side is the result of the centuries-long proximity between various linguistic, ethnic, and religious groups. This form of cos-

1922 (after the Greek defeat at Smyrna) and 1925 (the end of the implementation of the Lausanne agreement signed in January 1923 on the compulsory exchange of the Muslim population of Greece against the Greek Orthodox one of Turkey). Needless to say, these sources are as biased as any document with which historians have to work. The informants relied on their personal and collective memories, which had been influenced by the ethnocentric atmosphere of the Greek national state where they had been living for several decades at the time of the interview. One could go so far as to assert that the very project of Melpo Merlier was to constitute in retrospect a vigorous Hellenic Asia Minor within the Ottoman Empire. That may be going too far, however, for even if some interviewers had nationalist leanings, most files were not filled with the transcripts of a single CAMS agent. Some files were constituted over the years, some decades having passed between two interview sessions. Interviewing a refugee in the 1930s and possibly the same person in the 1950s or the 1970s was not the same. Even if the interviews were supposed to be all structured in the same directive way, some room was left for freer expression under the title: "Miscellaneous." But the main point in favor of these documents is that they are an unmatched fund of views, details, and personal accounts by firsthand witnesses about the social life in the Asian part of the Ottoman Empire. The nationalism that may pervade some of these documents is detectable, and the social scientist using them must evaluate them critically. The very bulk of information collected and their internal dissonances do allow for a critical approach to these documents. As specialists of oral history argue, such testimonies provide access to areas of human life long placed at the margins of historiography and diversify the social categories to contribute to the process of historical writing.

⁴ Hakob Kosian, *Hayk i Zmiurnia ev i shrjakays* [Armenians in Smyrna and Its Surrounding] (Vienna: Mekhitarist Press, 1899), 2 vols.

⁵ I already have distanced myself from idealistic points of view about cosmopolitanism. See Hervé Georgelin, "Smyrne à la fin de l'Empire ottoman: Un cosmopolitisme si voyant," *Cahiers de la Méditerranée* 67 (Nice: Centre de la Méditerranée Moderne et Contemporaine, 2003): 125-47.

mopolitanism is the secular Ottoman one. It is best illustrated by the usage of the Turkish language among non-Turks and non-Muslims. The assumption here is that linguistic aspects are a barometer of social reality. Armenians in the Smyrna region, especially in Aidin, the former administrative center of the province or *vilayet*, some 50 miles (80 kilometers) to the east of Smyrna, were native Turkish-speakers. The closeness of the Armenians to Muslim Turkish society is one of their most striking features for observers, be they foreign travelers or Greek neighbors. French scholar Vital Cuinet wrote:

Their great ability to speak Turkish leads many of them to the bar; their community provides the vilayet with most Christian lawyers. Moreover, they are closer to the Turks, in addition to the above mentioned conformity, than other Ottoman subjects.⁶

Turkish remained the main language spoken in the *charshes* (covered markets) and bazaars until September 1922—that is, following the expulsion of Smyrna's Greek administration, even though shops belonged overwhelmingly to non-Muslims.⁷ There is a connection between the kind of economic activity and the language used by social agents. Cuinet insists that Armenians in the Aidin vilayet were void of any nationalistic feelings as was the case also with the Greeks. The Christian groups appeared to have been part of a functioning whole—a truly Ottoman society whose main linguistic element was the Turkish language.

Ottoman cosmopolitanism changed its character in Smyrna in the nineteenth century. A rapid process of Graecization took place in the city and along the Aegean shores. It was triggered by migration from the kingdom of Greece, the Aegean archipelago, and the inner Anatolian provinces, but also by the high birth rate of the Greek Orthodox population in the region and their early access to modern medical care. Some places around Smyrna, especially the peninsula of Cheshme, were so dominantly Greek Orthodox that Muslims had to learn Greek to adjust to the prevailing language.⁸ In 1900, Armenians

⁶ Vital Cuinet, *Turquie d'Asie*, vol. 3 (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1894), p. 357.

⁷ Philippos K. Falbos, "Bezestens and Hans in Smyrna," pp. 130-95, in *Mikrasiatika Chronika*, vol. 9 (Athens: Union of Smyrneans, 1961), pp. 130-95, and "Charshes and Bazaars in Smyrna," in vol. 10, pp. 334-49.

⁸ Centre for Asia Minor Studies, Athens, Archive of the Oral Tradition, file: Ionia 112, Cheshme, informant: Ioannis Valampous; interviewer: Zoi Kyritsopoulou; Topic: Language. The informant stated: "Cheshme was a Greek-speaking town. Of the in-

in Smyrna numbered only about 10,000, out of a total population of 300,000.⁹ This figure had remained rather constant through the nineteenth century and would not change for most of the Ottoman twentieth century. It was radically altered only in the last month of Hellenic power in 1922. By 1914, the city had approximately 500,000 inhabitants.

Armenians did not experience a demographic growth similar to that of the Greek Orthodox, because of their emigration to the West or other cities of the Eastern Mediterranean such as Alexandria after the British occupation in 1882. As opposed to the general religious practice of endogamy, many intermarriages took place with members of other ethnic and religious groups, such as Greek Orthodox or Levantines, which affected negatively the size of the Armenian Apostolic community. In Smyrna, the Armenians became relatively less significant in numbers. This Graecization was not only quantitative but also qualitative, that is not only demographic but also certainly linguistic and affected all groups living in the region.

Armenian and Greek Orthodox Interactions within the Urban Framework

A corresponding shift took place in the dominant linguistic usage of the Armenians in Smyrna. Vernacular Greek tended to become the everyday language of Smyrna Armenians. Greek Orthodox inhabitants of the Smyrna area found it only natural that their Armenian neighbors would speak Greek. The linguistic adaptation of the Armenians to their surroundings was a natural given, or was seen as such. Unilingual Armenians would have been an incongruity in such an environment, as a Greek Orthodox interviewee remembered, quite possibly underrating the command of Turkish in his own group:

habitants, the mass did not know Turkish. Of course, the Turks, too, spoke Greek, not all of them, many though." Another indication can be found in the Compact Disc (Athens, 2008) by Proodeftikos kai Politistikos Syllogos, "Hayios Ioannis o Theologos" (<http://meli1.wordpress.com/>), and En Chordais (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/En-Chordais-En-Chordais/231723267948?v=wall>), *Stou Meliou tous kafenedes* [Songs from Meli (on the peninsula of Cheshme) in Asia Minor]. There are no Turkish songs in any of these, although such songs are no longer ostracized. The Greek lyrics do have, however some Turkish influences, but the language situation in the Cheshme area had nothing in common with that of Cappadocia.

⁹ S. Epikian *Patkerazard bnashkharhik bararan* [Illustrated Geographic Dictionary], vol. 1 (Venice: Mekhitarist Press, 1903), p. 789.

We spoke Greek, the Greek of Smyrna. We did not know Turkish, one or two phrases only. The strangers too in Bayrakle [a Smyrna suburb] understood Greek. Armenians, of course, the Jews, too, used to speak Greek.¹⁰

But, at the same time, there was no integration of the local Armenian youth into upper Greek Orthodox educational institutions of Smyrna. There is only one Armenian last name in the alumni list of the *Evangeliki Scholi*, which was published by Christos Solomonidis.¹¹ The *Evangeliki Scholi* was the most important Greek Orthodox school in Smyrna and was able to prepare students for further education at the University of Athens. Knowledge of Greek or Turkish is not mentioned with particular pride by non-Orthodox persons, because it was just part of the basic common knowledge of Smyrna's residents.

The Greek Orthodox had a complex perception of their Armenian neighbors. The very first element to be stressed is that the Orthodox did not consider the Armenians as true Christians and viewed themselves as the only real Christians to the exclusion of others. This common sentiment can still be heard in Greece today, pronounced even when there is no malicious intent. This distinction is seen in such statements by Orthodox refugees in Greece, as evidenced in this piece about Menemen, about 12 miles (20 kilometers) to the north of Smyrna:

In 1922, when we left, there were approximately 30,000 inhabitants. The majority was Turkish, the minority was Christian, 35 percent. There were also about 40 Armenian families and 20 Jewish families.¹²

The otherness of Armenians was, at least in retrospect, perceived as similar to that of the Jews, as one can deduce from the following statement by a former inhabitant of Karatash, a suburb of Smyrna,

¹⁰ CAMS, Ionia 9, Bayrakle, interviewer: Hermolaos Andreadis; informant: Yian-nis Kavgalakis; topic: Language, April 14, 1970. The setting of the interview was in Greece, and it is possible that a person with sympathies for Greek nationalism could have prompted the informant to minimize the Turkish-language proficiency of his own group.

¹¹ Christos Solomonidis, *I Paidia sti Smyrni* [Education in Smyrna] (Athens: n.p., 1961).

¹² CAMS, Ionia 43, Menemen, interviewer: Zoi Kyritsopoulou; informant: Dimitrios Katroulis; topic: Inhabitants, July 3, 1963.

about 2 miles from the governor's headquarters or *konak* to the southwest:

Karatash had only 350 Greek houses. There were as many Turkish ones. We were half and half. There were a few Armenians and Jews. We were all living separately. On one side the Hellenes, on another the Turks, and on another one the others.¹³

Collectively, Armenians were seen by others as the most well-off people. In fact, some high-profile cases made the social diversity of the Armenian population in Smyrna invisible for the non-Armenians, as this testimony by a former inhabitant of Goztepe, a bourgeois suburb situated 3 miles from Smyrna proper, makes clear:

When you got off the steamer at Goztepe, you saw the houses on the seaside. Among these, one would distinguish those of the Sivrissarians and the Aznavorians. They were real castles: large, beautiful, and well built.¹⁴

This flattering image of the local Armenians was confirmed by the Armenians themselves. Eprikian noted:

Crafts have never been very widespread among the Armenians; there are watchmakers, jewelers, blacksmiths, shoemakers, carpenters, tailors, eiderdown makers [feather comforters], pharmacists, etc. in insignificant numbers [compared with merchants and traders].¹⁵

This general perception of the Armenians might have been correct, if one takes into consideration that the still-fledgling Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaktsutun) gave Smyrna the code name *Voskehank*, that is Gold Mine, perhaps implying that much money could be obtained, on a more or less voluntary basis, from the local Armenian population. If members of the ARF shared the cliché about Smyrna, they drew very practical conclusions from this perception. Ransoming and blackmailing wealthy Smyrna Armenians was a more efficient means to get funds than waiting for voluntary generous gifts

¹³ CAMS, Ionia 5, Karatash, interviewer: Sophia Goraniti; informant: Markos Attalias; topic: Geography and topography, Dec. 11, 1965.

¹⁴ CAMS, Ionia 3, Goztepe, interviewer: Zoi Kyritsopoulou; informant: Heleni Ampatzoglou; topic: Houses, on July 16, 1970.

¹⁵ Eprikian, *Patkerazard bnashkharhik bararan*, p. 797.

to the radical organization, as French diplomatic archives extensively document (though confusing the two parties Hnchak and Dashnak).¹⁶

But such uniform pictures do not fairly reflect the disparity of social status between well-established local families and the Armenian newcomers, often bachelors from inner Anatolia, coming for seasonal work at first, a phenomenon known as *gurbet* in Turkish or *bandukht* in Armenian.¹⁷ Unfortunately, the presence of a low-income migrant Armenian population in Smyrna was a rather unrewarding topic for the Armenian publications of the time. Information is not plentiful about the less brilliant aspects of the Armenian presence in Smyrna.

The mental distance between Greek Orthodox and Armenians could go so far as preventing the Greek inhabitants from sympathizing with their Armenian neighbors in periods of danger for the Armenians throughout the empire, outside of privileged Smyrna, as in the massacres of 1894-96. The Armenian national cause attracted no sympathy in retrospect. The nationalist movements of other groups were seen as potential disturbances to the social order, the Ottoman status quo. The reader of the following lines can perceive the legitimacy that the Ottoman social and political order enjoyed among the sultan's Christian subjects. It would be a gross mistake to imagine the Christians fighting simultaneously and in solidarity for the dismemberment of the empire. Statements made by a former Greek Orthodox inhabitant of Bunarbashi, for example, reveal a different picture:

The Armenian massacres did not sadden us. We were not afraid. We had our consulate that was supporting us. They were a people with no organization. They were massacred like lambs, but they, too, were responsible. They rebelled every once in a while. They were abroad. Didn't they know what would happen to them?¹⁸

¹⁶ Archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, New Series, Turkey 67, folio № 164, dispatch of August 7, 1902, of the French Consul General at Smyrna, Pierre Blanc, to the Ambassador of the French Republic at Constantinople, H.E. M. Constans.

¹⁷ Hervé Georgelin, "Armenians in Late Ottoman Rural Cappadocia" in Richard G. Hovannisian, ed., *Armenian Caesaria and Asia Minor* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, forthcoming).

¹⁸ CAMS, Ionia 27, Bunarbashe (Pinarbashe), interviewer: Chara Lioudaki; informant: Kostis Lamprinoudis; topic: History, Echoes of major events, March 22, 1965.

The Armenian language, both a cause and an effect of the mental barriers between the groups, was very rarely spoken by non-Armenians in Smyrna.¹⁹ Some children of non-Armenian neighbors could learn some Armenian in order to play with Armenian friends. A Jewish woman from Smyrna whom I interviewed in Paris before she passed away, remembered a little Armenian, counting from one to ten, which she had learned before 1922. But nothing else either in the social or in the economic life of the city would have supported the learning of a language, which was considered in Smyrna as minor and with no practical use, a situation experienced by many groups in similar situations.²⁰ With this last argument, it may be seen that cosmopolitanism is no anarchic social process and that not all components of a multiple society have the same role in the resulting balance.

Being Symbolically Part of the West

The second side of Smyrna's cosmopolitanism was actually the only one of which inhabitants of Smyrna were proud. It was the result of the Western influence on the economy of the port city and the Ottoman Empire as a whole. Most non-Muslims as well as some few Muslims tried hard to copy the Western world, most especially France, which they imagined and certainly idealized, and of which they wanted to be a part. French was the legitimate language of official contact within the upper classes. It was the first so-called foreign language to be learned as early as primary school, be it Armenian or Greek. A good command of the French language was the yardstick to measure the quality of a person's educational level, especially in influential circles in the Ottoman administration or in the business spheres. Further proof of the importance of French could be seen with the development of the French language press in the nineteenth century, with journals such as *Le Courrier de Smyrne*, published by the Tatigian Publishing House, and *La Réforme*, edited by Stepan Voskanian (Sdepan Vosgan).

French inscriptions on shops and buildings throughout the city flourished. The Frankish or European quarter was used as a reference point in the urban identity of Smyrna. All these signs revealed the de-

¹⁹ It was the exact opposite in inner cities such as Marsovan/Marzvan/Merzifon, where Armenian was the predominant language.

²⁰ Gilbert Dalgalian, *Enfances multilingues: Témoignage pour une éducation bilingue et multilingue* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000).

sired visual Westernization of the city. An urban community, spanning to some extent across the ethno-religious *millet* boundaries, was formed by the common use of French, considered as the language of modernity. The importance of French was also evident in the social and leisure lifestyles of Smyrneans. For example, before World War I, French films made up more than 70 percent of the worldwide production. These films were available in Smyrna in movie theatres, such as Pathé, on the quay. The list of members of the Alliance Française in Smyrna shows that this cultural institution was almost entirely an Armenian-Greek and Levantine club. Muslim names on the roll are a rare exception.²¹ French became part of the local culture at least in non-Muslim circles, and Armenians played an active part in the scenery of "Petit Paris" of the Aegean.

Reactive Centripetal Forces

Despite the attraction of cosmopolitanism, special times, places, and institutions of Armenian collective life prevented Smyrna Armenians from complete absorption in the non-Armenian city. The legalization and development of social structures, especially in the so-called Armenian quarter of Smyrna, *Haynots*, as well as an ideological shift in the nineteenth century—that is, the evolvement of Armenian nationalism—reacted against the city's cosmopolitanism. Armenian scholars and journals, for instance *Arevelian Mamul*, in Smyrna but also others in Constantinople severely criticized the Smyranean way of life. Contacts with the outside world were connoted negatively, and Smyrna's Armenian community was always presented as a threatened one.²²

The Armenian language press and literature were the frontlines in the battle against the dangerous manifestations of cosmopolitanism, as exemplified by the large-scale exogamy of the local Armenian youth. The press presented the world as one that had to be centered on the Armenian community, or to be more precise, the *azg*.²³ Journals and mono-

²¹ The Alliance Française still exists. It is a worldwide network of French cultural centers.

²² Hervé Georgelin, "Être arménien dans une société plurielle: Le cas de la Smyrne ottomane tardive," in Michel Bruneau, Ioannis Hassiotis, Martine Hovanesian, and Claire Mouradian, eds., *Arméniens et Grecs en diaspora, approches comparatives: Actes du colloque, CNRS-EFA, Diasporas, 4-7 octobre 2001* (Athens: EFA, 2007), pp. 123-32.

²³ The term is difficult to translate. The word "nation" is only an approximation. In *azg*, there is the notion of kinship, rather than the contemporary Western political

graphs offered up a stereotyped successful Armenian social life, which supposedly was shared within the Armenian millet from birth and baptism, at least primary education, marriage, involvement in community life, such as membership in clubs and councils of various organizations. The *azgayin* life was formally organized, especially in Smyrna, from 1863 onward, thanks to the proclamation in Constantinople of the *Azgayin Sahmanadrutiun* or national codex regulating the structure and operations of the Armenian millet.²⁴ The community experienced a vivid development following the 1908 Young Turk revolution, once basic rights like freedom of association were guaranteed. For a brief time, at least, the local associations could then join empire-wide networks.²⁵

Assimilation to the West, through conversion to Roman Catholicism and exclusive use of French or Greek, was a pervasive process. This was more than an irrational fear. Catholic Armenians, descendants of emigrants from Nakhichevan, did not keep their language and mixed with the so-called Latin population. The Mekhitarist monastic order arrived in Smyrna only in 1840. In 1883, quite late indeed, an Armenian Catholic parish was founded in the city. Armenian Catholic newcomers benefited from the Mekhitarist and other institutions, but the old Catholic population had little interest in them. The Mekhitarist School was attended primarily by children of the Armenian Apostolic community.

The Armenian language among Armenians in Smyrna was always presented as endangered. In his history of Smyrna, Hakob Kosian lamented this situation:

One sees young Armenians who know how to write French or English but who are unable to articulate a word in their mother tongue. One even finds such people who call this process progress and civilization.²⁶

It is relevant to compare the fate of the Smyrna Armenians. The same phenomena of soft but decided differentiation were taking place simultaneously among other groups in Smyrna. The *Alliance Israélite*

understanding of "nation" as a working link of belonging to a polity. The same lexical root is present in the word *azgakan* for "relative." The Greek Orthodox *millet* experienced the same situation as long as it described itself as the *genos*, a word close to *syngenis*, but which was replaced in contemporary usage by *ethnos*.

²⁴ The Ottoman Turkish wording is: *Nizamnamei milleti ermeniyan*.

²⁵ S. Amadian, "Izmiri hay gaghute" [The Armenian Colony of Smyrna], in Teotik, *Amenun taretsoytse* [Everyone's Almanac] (Constantinople: Nersessian, 1913), pp. 166-81.

²⁶ Kosian, *Hayk i Zmiurnia ev i shrjakays*, vol. 1, p. 36.

Universelle would hire an Armenian teacher, if need be, but tried to find a suitable Jewish teacher to replace her as soon as possible, no matter what the professional abilities of the Armenian were.²⁷ Moreover, this desired separation was simultaneous with the sharpening of nationalism in Europe, especially since the creation of the Italian and German nation states. These developments affected the ideological climate in the Ottoman Empire. In a cosmopolitan city like Smyrna, it had major consequences, for instance by creating a depreciated self-image of this in-between world.

Cosmopolitan Armenians did not fit into the desired national patterns. This assumption is based on the published documents of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, which developed activities in Smyrna (Voskehank)²⁸ and put the Armenian community in Smyrna in danger by plotting violent action against European as well as Ottoman buildings in 1905. The attacks were part of a larger plan to force the European powers to intervene in favor of effective reforms to safeguard Armenian life and property.²⁹ The operation did not in fact take place because the plot was discovered due to poor planning and preparation.³⁰ The official Armenian community—notables, members of the neighborhood (*taghakan*) council, those close to the prelate (*arach-nord*), that is persons empowered by the national statutes or *Nizam-name* and with whom the French consul was likely to have contacts—expressed dismay about these acts and appeared as betrayed by those who seemed prone to sacrifice their fellow Armenians:

The peaceful Armenian population of our city is in disarray. If the Turkish element is not numerous enough to commit serious retaliations against them, if they have nothing to fear from the most peaceful

²⁷ Archives of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, file LXXXIV-E, Izmir, letter of M. Nabon, Head of the Schools of the Alliance Israélite Universelle at Smyrna to the Head of the Alliance Israélite in Paris, № 1478/3, Jan. 18, 1919: "Mrs. Nabon has hired as a replacement an Armenian woman, who graduated at Blois [France], through lack of being an Israelite."

²⁸ Hrach Dasnabedian [Tasnapetian], ed., *Niuter H.H. Dashnaktsutian patmutian hamar* [Materials for the History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation], vol. 1 (Beirut: ARF, 1984), p. 7.

²⁹ Mkrtich Tokajian, "Tsutsakan gortsuneutian (verhishoumner antsialen)" [Demonstrative Actions (Remembrances from the Past)], *Hairenik Amsagir* 38 (Sept. 1960): 72-84.

³⁰ Hervé Georgelin, *La fin de Smyrne: Du cosmopolitisme aux nationalismes* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2005), pp. 157-67, "Les Arméniens entre légitimisme et nationalisme."

Greek majority of the population, they seem to be seriously afraid of zealous excesses by the police against them. The number and swiftness of arrests already effected seemingly show that these fears are justified.³¹

Pre-Diaspora Dimension of Armenian Life in Smyrna

The Armenian community of Smyrna was noteworthy because, although it was located outside any historical Armenian territory, it developed flourishing activities in the economic and cultural spheres. This community was one of the best examples of the dispersion of Armenian life which had already taken place within the Ottoman Empire. Despite the distance, the community was by no means isolated. Postings of local Armenian educational or other cultural institutions would interest even Armenians in Constantinople. One article has made reference to a job offer that Hayganush Mark and her husband Vahan Toshigian, two Constantinople intellectuals, received from the Smyrna-based publications, *Arshaloys* and *Artsakank*—both founded by local man-of-letters Madteos Mamurian,³² which they accepted for some time.³³ The community regularly welcomed Armenian newcomers from the inner Ottoman lands seeking economic opportunities as well as personal safety, especially after the Hamidian massacres of the 1890s. The suffering of the Armenian population in the interior provinces was a matter of concern and evoked collective action to rescue orphans and ensure their coming to Smyrna and receiving an adequate education.

Despite the then-contemporary discourse of Armenian writers and journalists about the identity loss of Smyrna Armenians because of rapid Westernization or Graecization, the local community was still able to produce a healthy amount of literature and publish highly re-

³¹ Archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, New Series, Turkey 68, folio № 3, dispatch of Aug. 14, 1905, № 12, "Discovery of an Armenian Plot in Smyrna" by French Consul General at Smyrna, Pierre Blanc, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Paris.

³² Petros Simonian, *Hushamatian, Haykakan Zmiurnian* [Memorial Volume of Armenian Smyrna] (Paris: Union des compatriotes arméniens de Smyrne et des environs, 1936). See also in the same, a short biography, p. 37: "Matteos Mamurian, 1830-1901" p. 37. Claire Mouradian has kindly provided a photocopy of this book.

³³ Robert Hadejian, "Hushatetr: Patker me 1907 tvakani Izmirin" [Book of Remembrance: A Picture from Izmir in 1907], *Haratch*, Paris (May 19, 2006), first published in *Marmara* (Istanbul, 2006).

garded newspapers and periodicals until 1922.³⁴ Smyrna Armenians distinguished themselves in the first half of the nineteenth century as translators of Western, mostly French but not exclusively, literary texts. In this respect, they were forerunners of the Constantinople-based cultural explosion of the second half of the century.³⁵ The Dedeyan Publishing House is to be cited in this context as a major institution. How perceptible was this Armenian cultural fecundity to non-Armenians? The language barriers hid parts of the Armenian reality from non-Armenians. Translations from Armenian into other languages spoken in Smyrna were probably rare. To some extent, Armenians were already invisible to outsiders, because of their successful adaptation to the dominant French and Greek cultural patterns. They could function though as active cultural ferments only as long as they published in languages other than Armenian.

The conflict between ideological schemes and the social reality of the cosmopolitan city gives a first taste of the situation which Armenian survivors and refugees faced in foreign countries after 1915 and definitively after 1922. Adaptation to a predominantly non-Armenian environment was a prerequisite for all, but especially for men, living in Smyrna. Smyrna was both a place of acculturation and modernization for Western Armenians.

In the aftermath of World War I, Armenians in Smyrna became increasingly informed about the radical destruction of the Western Armenian world. The newly-founded Caucasian Armenian Republic could not attract Armenians from the Aegean, but Armenians in Smyrna felt sympathy for the fledgling state. The Republic's tricolor flag flew above the Armenian cathedral, and in September 1920, former Prime Minister Alexandre Khatissian arrived in Smyrna during a tour of diasporan Armenian communities to raise funds for the Armenian state. He was "convinced that there, too, the Armenian colony was full of affection toward independent Armenia."³⁶ Perhaps Khatissian meant that he was able raise much money for the struggling

³⁴ Aspet Manjikian, *Zmiurnahay mamule, XIX daru keseren minchev hamaynkin anshkatsume* [The Smyrna Armenian Press: From the Mid-19th Century to the Eclipse of the Community], *Haratch*, Paris (July 6-8, 2006), first published in *Aztag* (Beirut, 2006). The article is for the most part a compilation of information to be found in previous monographs quoted in this text.

³⁵ Vahé Oshagan, "L'École des traducteurs Arméniens de Smyrne au XIX^e siècle," *Haigazian Armenological Review* 4 (Beirut: Haigazian College, 1973): 199-216.

³⁶ Alexandre Khatissian, *Naissance et développement de la République d'Arménie* (Athens: Publications arméniennes, 1989), p. 213.

Republic, despite the enormous difficulties of the Smyrna community, which was involved in humanitarian efforts to assist surviving deportees who were returning to Asia Minor from the Syrian deserts.

The Armenian community of Smyrna was subjected to "special treatment" by the Kemalist army that captured the city in 1922.³⁷ Jews and to a large extent Europeans and Muslims were spared. The only Armenian surviving community of the Ottoman Empire, apart from that of Constantinople, was systematically destroyed at that time. The almanac *Amenun taretsoytse*, which had transferred from Constantinople to Paris, deplored the end of the second Western Armenian cultural capital.³⁸ Even authors more sympathetic to the Greeks confirm the testimonies of Armenian inhabitants of Smyrna.³⁹ The conquest of the city by the Turkish Nationalist forces signified completion of the genocidal scheme, held in abeyance by Rahmi Bey, the forward-thinking and prudent *vali* (governor) of Smyrna, during World War I.

In conclusion, it may be stated that the Armenian community in Smyrna experienced an ambiguous situation, much like that of the contemporary Diaspora. It adapted to the life of Smyrna, being both familiar with the local dominant cultures and playing an active part in the intense Westernization of the city. On the other hand, it developed elaborate Armenian institutions and a discourse extolling the *azg* and urging less personal intermingling with other ethnic and religious groups. But Armenian Smyrna, which survived the 1915 Genocide, had received only a deferral. The existence of the Haynots quarter and of Armenian neighbors was no longer acceptable to the victorious Turkish Nationalists. The vibrant Armenian life of the Smyrna was methodically extinguished in September 1922.

³⁷ Hervé Georgelin, "Smyrne 1922: Le nationalisme turc met fin à la présence arménienne et grecque en Asie mineure occidentale," *Aventures et Dossiers secrets de l'histoire*, No 61 (Nov. 2005): 20-33.

³⁸ Teodik, *Amenun taretsoytse*, vol. 17 (Paris: Turabian, 1924), p. 148.

³⁹ René Puaux, *Les derniers jours de Smyrne* (Paris: n.p., 1922), p. 10; cf. Hovakim Uregian and Krikor Baghdjian, "Two Unpublished Accounts of the Holocaust of Smyrna, September 1922," *Armenian Review* 35:4 (1982): 362-89.