



*Judith Crispin*

# IN NOAH'S COUNTRY

*A Roadtrip through  
Post-Genocide Armenia*

WITH ESSAYS BY VICKEN BABKENIAN, ARMEN GAKAVIAN, DICKRAN KOUYMJIAN AND HAMLET PETROSYAN.

**The Destruction of Armenian Cultural Monuments:  
Its Significance for World Heritage Preservation**  
Dickran Kouymjian

Hamlet Petrosyan's essay elsewhere in this volume explains how Azeri destruction of Armenian monuments and the physical elimination of that minority population from the territory was fundamentally necessary to the rewriting, the inventing, of a new history for Azerbaijan, or a new myth about its origins and development. It needs to be emphasised that this recourse was not only facilitated by the Communistic and religious policies, which Azerbaijan translated early in its young statehood in 1918 (chronologically equivalent to its also young nationhood.) It is inspired by, if not copied from, a plan developed a few years earlier by Young Turk ideologists strongly influenced by late romantic intellectual ideas from Germany on creating homogenized racially pure nation-states, with one language, one ethnicity.<sup>1</sup>

**Methods of Destruction of Armenian Historical Monuments in Turkey<sup>2</sup>**

Once the Young Turk ideologists decided to rid the Armenian homeland of its native population, the logical consequence of this decision was to complete the Genocide by removing forever any association of the Armenian people with the territories on which there remained physical traces of their past. Thus, the name "Armenia" was completely dropped from all Turkish maps and documents. When "Armenia" inadvertently surfaced in textbooks or popular literature, like airline maps, the publications were confiscated and destroyed. The Turkish government has gone to great lengths to efface all traces of Armenian civilization on its historical lands.

In the late 1950s, Turkey, already a member of NATO, systematically changed the names of towns, villages, hamlets, and rural areas in the eastern provinces in order to eliminate any Armenian place-names but also to guarantee that, in the future, the centuries-old nomenclature familiar to Armenians and other minorities to be dispensed with would be forgotten. As Turkish historians continue to revise the past, newer generations of Armenians will be hard pressed to find the localities inhabited by their ancestors.<sup>3</sup> In all parts of the former Ottoman Empire under Turkish control, except Istanbul, which had a high tourist profile and an important Armenian community, destroying all Armenian cultural remains or depriving them of their distinguishing national features has persistently continued the Genocide. Armenian churches, as witnesses to national life, represented intolerable embodiments of the historic Armenian presence on these lands. Religious monuments of the victims are a great embarrassment to the perpetrators of genocide. The greater their number, the more difficult is the campaign of disinformation. For this reason, all Armenian monuments were and are threatened. In the past few years, in view of efforts to join the European Union and appease outspoken liberal elements within and outside Turkey, some authorities, often in what appears a haphazard manner, have rehabilitated or allow the conservation of certain monuments. The most important so rehabilitated or conserved are the tenth-century Church of the Holy Cross on the Island of Aght'amar, though it was converted into a museum rather than a house of worship; the excavation and partial restoration of the walls of the city of Ani, even most recently mentioning in part its Armenian identity on signs; and the total restoration of the Church of St. Kirakos in Diyarbakir, a local initiative with some Armenian financial support.<sup>4</sup> But these acts have not put an end to the continued confiscation of Armenian property. Neither has it stopped what was seized a hundred years ago from being used for new Turkish development rather than indemnity or the return pure and simple of such property to its rightful owners. The most recent sensational instance is the building by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of his new megalomaniac presidential residence, *Ak Seray* or White Palace, on Armenian lands taken by the Ataturk regime in early 1921, and the use of the family of exiled Ohannes Kasabian's estate in Ankara as the presidential residence until this year.

Below, the major ways are enumerated by which Armenian churches and other properties suffered, and still suffer, destruction, ruin, or neutralization .

*1) Wilful destruction by fire or explosives of churches, civil buildings, and homes during the period of the Genocide, 1915-1917.*

Nearly every Armenian region was affected. During the years 1915–23, some 1,000 Armenian churches and monasteries were levelled to the ground while nearly 700 other religious structures were half-destroyed. The city of Van is a good example. Four years after the Genocide the historic city was completely gone, except for a few ruins such as those of one Armenian church. Today, there is another city of Van located about two miles away from the historic one. It is a brand new and very large city—but it is not the old historic one where Armenians, Kurds, Greeks, and Turks lived together for centuries. Not far from Van, about an hour's drive away in the mountains, is Varag one of the 429 monasteries mentioned above—a place of pilgrimage because it preserved a fragment of the True Cross on which Christ was crucified. Parts of the seven churches and chapels of the complex still stand in an urban context, but it is privately owned by a Turkish family, sometimes open for tourist but lacking even a caretaker to prevent further vandalism.

*2) Deliberate post-genocide destruction of individual monuments by explosives or artillery.*

Near the Armenian Turkish border in a mountainous area is the small tenth to eleventh-century monastery of Khtskonk with five little round churches. It is located in a remote area where there is virtually no habitation. Much of the monastery was dynamited over the years and now only one of the churches remains. That solitary eleventh-century church was also dynamited pushing out all the walls, but the traditional inner concrete core, of which all Armenian churches were made, held the church up and it is still erect today but there is no way to tell how long it will remain standing.

*3) Destruction by wilful neglect and the encouragement of trespassing by peasants.*

It is well known that the finely cut stones used on the facades of Armenian churches make perfect prefabricated building material. Not far from the Turkish Armenian border is the church of Tekor/Digor built in the fifth century, which once contained the oldest Armenian lapidary inscriptions, dated around 480. It was abandoned in 1906 and struck by an earthquake soon after. Though in ruins, it was still massive and impressive. By the 1970s there was little left and during our visit of 1999, there were only fragments, chunks of masonry walls. When one visits the Armenian Church at Soradir near the Iranian border, a little village populated with Kurds, one sees how the villagers made use of the finely cut stones from the facades of Armenian churches for their houses and in walls; the same is true nearly the whole of modern habitations around the Monastery of St. John the Baptist at Mush. This is common practice all over the Armenian Highland.

*4) Conversion of Armenian churches into mosques, museums, prisons, sporting centres, granaries, stables, and farms.*

Villagers also use the same church of Soradir as a storehouse for feed or hay for their animals. At Kars, the largest city before you get to the Armenian frontier, there is the tenth-century Church of the Holy Apostles—one of the jewels of Armenian architecture. After the Genocide it was converted first into a museum open to visitors. It had display cases filled with liturgical objects from some of the Armenian churches in the area. Today, there is no museum. The building was converted into a mosque in 1999.

*5) Destruction by failure to provide minimal maintenance.*

All remaining Armenian churches in Turkey are endangered by this neglect. The two best examples are the Church of Aghtamar and the Cathedral of Ani. The Church of Aghtamar served as the headquarters of a Catholicos, one of three before the genocide, who was resident on the small island in Lake Van. From there he administered to all the Armenians around the lake where there were scores of villages and literally hundreds of churches. On the island there was not only the Church of

the Holy Cross but also the cells for the monks, a school or seminary, and a large resident population of mostly clergy. Today there's nothing left of that compound, just the church, which is itself unique in the Christian world. Built in 915-921 by the Armenian king Gagik Artzruni, its entire stone façade was carved in bas-relief with scenes from the Old Testament. It was a showpiece in the capital of his kingdom. Furthermore, unlike most Armenian churches the inside was entirely painted from floor to ceiling with frescoes of Gospel scenes. The church itself, because it is on an island, has not been damaged as much as other churches. Although in the 1950s and 60s it was used for artillery and gun practice when a Turkish battalion was stationed on the island. Even though the church has stood for more than a thousand years, the roof, made of volcanic tufa stone, had a whole strip missing for more than 25 years. Protests were made for years to the Turkish Department of Antiquities and other agencies of the Turkish government to do something about it before the dome falls in or rain and moisture totally destroy the remaining frescoes. There been a very problematic and hasty recent restoration as a propaganda piece, which is a museum for the large numbers of western tourists.

The Cathedral of Ani is the second example of failure to provide care. Ani was the medieval capital of Armenia and is located in Turkey right on the present border with Armenia. The cathedral was built in 989-1001 and uses structural devices that predated by a century and a half similar elements used in Gothic architecture in European—pointed arches, clustered columns, and emphasis on height. The cathedral had not been used for centuries and Ani had been abandoned as a city around 1500. For years Armenian authorities and individuals, mostly non-Armenian art historians, complained to the Turkish government to do something about the fissure in the northwestern corner of the cathedral. The dome had fallen in long ago, probably due to earthquakes, but the gap in the northwest corner may cause an entire wall to collapse. The Turks have done nothing to repair it even though their very active Department of Antiquities has been made aware of the problem and has repaired the wall fortifications. After the 1988 earthquake in Armenia a whole corner of the church fell down but the Turks totally ignored this while paying attention to other later Islamic constructions of Ani. Aghtamar and Ani, the two most important tourist attractions in all of Eastern Turkey, have received some attention in the past decade mostly because of the profit from ever increasing tourism to these structures built through the patronage of Armenian kings, and to show European Union countries that Turkey cares for minority monuments.

6) *Demolition for the construction of roads, bridges, or other public works.*

A good example of this is the eleventh century Church of the Holy Savior in Ani. It is sliced in half. Some local reports say it was struck by lightening, other accounts suggest it was half demolished to make way for a new road, but there is no where for a road to go at Ani. In any case, it was destroyed, the remaining half needs to be propped up if it is not to collapse. In Istanbul, Armenian cemeteries, schools, and church property have been demolished or damaged to make way for roads, bridges, and other public works.

7) *Neutralizing of a monument's Armenian identity by effacing its Armenian inscriptions or its crosses.*

Once you do this, you can call the monument anything. Who can tell? What does the average tourist know of the difference between Armenian or Seljuk Turk? Even in Istanbul, Armenian inscriptions have been erased from at least one important community building.

8) *The intentional reattribution of buildings, especially of monuments of touristic importance, to Turkish, usually medieval Seljuk, architecture.*

The most notorious examples are the tenth century churches of Aghtamar and Kars, which ironically were built well before the Seljuk Turks even entered history. At the cathedral of Kars, for example, one used to be able to read an inscription that said, "Apostle Church Cathedral, built by Abbas, the Bagratid Armenian King of Kars..." and included a beautiful statement with dates,

origin, etc. But nowhere is the word Armenian found on that tourist plaque today and when visitors read Abbas (a traditional Arabic name), they have no way of knowing that he was an Armenian.

9) *The insidious restoration of a site, not to what it was when Armenians built it, but to how it was transformed centuries later by Turkic or Turkoman conquerors.*

An example of this is at the city of Ani with its most impressive walls, among the most extraordinary medieval fortifications anywhere in the world. Probably because of tourism, Turkish archaeologists have started to rebuild these walls. Unfortunately, they are restoring them following their conception of how they should look, that is to say without any suggestion of their having been Armenian-Christian walls and without consulting non-Turkish authorities. For instance, one can see from photographs taken a few decades ago that parts of the walls had crosses worked in stone on them. Will these crosses be restored or ignored? Also, in restoring monuments in Ani, Turkish specialists choose to restore monuments not with their original Armenian design, but as they were altered by later Turkic and Mongol occupiers.

10) Finally, to the nine points enumerated in an earlier article,<sup>5</sup> another can be added:

*The mania for the search of supposedly buried Armenian gold in and around the foundations of churches using metal detectors.*

This practice, encouraged by the authorities, often leads to digging under the structure, causing its eventual collapse.

Today Turkey continues its genocidal policy by allowing this destruction while carrying on the pretence of being a model member of the international community through its subscription to various national treaties on the protection of minority rights and monuments. A partial list of such agreements signed by the Turkish government includes:

A. Articles 38 to 44 of the 1923 revised peace Treaty of Lausanne, which deal especially with the guarantee and protection of minority rights. Yet Turkey has consistently violated its provisions, as foreign observers have regularly reported. In Istanbul until 1998, repairs on existing Armenian structures required government permission, which was not always granted. Even today, though some permission is given, it is far from generalised. Rebuilding and expansion is not tolerated, and church and community property is often sequestered by invoking the right of eminent domain. In the past two decade the threat of taxation of minority churches and charitable institutions has been invoked. With such an attitude in Istanbul, the very visible and touristic former capital of Turkey, is it not naive to expect that monuments in the relatively deserted interior of Turkey will be cared for? And despite the highly publicised “reforms” that Turkey used as bait for a date to be admitted into the European Union, Armenian charitable foundations, despite the new reforms, are not allowed to inherit, or in some cases even own property as are equivalent Muslim charitable foundations.

B. Turkey subscribed and approved the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of the United Nations Charter recognising, among other points, minority cultural rights.

C. In 1965, Turkey signed the 1954 Treaty of The Hague on the Preservation of Cultural Monuments during the time of War.

D. On 7 January 1969 Turkey signed the International Treaty for the Preservation of Cultural Monuments, which includes clear provisions for the care and preservation of minority cultural buildings.

Many have suggested that UNESCO, with a vast section devoted exclusively to the preservation of historical monuments, should play an active role in the safeguarding of at least those edifices of recognised importance to the general history of art. But UNESCO cannot engage in conservation

unless the government ruling the area in which the monument stands invites it to intervene. Furthermore, many experts have cautioned about the possible adverse effect of UNESCO's overt concern with Armenian monuments. The *Minority Rights Report* on Armenia, while detailing Turkish violations of international covenants on minorities concludes:

We would like to see the Armenian monuments in eastern Turkey better cared for, although we would warn any Western government (or UNESCO) from pressing the Turks on this matter, a course of action which would only hasten the destruction of the monuments that remain.<sup>6</sup>

### **Protection of the Historical Monuments of Minorities <sup>7</sup>**

On November 16, 1972 the General Conference of UNESCO adopted its far-reaching "Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage." The Convention has now been ratified by 191 states.

The work carried out under UNESCO's World Heritage Convention in Venice, Abu Simbel, and Angkor is well known to everyone interested in the great monuments of world culture. Less known are the thousands of missions UNESCO has sent to each of the member countries working with their governments on professional programs of preservation and restoration of humanity's common cultural legacy. The UNESCO register of protected monuments grows yearly, as does its geographical outreach.

The young Republic of Armenia is proud to be part of the Convention. In 1996 the medieval monastic complexes of Haghpat and Sanahin, nestled high in the mountains, was placed on the register, and in 2000 the Monastery of Geghard and the Cathedral and Churches of Etchmiadzin and the site of the Church of Zvartnots.<sup>8</sup> As UNESCO's cultural rescue net spreads wider, so too does the public's understanding of the importance of these monuments to humanity's creative past. This in turn has raised the interest and appreciation of the world's inhabitants toward cultural monuments everywhere.

The General Conference of UNESCO has every reason to boast about the unqualified success of the Convention on World Culture. Yet, there is still a grey area that has not been directly or adequately addressed by UNESCO and the Convention, namely, the preservation of cultural monuments of minority populations. No where do the articles of UNESCO's Convention on World Culture address the question of the cultural property of a minority or property which once belonged, or in some cases legally still belongs, to the population of another state. No article directly forbids a member state from taking deliberate measures against cultural monuments in their own country, specifically those of minority or foreign cultures.

The 38 articles of the Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage are either ambiguous or contradictory on this point. The fifth paragraph of the preamble reads: "Considering that the existing conventions demonstrate the importance, for all peoples of the world, of safeguarding this unique and irreplaceable [cultural] property, to *whatever people* it may belong...." (emphasis added) This is a clear statement by the framers of the Convention that the cultural heritage of minorities was also to be protected.

Yet, the articles of the convention make clear that it is the "individual State Party to the Convention that identifies and delineates the different properties situated on its territories (Articles 3 and 4)." ... "The States Parties undertake to give their help if the States on whose territory it [a cultural monument] is situated so request (Art. 6/2)." This notion is reinforced in Article 11/3: "The inclusion of a property in the World Heritage List requires the consent of the State concerned," and Article 11/6: "Before refusing a request for inclusion the [World Heritage] Committee shall consult the State Party on whose territory the cultural or natural property in question is situated." Twice



more the Convention underlines that it is the State that is the initiator of a request for protection. "The World Heritage Committee shall receive requests for assistance by States Parties with respect to property situated in their territories (Art. 13/1)." Or again, "Any State Party to this Convention may request international assistance for property of outstanding universal value situated within its territory (Art. 19)."

Nowhere do the articles address the question of cultural property of a minority or which once belonged, and in some cases legally still belongs, to the population of another state. In this respect Article 6/3 is interesting: "Each State Party to this Convention undertakes not to take any deliberate measures which might damage the cultural and natural heritage situated on the territory of other States Parties to this Convention." Surely the reference is to times of war. But no article specifically asks each State Party not to take any deliberate measures against cultural monuments in its own territory, specifically those of minority or foreign cultures.

The question has been raised before, both at the General Conference and to auxiliary organization such as ICOMOS. It should be brought up again with the hope that a commission will be empowered by this body to investigate how clearer provision can be drawn up for the protection of the cultural heritage of minority populations.

Fortunately, we have many splendid examples of State Parties carefully protecting minority cultural property. In Germany, numerous Jewish synagogues have been restored and opened as museums, often in localities where Jews no longer reside. In Israel, both the Dome of the Rock and the Holy Sepulchre, among the most important monuments for Muslims and Christians, are jealously protected by a Jewish State. In the United States sacred American Indian burial grounds have been returned to their rightful owners and restored to their original state. The Armenian government invited Iranian authorities in the late 1990s to help restore the famous eighteenth century tiled Persian mosque, now a major tourist attraction in the centre of the capital Erevan and used a functioning house of worship for the large Iranian and Muslim population in the capital.

The Armenian Monastery of Haghpat, a World Heritage monument on the territory of the Republic of Armenia has already been mentioned. Yet, if one were to ask a specialist of medieval architecture to name the most important monuments of Armenian heritage, Haghpat would come after the earlier Church of Aght'amar and Ani, the capital of medieval Armenia, with its splendid tenth century cathedral. Both of these monuments are today in the Republic of Turkey. They need protection and care and should be on the World Heritage list.

Thus far, these and hundreds of other monuments of Armenian cultural heritage have been abandoned to the elements and the abuse of local villagers. A broad agreement is necessary to protect such orphaned monuments, an agreement sanctioned by the United Nations through UNESCO. Armenian cultural monuments are scattered in various parts of the world, from China and India to Europe, Africa and the Americas. This is not a unique case. Think of Greek and Roman cultural heritage scattered everywhere in the Mediterranean region, or of Chinese monuments throughout Asia, or Jewish monuments nearly everywhere in Europe. The General Conference needs take up the matter of minority monuments so that in the new millennium there will be a convention to protect and restore any monument, in the words of the Preamble, 'to whatever people it may belong.'

### **Denial and Destruction**

Shortly after such an appeal was made by the Armenian Republic in Paris, indeed already before it, in piecemeal fashion, one of the most remarkable monuments of Armenian culture was totally and wilfully destroyed with a daemonic determination to leave not a trace: the medieval graveyard with its 10,000 sculpted stone crosses at the abandoned city of Julfa on the Arax River—since 1923 part

of the newly created, now former, Autonomous Republic of Nakhichevan part of the Republic of Azerbaijan, but separated from it by a strip of Armenian land, one of Stalin's Machiavellian exploits in typical Communist fashion of divide and rule. But latent and aggressive chauvinism was turned loose with the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991, which had until then provided a strong controlling influence on inter-communal and inter-ethnic conflicts among Soviet republics. Fuelled by the aggressive Turkic ideology of its linguistic and ethnic cousins in the Turkish Republic, and the loss of a war against the indigenous Armenian population of another one of its Autonomous Republics, the Mountainous Karabagh or Artsakh as it is known in Armenian, Azerbaijani authorities took their revenge out on helpless and innocent monuments belonging to what they constructed to be the country's enemies.

In the last days of the Soviet Union during Mikael Gorbachov's more liberal policies, the parliament of the Karabagh voted to become independent of Azeri tutelage and be united with Armenia. The Azeri's retaliated with pogroms in Sumgaït, the industrial suburb of Baku and other cities with Armenian populations, and soon sent the army to occupy Karabagh with a long siege of the capital Stepanakert. The David and Goliath war dragged on, with Goliath not only driven out of Karabagh but also losing the surrounding provinces—including the tiny strip that separated it from Armenia. In May 1994, as Karabagh fighters reinforced by the Armenian army utterly routed the overwhelmingly larger and better equipped Azerbaijani Army and marched virtually unhindered toward Baku, the Azeri's sued for a ceasefire arranged by Russia. With no Armenians left in Baku, or elsewhere—and after destroying or converting all Armenian public buildings and churches—there remained little trace of the Armenian civilization that had flourished already for two millennia before the Tatars, as they were called until the twentieth century, trickled into the south Caucasus in the eleventh century.

What remained was the imposing cemetery with thousands of monolithic stones, nearly two meters in average height, inscribed and decorated in high relief.<sup>9</sup> The graveyard on the banks of the river that had made the ancient Armenian city of merchants and craftsmen rich and famous was itself destroyed and with it all surrounding Armenian towns and villages by the Safavid Shah of Persia in 1604-5 during the interminable wars against the Ottoman Sultans. The population was literally forced into exile in Persia; a few thousand from the hundreds of thousands who driven from their ancestral lands made it to Isfahan, the new capital, with the belated and self-serving benevolence of Shah Abbas, who wanted them to continue running his silk trade and through their craft skills help embellish his new seat of authority. They were given unused land on the other side of the river from Isfahan and allowed to found their own Christian Armenian city, which they quickly called New Julfa, and which ultimately supplied nearly all the important Armenian merchants controlling much of the international trade in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>10</sup>

In a few days in December 2005, the Azerbaijani army systematically toppled whatever cross-stones were still standing, in this cemetery, a barren and uninhabited backwater, which remained as hallowed, though abandoned, ground for four centuries. The stones were then pulverized with jackhammers, pickaxes, and sledgehammers, loaded onto large gravel trucks, hauled a few hundred meters to the banks of the Arax River and dumped into the river forever. But this was still not enough to cover the trace of the crime and its memorial victims—the whole area was asphalted over and made into a firing range for the army. This operation was partly photographed and filmed from the opposite Iranian bank. The material was quickly presented to UNESCO in Paris by various delegations and sent to the international press. A publication with a DVD of the operation was published and widely distributed.<sup>11</sup> But there was no general outrage, no major rebuke, but only a bending before the tyranny of petrodollars. In an act of cynical irony, UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage on 17 November 2010 inscribed the art of the Armenian cross-stone on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.



In the following year in another disorganized attempt to redeem its reputation as protestor of the world's culture it allowed a photographic exhibit of Armenian *khach* 'k'ars in its Paris headquarters inaugurated on 15 June 2011, but insisted that photographs of Azeri destruction be removed as well as photos of the now empty site of that largest of all cemeteries of *khach* 'k'ars.<sup>12</sup>

President Ilham Aliyev and his sycophantic nationalists insist, with enraged conviction, that there were never indigenous Armenians in any part of Azerbaijan—having learned their lines and methods of negationism from their Turkish cousins. The rewriting of history, this newly created narrative of Turkic presence from the beginning of time, is taught as the official history in the Turkish Republic's school system. This attitude has been encapsulated in a short segment from a long and eloquent article, which has just appeared in *The New Yorker* article quoted above:

As İsmet İnönü, the President of Turkey from 1938 to 1950, said, "Our duty is to make Turks out of all the non-Turks within the Turkish country, no matter what. We will cut out and throw away any element that will oppose Turks and Turkishness." The state cut away Armenians from its history. At the ruins of Ani, an ancient Armenian city ... there was no mention of who built or inhabited it. In Istanbul, no mention of who designed the Dolmabahçe Palace, once home to sultans. This policy of erasure was called "Turkification," and its reach extended to geography: my grandfather's birthplace, known since the days of Timur as Jabakhchour ("diffuse water"), was renamed Bingöl ("a thousand lakes"). By a law enacted in 1934, his surname, Khatchadourian ("given by the cross"), was changed to Özakdemir ("pure white iron").<sup>13</sup>

The refusal to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide in Turkey, and the cultural genocide in Azerbaijan and Turkey, has been in part driven by two major forces: 1. the creation of an ethnically pure Turkish nation-state by killing those who are considered undesirable or assimilating them, and 2. the fear of giving up the riches acquired by the seizure of their property and possessions. Will the centennial commemoration of the first massive crime against humanity in modern times in this fateful year 2015 inspire the Turkish authorities to accept the genocide committed by their direct ancestors and with the aid of other nations and international organization oriented toward the establishment of international justice and to provide the appropriate reparations to the descendants of the victims? Or will the base motives of the industrial-financial complex and power-politics continue to manipulate the people through tacitly supporting the perpetrator's sophisticate and well funded policy of negationism and denial?

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1 For a discussion of the process in last years of the Ottoman Empire under the Young Turk regime and in the first years of the new Turkish Republic, see Uğur Ümit Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia, 1913–1950*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

2 Much of the material in the following analysis has been published in various forms: Dickran Kouymjian, "Destruction des monuments historiques arméniens, poursuite de la politique de génocide," *Le Crime de Silence*, 295-310; idem, "La confiscation des biens et la destruction des monuments historiques comme manifestations du processus génocidaire," *L'Actualité du Génocide des Arméniens*, Paris, 1999, 213-224; idem, "When Does Genocide End? The Armenian Case," *The Armenian Weekly*, vol. 69, no. 15 (April 12, 2003), pp. 8-9.

3 In December 2014, the Turkish governor of Van province decided to revert to original place names, publishing lists of hundreds of changes of towns and villages.

4 The fascinating narrative of how this happened is recounted by the writer whose family was from the city, Raffi Khatchadourian, "A Century of Silence," [Letter from Turkey](#), *The New Yorker*, January 5, 2015.

5 Kouymjian, "[When Does Genocide End?](#)," pp. 8-9.

6 *Minority Rights Report*, no. 32, *Armenia* (London, 1976).

7 Much of the information below is contained in an unpublished position paper prepared by the author for the Foreign Minister of Armenia, Vartan Voskanian, who was scheduled to deliver a speech at the UNESCO Assembly in Paris in 1999. He was unable to attend because of tragic circumstances in Armenia, but his appointed delegate spoke to the issue.

8 <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/AM/> [visited 10 December 2014]

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- 9 On the cemetery and its history see: Jurgis Baltrušaitis and Dickran Kouymjian, “Julfa on the Arax and Its Funerary Monuments,” *Armenian Studies/Études arméniennes: In Memoriam Haïg Berbérian*, D. Kouymjian, ed. (Lisbon, 1986), 9-53; Argam Ayvazyan, *Julfa* (Julfa) (Erevan, 1984), with short summaries in Russian and English with 107 illus.; idem, *Naxijewani vimagrakan zarangut'iwne* (The Lithographic Inheritance of Nakhidjevan), vol. I, *Julfa* (Julfa) (Erevan, 2004), a corpus of 1,161 *khach'k'ar* inscriptions with line drawings and photos recorded before the vandalism of the site
  - 10 For full details and rich bibliography, Sebouh David Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa*, Isfahan, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).
  - 11 *Julfa. The Annihilation of the Armenian Cemetery by Nakhijevan's Azerbaijani Authorities*, Beirut, 2006; *The Destruction of Jugha and the Entire Armenian Cultural Heritage in Nakhijevan*, Bern, 2006.
  - 12 On 26 June 2011 *Le Monde* published a devastating reader's commentary on the exhibit (available online), by Haroutioun Khatchadourian, herein a short excerpt: “Quelques heures avant l'inauguration, des employés de l'Unesco ont retiré les légendes des photographies des Khatchkars, légendes qui précisaient leurs localités, ne laissant que les étiquettes comportant les dates. Ces mêmes employés ont aussi supprimé une carte historique indiquant l'emplacement des différents Khatchkars avec des explications détaillées. Il est vrai que cette carte empiète sur deux Etats voisins, la [Turquie](#) et l'[Azerbaïdjan](#), qui s'acharnent, depuis un siècle, à [supprimer](#) toutes traces d'Arméniens de la [mer Méditerranée](#) à la mer Caspienne. Aucun officiel n'était présent à l'inauguration et la direction ne fournit aucune explication. Par ailleurs les drapeaux de l'Unesco et celui de l'[Arménie](#) étaient retirés. Alors, pourquoi une telle attitude et quelles sont ces fameuses valeurs défendues par cette institution internationale ?”
  - 13 Khatchadourian, “A Century of Silence,” *The New Yorker*, January 5, 2015.