

PATMEH TESNENK¹ : CONVERSATIONS IN THE FIELD

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What is important for Armenians to «remember», to «keep», to «change»? While church and secular leaders speak and write of an ideal Armenian, people in their own homes speak of changes and flexibility. They also frequently compare themselves and their habits to the other peoples around them, noting ways in which different diaspora communities borrow from their host cultures, whether Greek, Turkish, British, Arabic, Iranian or other. Speaking with Armenians in Cyprus and London I often heard explicit debate over what Armenian culture might be (or has been), whether it was possible for it to continue in diaspora, whether the collective, the nation, should be given priority over the individual and the family.

These conversations sometimes had a very familiar sound, and early in my fieldwork, after one young woman had analyzed her personal identity and then that of the community, I asked if she had been reading articles about theories of ethnicity or national identity. She hadn't, she said, nor had the many others whom I later heard discuss similar issues. Some of these ideas are absorbed through their analysis in the Armenian press as well as from related topics treated in other media, but many people suggested that it is living in diaspora which makes them conscious of different levels of identity and of the flux which surrounds them.

This study begins with conversations and anecdotes to give some context to the shaping and articulation of the ideas as I began to hear them. Recurrent themes are then drawn out and linked to the wider world of the other works and peoples. The themes which I noticed are not, of course, the only ones possible. They struck me, most of them many times over, from different directions and in various ways, as the framework of an invisible shared background for the group, conscious and unconscious, information, «truths», and attitudes which all share in varying degrees.

*Dzur nstink, shitak khosink*²

«How do you decide who to talk to?» many people asked. In fact relatively few meetings involved a prior decision on my part. My single «rule» was to keep as much variety of age, sex, politics, and occupation as possi-

ble in my scheduled meetings and otherwise allow one acquaintance to lead to another. At first these introductions were especially important as I spoke no Armenian and needed to know in advance whether and how well the person spoke English, or if I should bring someone to translate. Most people spoke at least some English, a large number extremely well, and many were fluent. As I gradually learned Armenian my confidence grew to the point where I thought I was ready to contact an unknown person by myself.

Someone had suggested I meet Mr. Boghos, an older man who made *basterma*³, very spicy, garlicky dried filet of beef, and *erishik*⁴, a spicy beef sausage also called *soujouk*⁵. Feeling very confident indeed I decided to look up his address and phone number instead of asking for help. Then a twinge of doubt... the telephone... speaking Armenian on the phone... Why not just stop by his shop and ask for an appointment? The address was right in the middle of town. Much easier... And Nvart said it was a great idea. I could buy some *erishkik* at the same time. She did not ask exactly where I was going.

So, I set off on a favorite walk⁶, through the municipal park, past the rows of tall date palms and colorful flowering trees, through the remnants of the Paphos Gate and along the narrow streets inside the wall of the old city. Walking slower and slower, I passed the right street number but no one was inside. The shop seemed to be full of textiles and fabrics. I glanced back and, of course, the men from the grocery store I'd just passed were now at their door, watching. I looked the other way and another merchant was watching too. What else was there to do? I went and asked, in English, if he knew Mr. Boghos.

«Yes...» he replied very slowly, looking over my shoulder. «There he is now.» He smiled.

One of the other three men was walking towards us, a lean, wiry older man. He looked at me with head cocked and asked something in Greek.

«Are you Mr. Boghos?» I ventured in Armenian.

«Yes!»

«I'd like to buy some *erishkik*, please,» I uttered out, happy to have a concrete reason to be there. But he looked bewildered. I went over it again,— it should be my Armenian. «Is this your shop?» I gestured towards the fabrics.

«Yes...»

«Um.... do you make *basterma*?» It still seemed possible somehow.

«No.»

I was running out of ideas now. «Someone told me...» But now I saw another head pop out of a shop further along and soon a familiar figure was running to the rescue.

Ared arrived and started talking in Armenian as fast as he was running. First to me. «Look! You are better off if you don't go into people's

shops while they are working! We'll arrange for you to come to the Club on Wednesday afternoon and you can talk to the men there and we'll talk about this,» and... so on.

All of this at 90 mph, but I got gist of it and agreed that it was a good idea. I would come on Wednesday, yes, thank you, «But just now I was trying to buy some *basterma*, actually, *erishik*... from Mr. Boghos...»

The two men looked at each other and Ared caught his breath. «*Eri-shkik?!*» Broad smiles suddenly from both. «Ok. Ok! I'll get it for you! How much do you want?» laughed Ared.

Now I didn't understand at all. «Where? Where will you get it?»

«Don't worry! I'll get it. How much?»

«No, no, please, don't trouble yourself! Don't worry about it! I'll get it. Just tell me...»

«No, it's too far. I'll go in my car!»

I was lost. Finally they explained that there was another man of the same name who did make *basterma* but who lived a couple of miles away! I sighed and surrendered Nvart's money and agreed to wait with the other Mr. Boghos while Ared drove off.

This day was not turning out exactly as I'd planned, and I wondered what I should have done differently as I followed Mr. Boghos into his shop. Thinking of Ared's words, I apologized for taking up his time. Perhaps I should wait outside? «No, no!» He pulled up a chair and ordered tea to be delivered from a near-by shop. He sat in the door and we tried to talk. He spoke no English and was very discouraged by my Armenian, but this changed a little as we struggled along. Fortunately he had already understood something about my work from what Ared said outside and thought it was a good idea.

«So, you will write a book about what life was like so that the young people do not forget!?»

«Well, yes... but I'm also interested in what the young people are doing...»

He carried on with his own train of thought, «Yes, what they're doing. It's terrible! They don't know Armenian!» He threw a meaningful glance around. «They're marrying foreigners, not listening to the older people! It's not the same anymore!»

I tried to join his train when it slowed down. «What do you think is most important for me to write down for the young people to remember?»

He thought a bit and looked out the door towards the sunny street, then turned back to me and began again, full of passion: «You must tell the young people that they *must* marry Armenians. Otherwise Armenians will disappear. Write that down!»

I was listening, watching him, waiting for the next part.

«Write *that* down!» He repeated. I was slow. He meant it literally.

«Write it down so you don't forget! Why are you holding a notebook?!» So I did. He leaned over looked at it. «What language are you writing in?»

I was embarrassed. «English...»

«Eh, you see?» He stared back out the door as if wishing Ared to return and save him now. He sighed and looked back eventually. «It's easier for you...»

«But what about here in Cyprus now?» I asked. «Why did you say the young people don't speak Armenian? They do...»

«They do now. But they will forget their Armenian eventually. This place is becoming more and more Greek, especially since 1974⁷. It is completely Greek, for us here. Look at me. I speak more Greek than Armenian. There's only Ared on this street. Otherwise all shopowners are Greek. My helper is a Greek. It's become easier for me to speak Greek...»

Ared flew to the door with the *erishkik*. «Don't forget Wednesday!» And Mr. Boghos by now almost seemed sorry that I was leaving and very kindly invited me back. «Monday afternoons aren't busy, you see...» I wandered back home feeling properly chastised but, at the same time, happy to have chanced on a new and interesting acquaintance, impressed once again by spontaneous hospitality and the patience of the people I meet.

In a chance meeting themes were expounded which were already sounding very familiar. Concern over intermarriage, and often I found that unmarried people were most strident on this subject, loss of language, and assimilation. There was general fear of the Armenian people drifting off into obscurity. At the same time, certain values and habits continued — hospitality, interest in each other's (and my) affairs, willingness to drop work at hand and do a favor, entertain, talk.

On Wednesday, after lunch and siesta time, I did venture to the Club as invited. Several men came to greet me and show me a seat in the middle of the room where a number of chairs were gathered. «Ah! *Bari yekar!*»⁸ Others were already in the back room playing *tric trac*⁹ or cards and across the patio in the opposite building a few other men and women had gathered to plan future club events.

Speaking in a mixture of English and Armenian, we chatted and others joined us. The men first discussed how many Armenians were still in Cyprus. The estimates varied widely but in the end a consensus was reached and we agreed on between 1700 and 1800. «The main thing though is the political uncertainty,» said one. And the others agreed. «The trend of the youth is to find their fortunes elsewhere — not just the Armenians, I mean — but the Greeks too and probably the Turks, but we don't know about them... There are plenty of scholarships and many go to England, or other places, and they get used to the life there. They find a wife, they stay...» I looked around and realized that all the men present were around fifty or older.

Someone else added that the Cypriot Armenian community was like a witch's brew. «Everything is in it. The people are from everywhere and they are trying to extend their roots here. Look at me. Half of my family is in Hayastan¹⁰ and half are in America.» «Yes,» added his neighbor, «I'm from Kharpert, but my wife is from Adana, you see...?»

Mr. Shant, a tall, older man, leaned forward, finger raised. «Now, Kharpert¹¹ is a mispronunciation from our Turkish-speaking days. It should really be *Karpert*. Stone castle. But we have forgotten that.» He looked around and continued: «My family was also from Kharpert. When the troubles came to us in 1915, I became separated from my family — except for my small sister, my aunt, and my grandmother. We stayed together and began walking, wandering towards Hayastan. The others went south to Der Zor¹²... We were from Kharpert and we walked north, through the mountains and snow, to the Russian frontier. My auntie, she was a young girl herself, had taken an Armenian alphabet book with her and so, wherever we sat she opened that book and we learned Armenian.»

He paused and looked at us. «Doesn't a race of this character have a right to live in this world? She was thinking of the future. The book would last longer than a loaf of bread, I remember the pictures in the book, and learning to make the letter 'r'.»

While we were talking a young teacher from the Melkonian Institute, the Armenian secondary school in Nicosia, had been pacing back and forth behind us. Now he sat down beside me and said that Mr. Shant, across from us, used to be his own teacher at the Melkonian. The young man had come from Turkey and knew no Armenian when he arrived.

«Mr. Shant taught me my Armenian. Not just the language! But he taught me what it is to really be Armenian.» Looking at the dignified Mr. Shant, I thought I could imagine what he meant, but I wondered... I started to ask, but the young teacher was a step ahead.

«You must tell her the story that you told us when we were students. I can never forget it, it affected me so much. About Hayastan...

«Yes,» Mr. Shant knew which one he meant, «but it's not about Cyprus... I don't know if she wants to hear.»

«She must. Yes, tell it!»

He began slowly, quietly, and the other men leaned forward to listen. «When we arrived in Hayastan it was... unbelievable. The hunger, the poverty, you can't imagine it. And yet we were so happy to be there. But it was a terrible time for the people, so much starvation. We were taken to an orphanage and we were the fortunate ones. Even though there was no food.

«For dinner, say, two walnuts. Why walnuts? Because Hayastan is famous for its walnuts. They're easier to find than anything else. The rule was this. Of course, sometimes you break the nut and there is nothing inside

— it's rotten or old. If you break two walnuts and there's nothing in either, you take the empty shells to the teacher and get one more. If you're lucky, that's a good one. If not, bad luck... We were ten, eleven years old and my little sister was seven. Before the organization of schools, we found time to forage. We'd look for anything to eat. If you've noticed the almond trees after the rain, there's resin on the bark, for example. We would eat it with the bark. Anything to survive. We used to go to the fields. And there somebody found some sort of root, like a carrot but flesh-colored. He ate it... and he was satisfied for the moment but after a while, it all came out. It didn't make any difference. He ate it anyway and he told his friends to do the same. Under these circumstances, a child who has always been hungry, he never remembers a full stomach...

«A child wanders under the trees and looks for a walnut that the crows have dropped. Imagine, a child of seven or eight finding a walnut and breaking it up and seeing that it is excellent and keeping it clenched in her fist and taking it to her brother to share...»

Mr. Shant's voice trailed off and his own clenched fist was trembling. I looked up from my notes and saw that his face was suddenly wet with tears, silent ones, and they continued to flow. We looked at each other as everyone quietly shifted in their chairs. I wished I knew what to say. «Your sister... she was full of love... even though she was so hungry...» Anything sounded inadequate and stupid at this point but he graciously nodded. The others shifted again and murmured that those were indeed difficult times.

Mr. Shant collected himself and looked back down from the ceiling at Vrej. «Don't ever ask me to tell that story again in front of people.» Then to me, «I can never tell that story without crying... It says something about not just one person but about the Armenians as a race.»

«Everything is embedded in that story,» said Vrej.

On the way home I wondered about what was embedded in that story. This one, like others I had heard, combined depths of misery and deprivation with optimism and innocence, here expressed by the sister's love. Often someone would turn a story of total abjection into one which demonstrated the heroism of a family member or sometimes to make the point that certain Turks or Kurds did help Armenians to escape or survive. Hope was rarely far behind the despair that was still so deep. Sacrifice, for family or nation, was another frequent theme.

What else had come up that afternoon? Insecurity, physical and political. The «missing generation» as someone put it another day, the young people who went away to study and didn't come back. The importance of learning: the Armenian language, but also learning in general, which now frequently led to working abroad. Though mentioned only briefly, the idea of the «witch's brew» was a very strong one and often came up in gossip about what it was like when Armenians from all over Cilicia had settled

in Cyprus, in explaining why one woman cooked with onions and another with garlic, and so on. It had a counter-part in the constant discussions of the differences between Armenians in the various parts of the diaspora and in Hayastan.

Some young people felt it was very important that I hear as many stories of the massacres and deportations as possible. It was evident that for both survivors and their families, memories and perceptions of the massacres greatly colored attitudes to daily life in subtle and in more conscious ways¹³. At times members of the oldest generation would encourage and push each other to tell me the stories of their own deportations. In other instances, a spouse or friend would try to derail someone from «carrying on about it again.» «It's over, finished,» they would say.

It seemed that most young people had gained their most detailed information about the massacres from school, written accounts, history books or published memoirs, poetry recited, and more generally from posters, photographs, songs and lectures at school, clubs, and church. Many parents felt their children and grandchildren had not really wanted to hear, or felt they couldn't bring themselves to tell them of such horrific experiences.

I found that in our private conversations and interviews, men usually dwelt more on the adventurous aspects of this childhood experience, while women held back neither tears nor gruesome details. This changed in more public places where men could deliver a less personalized, more rhetorical account.

Mrs. Haiganoush had been a young child when her family was deported. Though she said, and it was clear, that the experiences of those years had made a powerful emotional impact on her and continued to bother her greatly, she had never told her own children the story. She wondered aloud whether anyone who had not been through such an ordeal could possibly appreciate not only the terror felt at the time, but the scars it left on one's psyche. Even so, she said, she had really wanted to tell them to her husband, but the time never seemed quite right. There was dinner to make, clothes to wash, getting the children ready for school, listening to *their* adventures, her husband's concerns, family plans — everything and anything. And why disturb them...?

But she herself remained disturbed, carrying these horrific memories alone. We spoke in London where she now lives with her family, and when she began, the words poured out, their rush unimpeded by the tears which flowed alongside. Here Mrs. Haiganoush described part of her family's journey from Kharpert.

Having walked three days, they sat at the river's edge, a branch of the Euphrates. A priest's wife, lying beside her, had been shot the night before and thrown in the river.

«It became morning. Everyone was sad, there were no men. (Earlier

the men in the caravan had been separated from the women and killed in Malatya.) Women and little children. What was going to happen? Were they going to throw us all in the water? What would happen? And you would see things in the water... Someone would say it was a man, someone would say something else. Horrible things. They said they were going to make us pass over to the other side of the river.

«They killed a few other boys. We had already stayed there quite a bit. They killed people not because they had to, but for the enjoyment of it. That was the worst part. In the morning, at the river edge, there was a boy of ten to twelve years old. This I will never, never be able to forget. He got up early in the morning to fetch water. You know there were those gourds which had a big belly and you could hollow it out, dry it, and it served as a jug. It was light. How could you carry something heavy around? He took it to get water. To wash, to drink, for his mother? Who knows. There was the sound of a gun. A gun was fired from above. Very simple, they had taken aim just to see if they could shoot somebody down or not. So that they could be sure.

«Another woman had gone to get water. That boy dropped the gourd from his hand and the water took it and it went away. And he stayed there like that, as if dazed, a small boy of just eleven or twelve. The woman who had gone for water shouted, «Whose boy is this? He's been shot!»

«They had taken aim from above and had already shot him in the foot. Of course all the people got up together and ran. The mother came, the poor woman. The brother. They came at once. The gendarmes came too and saw that he had been shot in the foot. They threw him in the water. *Aman Astvadzim!*¹⁴ You should see those people, frozen in place. Nobody said anything, nobody could speak. What would you say? They were pushing the little one into the water. The little one knew how to swim. He swam and came back, swimming. They pushed him back with a stick. They found a stick and beat him into the water so that the water would take him away. He swam back. This was such a horrible picture that they should make it into a film so that people could see what the Turks were like, that it wasn't just murder, it was — in the act of killing they were getting pleasure to see how they could kill.

«Then, finally, they pushed him and he was gone. The people gave a big sigh together. He was free, they thought. The boy had gone. Because they pushed him into the depths with that big stick. The sound of the people is still in my ears. Still... He must have been freed. How much could he be tortured? They thought he was gone. But — he came back again! Swimming, he came back. He came and they all went back. They also thought that he must have been finished, that is, that he was gone. All of a sudden he took his head out of the water and started swimming back. Maybe he was a villager. It seems he was a villager and he knew how to swim. They

must have lived near a river. He came and we could see that he had no strength left. Just like this, like an animal, his hands on the ground, he was looking at the people... «Help!!»

«...Did anyone...?»

Who was going to help? The mother ran. The brother ran. They (gendarmes) came, they came, and one of them hit the brother too. Then he immediately began bleeding. The mother forgot the first one and immediately wrapped her head-scarf around the second son so that the soldiers wouldn't see that he was wounded and throw him in the river too. At that place, in front of so many people, in front of the women, he took out a gun and emptied it into the ear of the child and threw him back in the water.

«This is, I mean, it's not a story. I saw it with my own eyes. And, though many years have passed, I was six years old, it's impossible to forget it. Impossible. Those who died, who were beaten, who were wounded.

We shuddered and sat quietly together until the vivid images started to fade. Mrs. Haiganoush began to apologize for «burdening» me with her troubles.

Not only her own generation but those which followed had to come to terms with the incredibility and horror of what was done. There is a popular notion that the generations can be characterized by different reactions, that is, 1) survivors: stunned, trying to rebuild their lives; 2) their children: ignoring parents worries, assimilating and building life in a new country; 3) grandchildren: interest, anger at injustice — desire to do something about it, but I found much more variety within generations than between them and considerable overlapping of these categories.

While Mrs. Haiganoush had not told her children her own story, other survivors felt a need to talk about their experiences. In London a woman in her late fifties, who had been raised in Cyprus, spoke of how she heard of the massacres.

«One day, when I was six or seven, my mother said «Armineh, sit down by me. I'm going to tell you a story». I was very excited and sat down, crossed my arms and waited with wide-open eyes and open mouth. «I'm going to tell you a story about a little girl — how she became a refugee, how she came to an orphanage, and so on,» she said. I said, «It's you, the little girl, isn't it!?» And it affected me very much — to this day.

«Father was a teacher and had collected Armenian orphans after the massacres and taken them to an orphanage in Alexandretta. Then to Port Said and then to Beirut where he married one of the orphans. At night we were so interested in the stories about their lives — the older people. There was nothing else to do, of course, but we loved them. We especially listened to my mother who was very forceful and vivacious and talked about her days at the orphanage and during the massacres.

When we came to Cyprus, people were semi-literate. Mother was edu-

cated compared to them and could read and write. And she would sing Gomidas¹⁵. We thought, as little kids, that we were really something special. The refugees spoke Turkish, but we spoke Armenian.

Mrs. Armineh felt very proud of mother's courage, but she also indicated the pride felt by families who spoke Armenian and were knowledgeable in Armenian matters, when most around them spoke Turkish and were relatively uneducated. This is a division which was not based entirely on wealth. Certainly teachers' families were neither well-off nor secure.

Mrs. Armineh became a teacher at the Melkonian-Ouzounian primary school, where most in the next generation first heard about the pogroms. Hratch, now in his late twenties, recounted how it had impressed him.

«This is one of the few things I *really* remember from primary school. Mrs. Heghineh was our teacher. She was *very* nice. We loved her. But one day she was telling us about the massacres and the deportations. All of these people killed, carried away, kidnapped. And she was telling us very sadly, very depressed... and I couldn't understand why she wasn't angry and shouting. 'No' she said. I couldn't believe this either. 'Why not?' She told us they couldn't. They didn't have any guns... and I think she really believed that then. That's what people were told and they believed it. But I was a little boy. It didn't make sense. I thought, why didn't they have hunting guns or knives or — anything? They could even have used sticks and stones! Why did they let the Turks do that to them?

«It made a big impression on me and those days, for a long time afterwards, I used to imagine myself back during that time and would hide behind a door with a *big* stick and wait for the first Turk to come along... Even after I stopped doing that I wondered about it for a long time...

«Now it's different. Now they are telling us that people *did* resist. Some people did fight back and I am very happy to hear that. It makes a difference to me.»

Hratch came out from behind the door and dropped his imaginary stick as his mother called from the other room for him to calm down, and not get so worked up. He remembered an appointment at the club and took off at high speed.

«Don't worry, Mum!» «I *do* worry and I don't understand,» she said as his car pulled away. «His father and I care about what happened — it's terrible, of course — but we never pushed it on any of our children. What's the point? What can anyone do about it? The big countries will do whatever they want. And Turkey is their friend. They will never even admit they did it. Why should anyone get so excited about it? Let him concentrate on his own life. It's almost time to start a family.»

When I passed by another house that week, Mrs. Araxi was sitting on a sofa with her two teenaged grand-daughters, surrounded by paper clip-

pings. Astghig was looking through poems her grandmother had saved for one to recite at the April 24 commemoration of the 1915 massacres the following week.

«It's *really* difficult... Look at this, it's so self-pitying! 'Why us, God? Even the flowers are better off.' I can't say something like that. That's what so many of them are like. And there are two other choices, I figure, out of what we've been looking at. It happened to us and now we must fight. I mean, we must work harder and try to build up our lives again. Or the other type — it happened and now look at us. Aren't we great?! I think I believe that we must work, I don't know... But we can't find just the right poem anyway...» She returned to the pile to see what her grandmother had found.

Hratch and others were busy organizing the commemoration at one of the youth clubs that year and invited me to attend. The walls of the staircase leading up to the club were lined with large plasticized photographs of atrocities during the deportations — piles of skulls, miserable, bony children, men hanging from scaffolds. Upstairs young people were beginning to gather, some arranging chairs and the podium, while others sweeping the floor.

A few middle-aged men and women (parents) were in the crowd but many more older men were gathered in the smaller adjoining rooms playing *tric trac* or cards. This disappointed some of the young people, but by the time the program began, there was no space in the room for the card players, as nearly one hundred mostly young people crowded onto the closely-packed small chairs. We arranged our knees and listened to an hour of songs, a short lecture, and recitations of poetry, including one by Siamanto¹⁶ selected by Astghig and her grandmother.

Briefly outlined, the poem¹⁷ described a small group of Armenians who, having escaped the deportations, were hiding in a dark cave. Outside Turks were looking for them and suddenly, a baby among them began to cry. Someone said, «We'll have to strangle that baby before it gives us all away!» The mother cried, «No, strangle me first and then the baby!» As the outside footsteps came closer, two hands came out of darkness and killed the baby. The soldiers passed by and in the morning they escaped. The last scene was that of the crazed mother wandering through a village. «I've killed my baby! Won't anyone strangle me?! I have no more strength to do it!»

Though impressed with Astghig's delivery, I was shocked as I listened to the words. I didn't see how it fitted with what she said she was looking for. But clearly the poem fitted with a popular theme of personal sacrifice for the greater common good. It was not accidental that in this poem and others the image of family ties being secondary to those of the nation was used to show the importance of being and remaining Armenian.

In fact there was nothing in the Armenian world more important, on a day-to-day level, than the bonds between parents and children and still, to a degree, extended family. For many young people the message of the massacre was a commission to do well in this world (for nation, family, self) to honor the memory of those who died.

In Cyprus another kind of sacrifice continued to be made several times a year in a combination of religious ritual and community celebration, killing sheep donated by members of the community, cooking and serving the meat to all who came. The ceremony was held at the church except for one which was traditionally held at Soorp Magar, a monastery in the Kyrenia Mountains, to honor that saint's name day. Following the division of the island in 1974, Soorp Magar was lost and this *madagh*¹⁸ was not held again until May 1983 when it was transferred to the grounds of the Melkonian Institute¹⁹ and the celebration revived.

In 1985 the *madagh* ceremonies I observed were short, held outside on the Melkonian grounds or in the church courtyard where the sheep were tied. The priests said a prayer and sang the service with deacons standing beside them, children usually standing in a line, staring at the sheep. The sheep and crowd of people²⁰ listened quietly as salt was blessed and put into the sheep's mouth. The ceremony ended very quickly and a professional butcher, waiting nearby, began his work.

As the Soorp Magar service ended a group of women in the Melkonian kitchen began cooking and preparing for the next day's feast, washing vegetables, and boiling chicken and wheat to make *heriseh*²¹. A huge cauldron was heated in readiness for the sheep and the large room filled with steam. Men came in and out, helping to carry pots, vegetables, and water. The cooks worked until late at night, returning early the next morning to finish their preparations by 12:00, when a large crowd was already sitting at tables set inside and out, around the club.

In November, while helping with the preparations of the *madagh* for the Nicosia church's name day, several people mentioned that they thought that in the past the feast of the *madagh* had been distributed to the poor and not shared among the whole community. During a visit the next week, Mrs. Alice, a Protestant, said that she and her neighbor, an Apostolic²², had been discussing the *madagh* and its meaning. The neighbor, Mrs. Zabelle, had told her that in the Sunday's sermon the priest explained that *madagh* custom was a carry-over from pagan times. In the Armenian Christian tradition it was changed to an offering by the rich to the poor, first blessed in a special service. Now it was a meal of fellowship for all. Mrs. Alice added that though all of this sounded good, she was still troubled by the idea of the lamb as «sacrifice». «Didn't Jesus say that he, himself, was the last sacrifice?»

Later the priest added: «It is a tradition in old societies. But, during the Christian era, Christ said. 'I'm not looking for sacrifices.' So, why do we do it, if Jesus says this? Because in the old days, you couldn't eradicate anything overnight. Today it is a way to take part in the religious activity of the church — the old *agape*²³ system of eating together. In the liturgy we mention the forgiveness of sins, blessings from God... Well, it is a hold-over from pagan times, but given a Christian aspect.»

Whereas some people wonder to each other about the specific meaning and even «correctness» of such an act, most (not all), including the priests, were content to accept it as a tradition which should be continued for the sake of the tradition — and, if necessary, re-explained in terms which make sense today. The combination of sacrifice and sense of community was a major part and grew in a somehow symbiotic way alongside its twin of display of wealth (or would-be wealth) and pride.

In 1986 the April 24 commemoration in London was a cooperative event, sponsored by the different clubs and organizations. Following the introductory remarks by a retired Melkonian teacher («Our cause, the Armenian Cause, is a holy one and it will persevere because of that.») and a dramatic recital of the poem of the baby in the cave, the main speech was given by an Armenian Iranian. The points were familiar.

«The most important thing is our Armenian language. Without it we don't have our songs, our poems, our literature. Without it we don't have Armenian culture. Armenian schools and families are also important, mothers who raise the children to speak and to be Armenian. The church and the clubs must also be supported. As we don't have a government, these are the institutions which in turn support us.»

The speaker concluded that the Armenian Cause was the return of the Armenians to their homeland. And the solution of the problem of the lands depended on the politicization of the Armenians.

A poem about Ararat, the holy mountain, was read by a young woman. Songs about Armenia were sung by a community choir. Finally the bishop rose to end the program.

«Ours is a history of blood spilled over 3,000 years. But we don't have a day of *mourning* in all our history. If we are the true descendants of those who were massacred, we must vow to keep our church, our language, and to work for the Armenian Cause. We have been a visionary and artistic race. April 24 must live on in the memory of our cherished dead. But we will work rather than mourn for them.»

Emerging Themes

The memories of the massacres and deportations of the early twentieth century are the most striking part of the Armenian «prior text»²⁴ or shared background. The subject is internalized, absorbed from family atti-

tudes and schooling. The external, organized reminders, such as the commemorative services, lectures, and events described above, interact with the internal aspect, sometimes irritating with their stridency, sometimes inspiring. Don and Lorna Miller, working with the survivors and their families in Los Angeles, observe that communal conversation revolves around these traumatic events, adding that when such stories «include moral contradictions, we may reject them because they paralyze and threaten us, or we may seek to correct our past in an effort to achieve personal wholeness and healing.»²⁵

Armenians speak of feeling a collective and an individual debt to the past. A feeling that the loss should not be forgotten and that those who have survived should somehow make up for it. This includes the notion of sacrifice for family and for nation. Frequently those who are most active in Armenian politics, education, or «cultural» affairs speak in terms of sacrificing their time and energy for the nation. Similarly, attending weekend classes in Armenian is very time-consuming for parents, children, and teachers, yet it is done in order to ensure that some part of the national heritage will continue. A sense of moral duty pervades many of the organized activities.

At the same time, life is to be enjoyed and lived to the fullest. Sacrifice is not necessarily monetary, and the well-dressed, stylish Armenian most visible to other ethnic groups in Nicosia or London is not obviously a person touched by the memories of deep personal and collective losses. Instead, their neighbors in Cyprus and England speak of Armenians as a group known for their hospitality and gregariousness, business acumen and shrewdness.

Both sacrifice and enjoyment of the moment relate to insecurity, a word frequently heard in conversations concerning the physical uncertainty of the future, but also explaining the psychological scars of the past created by the earlier deportations and by more recent losses in Cyprus during inter-communal conflicts. The barricades along the Green Line in Nicosia are constant reminders of the old homes which lay just beyond and also of the dangerous times when they were lost. But though there is a longing for the old neighborhood, there is also concern that current negotiations to reunite the island could lead eventually to more disturbances. Armenian Cypriots want to believe that a united Cyprus would remain a peaceful one but their own experience leads to great anxiety. People ask: «Will we be forced to move again? Should we move now to avoid losing everything?»

Concurrently, another kind of insecurity influences Armenians in Cyprus and more so in London: the question of assimilation, of losing the Armenian nation not through bloodshed but through *jermag chart*,²⁶ a general drift into the surrounding cultures. The question of intermarriage also enters here, perceived by many as the biggest threat to the nation and

more immediately, to the continuation of closely interwoven family ties. Phillips, working with Armenians in the Boston area, has described this combined fear of physical danger in some countries, assimilation in all, as the «root paradigm» for Armenians, «the endangered nation, endangered people,» a concept which informs their beliefs and actions as individuals and as communities.²⁷

Insecurity, both individual and communal, in turn encourages a sense of urgency and a need to achieve as much as possible while the opportunity is there. For many this takes the form of earning as much money as possible — to make up for what was lost and provide for future contingencies. Others push themselves, or their children, towards further education and various professions (also seen as ensuring mobility, if necessary). In this case, another problem emerges as higher education introduces the students to many job possibilities that the Cyprus community can not support and to a number of other interesting and attractive non-Armenian students at an age when many are beginning to think of marriage. Parents who encourage their children to achieve in education often find they develop interests and a circle of friends quite outside the community. This is also called sacrifice, putting the children's interests first, though sometimes children speak of sacrificing their own wishes for those of their parents, giving up the foreign girlfriend, choosing a job close to the family home.

In practice it is the rare person who puts nation above family. In many ways, nation does mean family and is often thought of, pictured in those terms, but on a day to day level, the needs of family life are first. Though both family and nation are spoken of in terms of duty and responsibility, informally it is only where nation overlaps with family in psychological terms that it is spoken of with similar affection. When people complain that there is a «missing generation» in Cyprus which skews community life and bodes ill for its future, they very frequently add that this includes a personal loss, a son or daughter (or more) who have moved away. Family is the axis of activity, the first priority in loyalty and in all practical terms.

Hospitality,²⁸ the constant visiting, keeping in touch, is a basic part of Armenian family life. It includes one of the most powerful, most discussed, but least acknowledged symbols of Armenian life, food. It is taken for granted and only really noticed when it is not there, as when students began arriving in London. Then especially, the smell of a good *pilaf*²⁹ or the taste of a crisp, sweet watermelon brings with it all the memories of home and other Armenians.

Food is not taken seriously as a symbol because the dishes are so similar to those eaten by the neighboring peoples and because hospitality is thought of as a Middle Eastern or Cypriot custom, not only Armenian. What is *particularly* Armenian is concern of the community leaders, teachers, politicians, and priests. Family and hospitality are important, they would agree,

but when it comes to passing on Armenian-ness to the next generations, this is not enough. The «witch's brew» mentioned earlier included a large variety of habits, customs, and dialects in the early part of this century. People's primary identity was with their extended family, village, or town.

This flux and diversity led to a conscious consolidation of themes and symbols throughout the diaspora to emphasize the unity and encourage the future of the Armenian people as a nation. Today three elements are presented as the cornerstones of Armenian culture and identity: history, language and church. They are portrayed as only nominally separate, sharing considerable overlap as major symbols of Armenian life, currently in danger themselves of being lost to the next, or at least to future generations.

Today the Armenian Cause, as it is called by some, the fate of the Armenians, as others refer to it, has taken on a sacred quality for many who are committed to working for it. For others this remains a poetic metaphor, but for them, moral fulfillment is found in working for the cause, for the organization and political parties.

Living in Diaspora

Often Armenians asked me, or each other while we were talking, if they really had a culture. This was nearly always a rhetorical question and the same person would answer. «Yes, but... We in Cyprus are watered-down versions of the real Armenian. And it's worse in England.» When people spoke of «traditional culture», I noticed, it was the vague but powerful and often idealized memory of the customs and habits of Armenians before dispersal and modernization. An important part of the current culture is the contrast it is felt to have with «traditional culture».

Culture is popularly understood as a certain conjunction of traits and customs and when these are seen to have changed, the culture is lost or in danger of being lost. Here I am defining culture as being a system of ideas and ways of communicating and behaving, a set of shared symbols and associations³⁰. Gellner notes that while culture is socially transmitted, societies are not necessarily nor wholly transmitted by culture³¹. Particular relations or sets of relations between people, like certain dominant traits or ideals, are transformed or even abandoned as physical, emotional and intellectual circumstances change.

At the same time, as Hirschon has observed, there is continuity in the core «values and perceptions which people hold about themselves and the world about them, the ways in which their relationships are organized» even through the most disruptive times.³² Continuity should not be confused with stagnation though, and culture is recognized to be in flux and always changing. How does culture change? Individuals make choices within the realm of possibilities known to them through the family, community, and

culture, which in turn work back on the culture (community and family), transforming it in the process. Cultures have many strands, including certain dominant ideals. These ideals or images of culture are not always carried out in practice and societies contain much individual variation.

This must, of course, be understood within the wider context of politico-social affairs of the host country, area, and world events. Given the crises which have disrupted Armenian communities in the past, it is tempting to see the cultural change as imposed, as a consequence of outside circumstances. This aspect is certainly not denied but, through the personal stories and ideas, it should be made clear that even within the most dramatic events, choices were being made from a complex assortment of possible alternatives, selecting one strand over another from the culture. As Harding points out in *Remaking Ibiaca* (1987), in many cases, choices are made with the hope that the traditional life and especially values might continue and prosper³³. People often cannot foresee that their decisions, for example those concerning their children's education, will irrevocably change the fabric of their own and community life.

Individuals choose, but choices have certain limits and the results are far from guaranteed. Ortner further clarifies the role of the individual actor in culture as one «who is 'loosely structured', who is prepared — but no more than that — to find most of his culture intelligible and meaningful but who does not necessarily find all parts of it equally meaningful in all times and places»³⁴. She adds that what is felt to be meaningful at one stage of one's life may be less so at another (and vice-versa). This becomes especially pertinent in diaspora as the actors are living in both their home and host cultures, and are often mobile, both physically and socially.

The differences between each level of identity within diaspora, community, ethnic group, and nation, are slim and can be viewed as variations on a theme of the group. But each has its particular resonance and individuals will find themselves more attached (and committed at times) to one than another, again depending on the situation and their own «prior text»³⁵.

A community is a group of people who share a certain geographical area, institutions, interests, and conversation. Markowitz³⁶ suggests that community is formed and held together by talk, while Hannerz, a characteristic shared in more formal ways by the ethnic group or nation. Here I use the word as Armenians do, to mean the local entity, whether belonging to a city or a country. Bakalian traces *gaghout*, community, from *gharipoutiune*, living as strangers, the root borrowed from the Turkish and Arabic word *gharib/garib*, stranger³⁷. Referring to the «wider Armenian community», linking these local bases, Armenians speak of the Armenian people or nation³⁸.

Bowman suggests that the Palestinian people occupy three «discrete locales» in diaspora, allowing and encouraging the development of different kinds of national identity. He cites Israel and the Occupied Territories; Middle Eastern Refugee Camps; and the bourgeois diaspora³⁹. The corresponding Armenian world would be Hayastan (formerly Soviet Armenia); the Middle East and Cyprus (lands inside or closest to the old homelands); and the rest, mostly Western diaspora. Though not entirely discrete, each area has its own distinct priority and variant of the shared culture and, as Bowman points out, ways of imagining the nation and thus the aims and methods of nationalism, differ widely between them⁴⁰.

«Ethnicity» is a more appropriate term to use in Western Diaspora, as Tololyan suggests⁴¹, while Armenians in the Near East, including Cyprus, probably view themselves and their connection to the rest of the diaspora and homeland, as a nation in exile. This has as much to do with the political organization of the host states, such as Cyprus or Lebanon, as with the physical closeness of the homeland. Both ethnic group and nation connect local people to other related communities, and with this shift in emphasis comes an increased interest in the more theoretical and more readily observable aspects of identity and away from the practical, every-day functioning of community. Ethnicity is more conscious — but less so than nationalism, a more politicized term which requires belief and a certain amount of dedication to it as a cause⁴².

Community, ethnic group, nation, and culture all involve the boundary marking and maintaining suggested by Barth⁴³ (1969). This also serves to mask, or draw attention away from, the many internal differences which in turn provide the fodder for cultural change, new forms of community life and views of ethnicity and nation. What makes an Armenian Armenian or a group of people an Armenian community? In both cases I am taking the self-ascriptive approach: those who consider themselves Armenian are Armenian. This then leaves the discussion of *how* Armenian someone is to nationalists. I am more interested in this study, in the many different ways of being Armenian that exist within a certain community.

I think of the Armenians as a long-standing «ethnos»⁴⁴ with shared characteristics and institutions, and also many differences, which has come to view itself as a nation in modern times. The time period covered here is just after the transition from «ethnos» to self-aware nation but, from the stories and memories described within, it should be clear that there was indeed considerable variety in traditional Armenian culture and a very concerted effort through education, the clergy, and popular literature, to create a modern Armenian nation⁴⁵.

Armenians do clearly see themselves as a group distinguishable from others in a number of important ways. Today this is believed to be due to a shared language, church, and history⁴⁶. Within that, history includes a

shared descent, traced through family ties and connections, but also through an assumption of ancestral ties to a much more ancient past. For most Armenians this is the myth and symbol complex which Smith describes as the underpinning of ethnic polity, stating that one must also look «at the mechanisms of their [myth and symbol] diffusion (or lack of it) through a given population and their transmission to future generations if one wishes to grasp the special character of ethnic identities»⁴⁷.

This transmission does not follow a smooth course. Fischer, looking at autobiographical works which focus on ethnicity, observes that ethnicity is dynamic. «It can be potent even when not consciously taught; it is something which institutionalized teaching easily makes chauvinistic, sterile, and superficial, something that emerges in full — often liberating — flower only through struggle»⁴⁸.

This struggle is most often a personal, relatively hidden one, but early in this research a related though very different kind of struggle was frequently in the news and in people's conversations and thoughts, that of armed Armenian «freedom fighters» or «terrorists». In her study of the London Armenian community Talai points out that the small group of activists sympathetic to the armed struggle received an «ambivalent response» from the larger community⁴⁹. As with other conscious aspects of ethnicity, their aggressive dedication to a specific cause had the ability to both inspire and repel, and soon after 1983 changes in international politics and groups' own intranecine warfare had left them splintered and relatively quiet.

Writing in the context of the Jewish experience, Kugelmass notes that the myth and stories which all cultures provide to make sense of the chaos of their experience are themselves «all subject to considerable dispute.»⁵⁰ Jews, like Armenians, disagree among themselves on interpretations and relative importance of the different components of the myth-symbol complex. One of these is the notion of homeland, where and what it is, how central is its importance, whether the myth of return is a sustaining dream or a practical, however eventual, reality.

In *After the Last Sky Said* illuminates a Palestinian perspective, asking questions which concern all peoples in diaspora.

«All of us speak of *awdah*, 'return', but do we mean that literally, or do we mean 'we must restore ourselves to ourselves'? The latter is a real point, I think, although I know many Palestinians who want their houses and their way of life back exactly. But is there any place that fits us, together with our accumulated memories and experiences? Do we exist? What proof do we have?

«...When did we become 'a people'? When did we stop being one? Or are we in the process of becoming one?»⁵¹

A people is always in the process of becoming. New ties and attachments are formed and re-formed at personal, communal, and national levels.

Living in diaspora includes a constant reconstruction of a sense of place where the past is woven into the present and a new territory, and the new space made meaningful. The space itself changes. What does it mean to be an Armenian Cypriot in the twentieth century? An Armenian Cypriot living in England? A British Armenian? Or what?

NOTES

1. *Patmeh tesnenk*. An Armenian expression, literally meaning «Let's see what you have to tell». Here it means «Come on, tell us!» «Patmeh tesnenk» is the second chapter of a Ph. D. dissertation which bears the title of **Faith in History: Armenian Rebuilding Community in Cyprus and London** [ed.].
2. «*Dzur nstink, shitak khosink*». An Armenian expression which literally means «Let's sit bent, but talk right». It means «Let's talk frankly» [ed.].
3. *Basterma* [*Pasterma*]. A Turkish word used in the Armenian colloquial of the Cilician Armenians. It is «a filet of beef covered with a thick mixture of cumin, salt, dried and powdered red and hot pepper, smashed garlick and tomato paste, and dried in a shadowy place. It is thinly sliced and eaten uncooked». In Armenian it is *apoukht* [ed.].
4. *Erishik*. A misnomer for the Armenian word *yershik* [ed.].
5. *Soujouk*. The Turkish appellation for *yershik* [ed.].
6. The walk took place in Nicosia, Cyprus.
7. In 1974 the Cypriot army rose in opposition against the Cyprus government demanding unification with Greece. The result was the beginning of troubles in Cyprus, whereupon the Turkish forces invaded the island and occupied forty percent of the land in the north of Cyprus. No international move was made to stop Turkey; just the opposite, the U.S. government backed it with almost every possible means [ed.].
8. *Bari Yekar*. In Armenian, «welcome».
9. *Tric trac*: backgammon.
10. Hayastan. Armenian SSR, now the Republic of Armenia.
11. *Kharpert*. Harput in modern Turkish, though some dialects of the region keep the sound *kh* of the old days and have it as *Kharput*.
12. *Der Zor*. Deir el-Zor, Zor or Deir in Arabic. A city in Syria, some 535 miles east of Aleppo. In 1915 the Turkish authorities decided it to be the slaughterhouse of some 200,000 Armenians sent there from all corners of the Ottoman Empire.
13. E. Donald and Lorna Touryan Miller, «Memory and identity across the generations: A case study of Armenian survivors and their progeny», **Qualitative Sociology**, vol. XIV, N° 1, 1991, pp. 13-38. See also «An oral history perspective in response to the Armenian Genocide», in Richard G. Hovhannisian [ed.], **Armenian Genocide in Perspective**, New Brunswick, 1986, *passim*.
14. *Aman Astvadz im*. Oh, my God!
15. Father Komitas [= Gomidas], born Soghomon Soghomonian, a priest, gathered and notated Armenian folksongs at the turn of the century. Apprehended and exiled in 1915, but released to return home in Constantinople where he could not recover from the mental shock he had in exile. Died in Paris, 1935, at the psychiatric hospital Villejuif.
16. *Siamanto* [= Adom Yardjanian], 1878-1915, the famous Armenian epic poet and the author of several books and compendiums of poetry. Apprehended on the 24 April 1915 by the Young Turk authorities in Constantinople, Turkey, with more than 400 other Armenian intellectuals, teachers and professors, political party leaders, traders and industrialists and Armenian national leaders and clergymen, was first deported to Ayash, a Turkish forlorn town in the interior, and then massacred in the June of 1915 [ed.].

17. The poem alluded to is one of the best known poems of Siamanto. It is the «Kheghdamah», The Strangled, for which see Siamanto, *Amboghchakan Gordzer* [Complete Works], vol. I, Boston, 1910, pp. 184-188 [ed.].
18. *Madagh*: Sacrifice.
19. Officially known as Melkonian Educational Institute. It was founded in 1924, in Nicosia, to serve the needs of an orphaned Armenian generation after the 1915-1920 massacres. It started as an orphanage-elementary school in 1926 and from next year on it grew up to a full-fledged high school. In 1940 it was officially recognized by the Cyprus government as a senior high school. See [Editorial Board], *Melkonian Kertakan Hastatutiune*, 60, *Hushamatian*, 1926-1986 [Melkonian Educational Institute, 60, Memorial Book, 1926-1986], Nicosia, [1986], [ed.].
20. By 1991 and 1992, the Soorp Magar ceremony was performed by one priest, no deacons, and attended by only two or three people. The feast, the following day was still shared by over 200.
21. *Heriseh* [= *Herisa*]. A savory stew of meat, decorticated wheat and butter.
22. An Apostolic. A member of the Armenian Apostolic National Church.
23. *Agape* means «love» or «love-feast» in Greek.
24. A. L. Becker and Aram A. Yengoyan [eds.], *The Imagination of Reality : Essays in Southeast Asian Coherence Systems*, New Jersey, 1979, *passim*.
25. Miller and Miller, pp. 35-36.
26. *Jermak Chart*. An Armenian expression literally meaning «White massacre». In fact it means a complete loss of national identity, by assimilation, intermarriage, loss of language, traditions, culture and religious belongingness.
27. Jenny King Phillips, *Symbol, Myths, and Rhetoric: The Politics of Culture in An Armenian-American Population*, a doctoral dissertation, Boston University, 1979, p.15. After Turner, Dudwick also deals with the subject in terms of the Karabagh Movement in Hayastan, see Nora Dudwick, «The Karabagh Movement: An old scenario gets rewritten», *The Armenian Review*, vol. XLII, N° 3 (167), Boston, 1989, p. 64.
28. Bakalian asked community leaders in the U.S. to suggest «typical» Armenian values. They listed «generosity and hospitality, hard work and industriousness; resourcefulness and ingenuity (*jarpikutiune*); filial respect and loyalty; parental sacrifice and keeping the goodname, honor and reputation of the family (*pateev*) by avoiding shame (*amot*)». See Anny P. Bakalian, *Armenian-Americans: From Being to Falling Armenian*, New Brunswick, 1993, p. 294.
29. *Pilaf*. Boiled rice with salt, roasted almond and butter, and at times some raisins [ed.].
30. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Culture*, New York, 1973, p. 89.
31. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford, 1983, p. 14. Cf. Ernest Gellner, *Plow, Sword and Book*, London, 1988, *passim*.
32. Renée Hirschon, *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe: The Social Life of Asia Minor Refugees in Piraeus*, Oxford, 1989, p. 14.
33. Susan F. Harding, *Remaking Ibiaca: Rural Life in Aragon Under Franco*, Chael Hill, 1984, p. 200.
34. Sherry B. Ortner, *High Religion: A Cultural and Political History of Sherpa Buddhism*, Princeton, 1989, p. 198.
35. Maxime Rodinson, *Cult, Ghetto and State: The Persistence of the Jewish Question*, London, 1983, p. 118.
36. Francine S. Markowitz, *A Community In spite of Itself: Soviet Emigrés in New York*, Washington, D.C., 1993, p. 247.
37. Bakalian, p. 145.
38. *Hay azg* (Armenian nation), *Hay zhoghovurd* (Armenian people) or *Hayoutiune* (Armenian people or Armenians) used to refer to Armenians generally, are more forceful terms than the simple *Hayer* (Armenians). These words can change their meaning and emphasis depending on the context.

39. Glenn Bowman, «Tales of the Lost Land: Palestinian identity and the formation of nationalist consciousness», in Erica Carter, James Donald, Judith Squires [eds.], **Space And Place: Theories of Identity and Location**, London, 1993, *passim*.
40. *Ibid.*
41. Khachig Tololyan, «The Role of the Armenian Apostolic Church in the Diaspora», **The Armenian Review**, vol. XLI, N° 1 (161), Boston, 1988, pp. 55-68.
42. Karl W. Deutsch, **Tides Among Nations**, New York, 1979, *passim*. Cf. John Armstrong, **Nations Before Nationalism**, Chapel Hill, 1982, *passim*.
43. Fredrik Barth, **Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Differences**, Boston, 1969, *passim*.
44. Anthony D. Smith, **Ethnic Origin of Nations**, Oxford, 1986, *passim*.
45. Deutsch, p. 29; Gellner, p. 49; Benedict Anderson, **Imagined Communities: Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism**, London, 1983, *passim*.
46. O'Grady and Phillips focus on this aspect of the Armenian life and Phillips states: «I have described a social system within which there is a strong sense of shared culture and history juxtaposed with the reality of intraethnic conflict and political fragmentation. In this sense, Armenian identity is not derived from a particular culture or history, but an active process of symbolization». See Phillips, p. 274. Cf. Ingrid O'Grady, **Ararat, Etchmiadzin and Haig (Nation, Church and Kin): A Study of the Symbol System of American-Armenians**, Doctoral dissertation, Catholic University, 1979.
47. Smith, p. 15.
48. Michael M. J. Fischer, «Ethnicity and the post-modern arts in memory», in James Clifford and George E. Marcus, [eds.], **Writing Culture**, Berkeley, 1986, p. 195.
49. Vered Amit Talai, **Armenians in London; The Management of Social Boundaries**, Manchester, 1989, p. 138.
50. Jack Kugelmass [ed.], «Introduction», **In Between Two Worlds: Ethnographic Essays on American Jewry**, Ithaca, 1988, p. 11.
51. Edward Said, **After the Last Sky**, New York, 1985, pp. 33-34.

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ՍՈՒՋԱՆ ՓԵԹԻ

(ԱՄՓՈՓՈՒՄ)

Հոս տրուող գրութիւնը երկրորդ հատուածն է աւելի ընդարձակ գործի մը, որ դոկտորական ատարտանաւուն է Տիկ. Սուգան Փեթի-Չիլինկիրեանին: Հատուածը կը ծանրանայ Հայկական Տասընհինգի ջարդերէն, ախորճներէն եւ սուրիական ու միջագետեան անապատներու մէջ թափառայածումներէն մագապուրծ, եւ նախ կիպրոս ու ապա, 1974-էն ետք, Լոնտոն ապաստանած հայու բեկորներու հոգեկան, հոգեբանական եւ իմացական տագնապներուն վրայ, որոնցմէ պիտի յառաջանար որոշ աշխարհահայեացք եւ ներքին մթնոլորտ անոնցմէ՝ այդ հայու բեկորներէն ներս: Գրութիւնը կը բաժնուի հիմնական երկու մասի, որոնցմէ առաջինով կը տրուին հեղինակին ունեցած կարգ մը հանդիպումներն ու գրոյցները թափառ ինկած հայերու եւ հայուհիներու հետ՝ մանաւանդ կիպրահայերու եւ նախկին կիպրահայերու: Գրութեան երկրորդ մասը գիտական մէկ վերլուծումն է այդ գրոյցներուն ետին գտնուող բեկորներուն ներքին աշխարհին եւ անոնցմէ յառաջացած այլազան հարցադրումներուն, որոնց հիմնականները կը մնան հայ ազգային կարգ մը ընկալումներ — հող եւ հայրենիք, կրօն եւ եկեղեցի, ազգ ու ազգութիւն, հայ եւ հայութիւն, հայկական կարգ մը առաքինութիւններ, լեզու եւ ազգապահպանում, ժողովուրդ, անհատ եւ ընտանիք, եւ տակաւին բազմաթիւ բաներ, որոնք կու գան կերտելու ազգ մը ժողովուրդէն կամ հաւաքականութենէն: Յօդուածին երկրորդ մասի աւարտին հարց կու տայ հեղինակը թէ «Ի՞նչ կը նշանակէ կիպրահայ ըլլալ քսաներորդ դարուն [ըլլալ] կիպրահայ մը որ Լոնտոն՞ կը բնակի, անգլիահա՞յ մը, թէ ի՞նչ»:

Հարցումին պատասխանը պիտի գայ խորունկ մէկ ընկալումէն Սուգան Փեթիի գրութեան:

