

# 1

## Introduction

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“Soviet Reports Major Unrest in Armenian Areas in South”

*New York Times*, February 24, 1988, p. A-1

“News Cut Off as Armenian Protests Continue”

*New York Times*, February 26, 1988, p. A-6

“Gorbachev Urges Armenians to End Nationalist Furor”

*New York Times*, February 27, 1988, p. A-1

“Soviet Reports a Major Oil Center in Azerbaijan Hit by Riots”

*New York Times*, March 1, 1988, p. A-1

“Soviet Said It Used Troops to Quell Riots”

*New York Times*, March 2, 1988, p. A-10

## Background

In February 1988, Nagorno-Karabagh rocked the Soviet Union.<sup>1</sup> The above headlines were typical of the global attention that focused on Armenian protests which had no precedent in scale and intensity since the early years of the Soviet Union. Continuous mass demonstrations, marches, vigils, and hunger strikes along with Azerbaijani repression, placed Nagorno-Karabagh, Armenia, and Azerbaijan center stage. Yet few people had ever heard of Nagorno-Karabagh, the small, 4400 sq km Soviet enclave then known as the Nagorno-Karabagh Autonomous Oblast. And less was known about the forces that were driving people into the plazas, squares and streets of Yerevan and Stepanakert, the respective capitals of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh, by the hundreds of thousands.

For a time, Nagorno-Karabagh continued to be front page news, and justifiably so. In rapid succession beginning on February 13, there was the resolution from the region's legislature, the Supreme Soviet, asking that the region be transferred from the Azerbaijan SSR to the Armenian SSR. This reflected the desires of the region's Armenian majority, a desire that had been thwarted in 1921 by the larger agendas of the early Bolsheviks.<sup>2</sup> Then came the massive marches and demonstrations in Stepanakert and Yerevan. The Yerevan protests brought together hundreds of thousands of people in a day and on several days, reportedly, close to a million people.<sup>3</sup> On February 26, Soviet head of state Mikhail Gorbachev tried to calm the situation by asking for a moratorium on demonstrations for a one month period after which he would announce a policy regarding Nagorno-Karabagh. The Armenians agreed to suspend their protests. Repression soon followed on February 27, 28 and 29 in the Azerbaijani industrial city of Sumgait where a vicious pogrom was carried out against the city's Armenian minority.<sup>4</sup>

As the weeks and months progressed, the scope of the challenge broadened and the crisis deepened, though media coverage became intermittent and reported only major dramatic events as they unfolded over the course of the spring, summer and autumn of 1988. In late March, Gorbachev announced that there could be no change in the status of Nagorno-Karabagh. In May, he expressed his displeasure at the continuation of general strikes and other protests by dismissing the first secretaries of the Armenian and Azerbaijani SSRs.<sup>5</sup> On July 5, Armenian protestors employed a sit-in and mass demonstration at the Zvartnots International Airport in Yerevan and briefly shut it down until dispersed by MVD security forces.<sup>6</sup> On July 18, the Supreme Soviet convened in Moscow to discuss the question of national minorities and shattered any lingering illusions that the central government would authorize a transfer of Nagorno-Karabagh to Armenia.<sup>7</sup> Throughout the fall Armenia and Azerbaijan (excluding Karabagh) began to force out their respective Azerbaijani and Armenian minorities.<sup>8</sup> The November 7 commemoration of the 71st anniversary of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution saw nearly one million Armenians turn out in Yerevan and jeer Communist leaders; at the end of the month, martial law was declared in Armenia.<sup>9</sup> On December 7, a terrible earthquake struck Armenia's second largest city Leninakan (now Gumri) and surrounding areas, killing between 25 000 and 100 000 people.<sup>10</sup>

Although Gorbachev cut short his visit to the United States at this time to rush back to Armenia; he, his reforms, the Soviet system and Communism, were thoroughly discredited in Armenia by his inability

to understand the centrality of the Karabagh issue for Armenians, and the refusal of the Party apparatus and the army to respond appropriately to the earthquake with cranes and other needed rescue equipment. A middle-aged man named Albert captured this for me in dramatic fashion on a warm sunny day in May 1989. He had survived the earthquake along with his wife, daughter, daughter-in-law, and two grandchildren, but his two adult sons had perished. Earlier in the day we had visited their grave sites and laid carnations. Later, as Albert drove us around what had been the downtown area of Leninakan, he pointed his finger to the rubble everywhere around us and said:

Look at what we have after seventy years of Communism. Nothing! What do we have to lose? Maybe it is time for us to go our own way, to start over.<sup>11</sup>

I had rarely heard such sentiments during the ten months I had lived in Armenia in 1986 and 1987, but they were commonplace by the spring of 1989. What had taken place over the course of a year and a half was a startling turnaround. In the initial Karabagh demonstrations, one saw frequent images of Gorbachev carried by protesters. While these images were to some protesters mere cynical/manipulative public expressions of loyalty to the Soviet system, for many they expressed not only loyalty but also representations of hope and belief in the power of the Gorbachev reforms. In other words, people believed it was possible that Gorbachev would undo historical injustice by reuniting Karabagh with Armenia. Soviet leaders dissipated that faith. The failure to punish the perpetrators of Sumgait, the refusal of Gorbachev in March and the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in July to transfer the territory, the repression at the airport, and the inability and refusal to respond adequately to the earthquake deeply alienated many Armenians from the Soviet system.

When he was faced with mass protest from the grassroots, Gorbachev was unable to satisfy demands or to respond with adequate alternatives. Instead the Soviet leadership insisted on a *status quo* that had been experienced as unjust for 70 years and was being openly declared unacceptable. Gorbachev not only raised expectations he was not prepared to meet, but he was remarkably lacking in inventiveness in exploring and implementing a third way that could have satisfied Armenian demands. His half-hearted concessions to the Armenians alienated Armenians and Azerbaijanis alike. Gorbachev's was the typical miscalculation of those accustomed to mastery – to solicit the views of subordinates when they think of openness and democracy at all and

to retain and employ the right of rejection of the responses from those below. In many instances the charges will simply keep their mouths shut or go away. In this case they did not. Protests escalated regionally and quickly throughout the Soviet system.

Emblematic of these swirling changes was the Karabagh Committee. The Committee emerged early on in the struggle, and initially had an evolving membership of nationalists and dissident intellectuals. It came to center on 11 men, mostly academicians, who were perceived as honest, nationalist, and unaffiliated with the Party apparatus.<sup>12</sup> The Committee represented the aspirations of the Armenian people in a program of democratization, anti-corruption, reunification of Karabagh, and environmental concerns focusing on the Medzamor nuclear power plant, the Nairit chemical complex, and the pollution and depletion of Lake Sevan. As Gorbachev's ratings and Communist Party fortunes plummeted during 1988, the Karabagh Committee rose to levels of national hero status. By the time of the Bolshevik Revolution commemoration in November, the Party apparatus was thoroughly discredited in the minds of most Armenians, and it was the Karabagh Committee that took charge of earthquake relief.<sup>13</sup> Gorbachev employed the cover provided by the tragedy to order the Committee arrested. The last Committee members were arrested in early January, and they spent months together in a Moscow prison. They were held without charge and released in late May without a trial. Their arrests backfired on Gorbachev and served to elevate the Committee members to even higher levels of national esteem. This strong popular base allowed the Committee to take an increasingly bold and independent course concluding in the vote for national independence and the election of Committee member Levon Ter-Petrossian as president of the independent Armenian republic.<sup>14</sup>

These developments not only had a profound effect on Armenia, but they impacted the Soviet Union as well. The first protests of the Gorbachev era were not in Armenia but in Alma Ata, Kazakhstan in December 1986. Unlike the Armenian protests, though, the Kazakh protests did not spread to other parts of the Soviet Union.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps the protests were too quickly extinguished by Soviet forces, the time was not right, or the Baltic and other republics in the western USSR were disinclined to take their cue from Central Asia. Karabagh was different. It was the cue awaited by all discontented Soviet citizens who wanted to see if *glasnost* was real. Soviet citizens had long been wary of state initiatives encouraging openness only to impose sanctions. There was precedence for this in Mao's 1957 Hundred Flowers campaign,

a free speech experiment wherein each flower was to represent an alternative voice. In actual practice, official encouragement served as a lure in a policy of government entrapment.<sup>16</sup> Such a possibility was not missed by people. Was *glasnost* real? How could people know? Who would take the first step?

Initially it was the Karabagh Armenians, followed right behind by those in the Armenian SSR. Events there made it clear that to a substantial degree *glasnost* was real as far as the central government was concerned. There were no disappearances of activists as in Argentina, nor their torture as in Brazil, nor government sponsored death squads as in El Salvador, nor severe police repression and mass deportations as in earlier Soviet history. In the language of Sovietologist Alexander Motyl, one did not need to be a martyr or fanatic to make one's voice heard.<sup>17</sup> To be a participant in urban demonstrations and general strikes, one had to be a person with grievances who was willing to face martial law, curfews, and perhaps tear gas and water cannon, but not torture, death, and Siberian exile.<sup>18</sup> Sumgait notwithstanding, that was the lesson drawn from events in Nagorno-Karabagh and Armenia. Before long the Baltic republics, Ukraine, Georgia, and Russia itself, and later other parts of the Soviet Union, including, eventually and to a more limited degree, Central Asia, were awash with mobilized and articulated grievances, that is, protest.

Gorbachev clearly underestimated the depth of discontent among Soviet nationalities, and he misjudged the impact of his reform program. In December 1991, he paid the price with the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Despite the fact that many current writers seem ignorant of the role played by Nagorno-Karabagh in that dissolution or choose to ignore it, it was the trigger that had begun the process in early 1988.

The importance of Karabagh as a social movement, Karabagh's impact on Armenia, the struggles of the Karabagh Armenians themselves, and the role of Karabagh in late Soviet history are all underscored by the lack of resolution of the conflict between Armenia and the Karabagh Armenians on the one hand and Azerbaijan, aided by Turkey, on the other. The two sides fought a bitter war between 1988 and 1994 for control of Karabagh. Since May 1994, a Russian brokered ceasefire has been in effect and largely held. However, without a permanent peace settlement, the unresolved Karabagh conflict contributes to the instability of the Caucasus region. The region itself is strategically located, and serves as a geographical center-point between Russia, and Iran and the Persian Gulf on the north-south axis, and Europe and Turkey and Central Asia on the east-west axis. There is a labor pool

and market of roughly 15 million people and various mineral resources, including Azerbaijani oil and natural gas deposits alleged by many experts to be large. Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, the region has been in turmoil – Chechnya, Nagorno-Karabagh, South Ossetia, Abkhazia – and this has denied the stability required for investment, development, and integration into the world economy. There are many interested players here, not all of the same mind. There are the Karabagh Armenians seeking security through *de jure* independence; Armenia seeking to aid Karabagh but also to end the crippling blockade of its economy by Turkey and Azerbaijan; Azerbaijanis, including refugees from Karabagh and surrounding areas, seeking the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan within its “internationally recognized” borders; Russia, Turkey, and Iran competing for regional hegemony; and the western states coveting Azerbaijani energy resources and the stability required for infrastructure investment by states and profit-making investment by multinational firms.

Whatever perspective one takes, and there is clearly more than one, the centrality of Nagorno-Karabagh in the southern Caucasus is not in doubt. It is appropriate, therefore, to consider, evaluate, and assess the Karabagh movement and its evolution in the dozen years since the 1988 protests. The chapters in this volume have been assembled with that objective in mind. In the remainder of this Introduction, I would like to address four issues.

First, I would like to consider what I call the establishment interpretation of the conflict over Nagorno-Karabagh.<sup>19</sup> I realize the term will evoke in the minds of some readers images of 1960s radicalism and social protest where the fabled “establishment” was targeted for mass protest. In my view, the term, if not its original nebulous usage, retains considerable utility in referring to the views that dominate in the foreign ministries of western states and in their academic and policy-making circles. The term assumes a transnational, globalizing, private and public sector interest bloc. Those in it are not necessarily of a single mind, nor is it the case that a certain amount of limited internal conflict and debate are absent. Nevertheless, there is a shared interest among top level corporate executives and board members along with government officials in the White House; State, Defense, and Treasury departments, and the national security agencies in employing diplomacy and selective force to gain favorable access to raw materials, labor and markets in other regions of the world. I call the worldview that emerges from this nexus of actors the establishment interpretation. It constitutes a central ideology that informs western diplomacy,

journalism, and peace mediation efforts, and serves to define the parameters of discussion on the resolution of problems. If one buys into the establishment interpretation, the independence of Nagorno-Karabagh or its union with Armenia become unreasonable ideas – particularistic, self-interested and banished to the margins of serious discussion. While academics and journalists seldom make their way to the top echelons of power, referred to in the sociological literature as the power elite or dominant class – Henry Kissinger is a notable exception – they do play a central role in articulating the policies that promote establishment objectives. I refer to this group of intellectual players as the establishment analysts and commentators.

There are people, organizations, and nation states, dissenting from the establishment interpretation of the Karabagh conflict. Their critique, in particular the Armenian critique, is the second topic I will address. The third is the history of Nagorno-Karabagh because it is little known and because it is contested. As we shall see later, policy makers, peace mediators, and academicians often respond to contested realities either by dismissing both sides, seeing the truth as being somewhere in the middle or creating yet some other interpretation. These are erroneous paths in the case of Nagorno-Karabagh. I shall demonstrate how and why this is the case. In the final section, I would like to present a brief summary of each chapter in the volume and its contribution to the whole.

## **The establishment interpretation**

Various western and regional governments and international mediation organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) have expended considerable resources in trying, thus far unsuccessfully, to negotiate a treaty resolution to the struggle over Nagorno-Karabagh. Although these efforts are publicly portrayed as objective and unbiased and in the best interests of all concerned, they are not necessarily perceived that way by the actual parties to the conflict, in this instance the Republics of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Nagorno-Karabagh. On occasion, a western analyst or commentator will bring the broader objectives out in the open. One of these is the establishment analyst and author of numerous books, Neil MacFarlane. He writes:

In its simplest sense, there is wide agreement in the West among both private and public actors on the agenda of political and

economic reform, the opening of the region to the international market, and sovereignty and regional stability. Most state and private actors would also embrace the objective of balancing Russia's influence in the region either for geopolitical reasons or because it would facilitate other elements of the agenda. The agenda involves no less than a substantial reordering of the domestic affairs and international relations of the southern NIS (newly independent states) to render them democratic, liberal, integrated participants in a western-dominated political and economic order. The devil is in the details.<sup>20</sup>

Edmund Herzig writes in a similar vein. No regional power, especially Russia and Iran, should be allowed to exert disproportionate power in the region, and there should be peace and stability so that investments in petroleum can be made in a secure environment and the oil can be safely shipped out. There are a number of reforms that are seen as promoting these objectives: supporting the independence of the three Caucasian states; working to achieve conflict resolution, always at the expense of the dissident movements including the Karabagh Armenians; encouraging political, economic and military reform which means privatization and economic integration into the nexus of transnational commerce and the institutions of democratic decision making, especially through political parties and elections; and treating energy and the pipelines as a positive sum game in which all interested parties will be able to achieve some gain. Herzig concludes:

If these objectives can be achieved, the region will be made secure from internal and external threats, and will become a friendly environment for the operations of western businesses.<sup>21</sup>

The approach of the establishment analysts and commentators very much reflect the establishment itself. That establishment consists of transnational corporate investors and the governments of western industrialized states. The objectives are externally generated by these public and private sector actors and imposed on the region. Various carrot and stick inducements, such as the promise of loans and other forms of assistance or their denial, are employed to nudge the regional actors along to compliance with the grander plan. In this interventionist framework, regional history and popular will are seen as impediments to success since they conflict with one another, often serve as the basis for conflict, present problems in reconciliation, and may lead



to unwelcome conclusions, for example, the Armenians have a very strong claim to Nagorno-Karabagh. The establishment approach is technocratic and the emphasis very much pragmatic. Do what works to get the job done is the order of the day – don't let history, culture, or local needs interfere. MacFarlane makes this explicit:

The fifteen republics of the former Soviet space exist in the territorial boundaries defined under Soviet rule, whether or not they make sense in ethno-geographical terms, or correspond to the aspirations of the people living in them.<sup>22</sup>

It is difficult to imagine a more transparent statement than MacFarlane's to make the point that the "more-knowing-than-thou" posture of the establishment analysts and commentators is hardly objective and unbiased. In fact, it is so deeply steeped in the assumptions of the priority of western political and commercial interests that some analysts and commentators make no effort to conceal it.

## Dissent

The views of the Karabagh Armenians and their supporters differ substantially from those of the establishment analysts and commentators on seven separate dimensions. I will examine each as appropriate. The areas of disagreement are (1) territorial integrity versus self-determination; (2) the appropriate role of history; (3) the origins of the conflict; (4) the role of oil; (5) the Armenian lobby; (6) the world view of people who have suffered genocide; and (7) the assumption that the developed world is democratic and fair. It will be argued that together the establishment view on these seven items constitutes a particularistic, agenda-driven ideology that masquerades as objective and unbiased. This summary argument will be made in the last subsection, "Postcolonial colonialism and the posture of objectivity".

### Territorial integrity versus self-determination

From the beginning of the Nagorno-Karabagh protests in 1988, there have been claims and counterclaims concerning the transferability or independence of Nagorno-Karabagh under the principles of Soviet and, later, international law. The establishment analysts and commentators consistently argue that while both the principles of self-determination (invoked by the Armenians) and territorial integrity (invoked by the Azerbaijanis) are established principles in international law, territorial

integrity takes precedence. Nagorno-Karabagh must, therefore, remain within the borders of Azerbaijan. The reasons behind this line of argument are not difficult to discern. Ethnic, racial, linguistic, and religious minorities are features of nearly all states, and partition by secessionist minorities is at least an implicit and unwelcome possibility for the leaders of such states. Consider the examples of the USA, Britain, Turkey, Iran, and Russia, five countries with interests in the Caucasus. Each faces threats of greater or lesser proportion from national minorities within its own borders, some of whom seek autonomy or even national independence – the USA from some African-American nationalists, Native Americans, and Puerto Rican separatists; Britain in Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales; Turkey and Iran from the Kurds; and Russia, catastrophically in Chechnya, and, in the future, very possibly elsewhere. An insistence on territorial integrity (Nagorno-Karabagh remains within Azerbaijan) contributes to the ideological repertoire of the USA, Britain, and the regional powers for the maintenance of their putative turf against the claims of their own minorities.

Edmund Herzig, a leading establishment analyst, prioritizes territorial integrity and self-determination in his discussion of separatist movements in the Caucasus – Nagorno-Karabagh, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia:

The constitutional dispute boils down to a secessionist emphasis on the principle of self-determination, and a Georgian and Azerbaijani insistence on the principle of territorial integrity. While both principles are firmly enshrined in international law and treaties, their interrelationship and appropriate criteria and forums for resolving their frequent clashes in real political situations remain elusive to consistent or theoretical or practical solution. The relative clarity of the notion of territorial integrity and its obvious importance for the maintenance of international stability contrast with the vagueness of self-determination. (What does it actually mean? The right to full statehood and sovereignty or to some more limited form of self-government? And who enjoys it? Does a small national minority constitute a “people” entitled to this right?) In practice most states and international organizations tend to prioritize territorial integrity – the final act of the 1975 Helsinki Conference, for instance, explicitly constrains respect for the right to self-determination with conformity with international principles and norms relating to territorial integrity. The inconsistency in the way these principles are understood and applied by the international community has engendered

confusion and cynicism towards international mediation among the parties to the conflicts.<sup>23</sup>

In common with much establishment writing on this issue, Herzig's statement contains the veneer though not the substance of reason. It is certainly true that there are ambiguities in international law, but there is no reason, other than its compatibility with Herzig's agenda, to argue for the "relative clarity" of territorial integrity versus the "vagueness" of self-determination. The following questions, if one were inclined to pose them, quickly diminish the "relative clarity" of territorial integrity claimed by Herzig and increase its "vagueness": What does territorial integrity actually mean? Is territorial integrity absolute? Should territorial integrity be maintained if borders are drawn in disregard of the wishes of the residents? What levels of internal oppression, persecution, and neglect should be tolerated before a nation can be said to have abrogated its right to territorial integrity?

The key to Herzig's views on this issue is found in his reference to territorial integrity's "obvious importance for the maintenance of international stability". This means that goods, services, energy, labor, and capital should flow freely without interruption between nations, regions, and continents. This is not a foremost concern of national minorities or in the case of the Karabagh Armenians, majority groups who have had oppressive political arrangements imposed upon them. It is a foremost concern of transnational corporations and western industrialized states. In fact, the diplomatic and military apparatus of the latter are in the service of creating and maintaining the political conditions that maximize such movement by preventing or removing any obstacles imposed by troublesome ideologies of the left (socialism, communism) and the right (Islamic fundamentalism, militant nationalism), recalcitrant leaders, and dissident social movements. Herzig and other establishment spokespersons frequently present particularistic logics as universal ones, which require national minorities not only to agree to live under oppressive political arrangements but to concede their reasonableness, even though such arrangements are consistent with the larger objectives of the western establishment and not their own.

A further duplicity, and a rather blatant one because it so directly furthers the agenda of existing states and transnational corporations, is found in Herzig's statement concerning the Helsinki Agreements. Herzig writes that the treaty "...explicitly constrains respect for the right to self-determination with conformity with international principles and norms relating to territorial integrity." If true, this would

make self-determination a principle secondary to territorial integrity. However, just as self-determination is qualified in the document as Herzig says it is, territorial integrity is also so qualified. In other words, there is nothing in the Helsinki Agreements that makes either principle primary over the other, and the document makes it clear that the invocation of either principle should not come at the expense of the other.<sup>24</sup> This is a rather different outcome than the one alleged by Herzig.

Herzig's last sentence also calls for comment: "The inconsistency in the way these principles are understood and applied by the international community has engendered confusion and cynicism towards international mediation among the parties to the conflicts." Indeed. The principles of international law on boundaries and peoples are often applied in a self-interested manner. African and Asian anti-colonial struggles after World War II were justified by appeals to self-determination. These same states now argue that the concept of self-determination ought to apply only to struggles against European colonialism.<sup>25</sup>

More important than these examples, because they originate with the nations which claim the moral high ground and the right to lead the way in upholding international law, are the inconsistencies of the western capitalist states themselves. President Woodrow Wilson, the "idealist" advocate of the self-determination of nations, demonstrated little regard for this principle in Mexico, Nicaragua, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. The later actions of such nations as Britain, France, and the USA in such places as Malaya, India, Kenya, Algeria, French Indo-China and the Belgian Congo, among others, indicates an unwillingness of colonial and neocolonial powers to abide by the principle of self-determination in the very context of anti-colonial struggles where the principle is today regarded by many as having the widest area of legitimacy. The contradictions are no less glaring when we consider contemporary events. The same international community that insists on the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan has an entirely different standard when it comes to states that are fully integrated into the global alliance. Thus the western capitalist states have allowed the Turkish occupation of northern Cyprus since 1974 and the Israeli occupations of the Syrian Golan Heights since 1967 and southern Lebanon from 1982 to 2000. These are examples of what linguist Noam Chomsky refers to as intentional ignorance in the face of inconvenient facts.<sup>26</sup> References to Turkish and Israeli occupations are conspicuously absent in the establishment literature. The major powers and their analysts and commentators prefer to ignore them while lecturing the Karabagh Armenians on the inadmissibility of self-determination. This

is despite the fact that the claim of the Karabagh Armenians to self-determination is stronger than many such claims in the 20th century and inferior to none. In such a context, cynicism among the Karabagh Armenians and their supporters is neither uninformed nor irrational.<sup>27</sup>

The arguments of the academic spokespersons for the western capitalist states highlight the flexible and self-interested manner in which these states deal with the tensions engendered by the principles of self-determination and territorial integrity. However, they do little to point the way toward a resolution of the Karabagh conflict. There can be no doubt that the issues of self-determination and territorial integrity raise some of the most difficult problems in international law. There is no simple resolution. Self-determination in the form of the creation of new states from the territories of existing states does challenge the principle of territorial integrity and must, therefore, meet the highest legal standard to be considered legitimate. The establishment analysts and commentators side step this option in favor of rejecting self-determination. The inadmissibility of self-determination, the position taken by the establishment analysts and commentators, effectively eliminates self-determination as a working legal principle by limiting its applicability to cases where both parties agree to separate, as in the case of the former Czechoslovakia. It is not unreasonable to ask, though, if both sides agree, what is the purpose of an international law? Law is specifically designed to address cases where there is disagreement between sides in conflict. In the case of Nagorno-Karabagh and other instances of the claim and rejection of self-determination by states and dissidents in conflict, there needs to be a serious examination of international law and its applicability to each case along with negotiation between the sides in conflict. But this is nowhere in evidence. What we have instead is (1) Azerbaijan's rejection of the Karabagh Armenians as parties to negotiation; (2) the acceptance of this rejection by the industrialized states of the West; and (3) rejection of the Karabagh Armenians' right to self-determination on the basis of self-interested arguments masquerading as universal principles, that is the alleged primacy of territorial integrity over self-determination.<sup>28</sup>

### **The appropriate role of history**

Establishment analysts and commentators treat history as an indecipherable minefield of claims and counterclaims. Considering archaeological accounts, one writer poses the question "...what makes some 'nationalist' and others more objective?" In his view, it is authorship. He suggests that the work of writers writing about a group they themselves

belong to ought to be dismissed.<sup>29</sup> Others present the claims of each side without any attempt to sort out the accuracies from the inaccuracies, the truths from the falsehoods.<sup>30</sup>

Edmund Herzig takes this a step further by labeling Armenian and Azerbaijani positions mythical. These myths, writes Herzig, originate in Soviet *samizdat* literature and what appear to the outsider to be innocuous scholarly or cultural works "...advanced nationalist claims that were transparent to their intended audiences."<sup>31</sup> The selective use of sources, tendentious interpretations and deliberate falsifications promoted the construction of myths, as did "...the relative insularity of the republics' official and dissident cultures, which were able to construct and reproduce historical myths without exposing them to external debate or criticism."<sup>32</sup> By virtue of his failure to assess the mutual claims of the Armenians and the Azerbaijanis, Herzig is able to dismiss both. This is one means by which he is able to claim the high ground for himself, and the right to make judgments on what is a fair and just resolution of the Karabagh conflict, namely that Karabagh stays within Azerbaijan, certain concessions are made to the Armenians, and the full integration of the Caucasus region into the global economy begins in an atmosphere of stability necessary for it to succeed.

I would argue that there is an alternative route to the one Herzig and other establishment analysts and commentators choose, a route less direct and more troublesome, though one consistent with the canons of scholarship and the scientific method. That would be to investigate the Armenian and Azerbaijani claims regarding Nagorno-Karabagh. There is census data and other types of archival material. The architectural remains of medieval Armenian settlements are there for the viewing. Neither the circumstances under which Nagorno-Karabagh was assigned to Azerbaijan in 1921 nor the condition of the Karabagh Armenians under Soviet rule nor the settlement policies of the Azerbaijani SSR in the enclave need be matters of mythology or speculation. They are matters of historical record for those who wish to conduct the necessary research. The problem is that the information is discordant. It reinforces the Armenian position Herzig and others prefer to dismiss as merely another mythology. To do otherwise would be to threaten the Western-Turkish alliance wherein Turkey insists on maximalist positions on matters of the Armenian Genocide and Nagorno-Karabagh. It is also thought to endanger access to Azerbaijani energy resources even though Azerbaijan can neither extract nor market them without reliance on the West.

### How did it start?

The armed conflict over Nagorno-Karabagh in the early and mid 1990s was a serious war, and under certain circumstances it is one that could break out again. Nearly all writers put the fatality figure in excess of 20000 and the number of refugees at over one million. One writer puts the number at 1.4 million – 850000 refugees and internally displaced persons in Azerbaijan (Azerbaijanis), 400000 refugees in Armenia (Armenians), and 100 000 refugees in Russia (Azerbaijanis and Armenians).<sup>33</sup>

Given the enormous level of human suffering, it might seem extraneous, even insensitive, to inquire as to how the conflict began. However, a consequence of not posing the question, as with the dismissal of history, is to place Armenian and Azerbaijani claims on the same plane. The argument being made here is that this leveling of history and responsibility erases the legitimate strengths of the Armenian position and provides legitimacy to the Azerbaijani position that would be belied by a closer examination.

Armenians raised the issue of Karabagh in a peaceful manner during 1987 and 1988. They employed time honored means of non-violent resistance including petitions, marches, vigils, hunger strikes, demonstrations, rallies and general strikes. These actions were met with extreme violence, first in the Azerbaijani industrial city of Sumgait in late February of 1988. For three days Azerbaijani mobs rampaged through Armenian districts looting, raping, and murdering Armenians. Approximately three dozen Armenians were killed although some sources claim a higher number of deaths. The manner in which the Armenians were killed is significant.

Avakian, Lola, daughter of Pavel, born 1961, living in Sumgait, Quarter 45, Building 10/13, Apartment 37. Attacked in her apartment on 29 February 1988, Lola Avakian was raped and then led nude through the street where she was forced to dance. She was stabbed with a knife, and her body had marks from cigarette burns. She was further mutilated and could only be identified by her little finger....

Melkoumian, Igor, son of Soghomon. Born 1967, living in Sumgait. Quarter 41A, Building 2B, Apartment 21. Second-and third degree burns over the entire body, carbon monoxide poisoning, contusions to the neck. After being beaten he was burned alive in the street. He was killed at the same time as his father, mother, brother and sister.<sup>34</sup>

The victims of these crimes are best seen as representatives of the Armenian people as a whole and not as individual Armenians. The killings of Armenians in Sumgait were, therefore, exemplary crimes and bear strong similarities to the lynching of African-Americans in the USA and the victims of other pogroms and genocides.<sup>35</sup> In all these cases, even though the victims were individuals, the purpose of the crimes was to intimidate the entire community of people to which the victims belonged. The victims were chosen for who they were, in this case Armenians, and not for anything they may have done. The killings were a response to the protests in Karabagh and Armenia that challenged the hierarchy of ethnic relations and threatened to alter the subordinated status of the Karabagh Armenians. Armenians could live peacefully in Azerbaijan so long as they never challenged their subordinated status. When Armenians challenged that status in Stepanakert and Yerevan, the Armenian people had to be taught a lesson.<sup>36</sup> Sumgait was designed to send the collective message that challenges would not be tolerated and that a stiff price would be exacted for them.<sup>37</sup>

The second round of pogroms took place in Baku beginning on January 13, 1990 and claimed over 50 Armenian victims. On the third day of attacks a state of emergency was declared. Soviet troops occupied the city on January 20, and 150 additional persons were killed, mostly Azerbaijanis, in the process of restoring order to the city.<sup>38</sup>

A third round of anti-Armenian violence began during the winter of 1990–91 and continued until the failed August coup that signaled the end of the Soviet Union. This program of ethnic cleansing was carried out in Karabagh itself and surrounding Armenian settlements to the northwest of the region. These intimidations, deportations and killings operated under the code name Operation Ring, and they differed from the previous instances in four ways. First, they were carried out in and around Karabagh itself and not in Azerbaijani cities with Armenian minorities. Second, the perpetrators were Russian and Azerbaijani military units and not incited mobs. Third, there was the deliberate intent of cleaning out Armenian areas, including Karabagh as a whole, of Armenians. The reigning slogan in the Politburo was “No Armenians, No Problem.” Finally, the Karabagh Armenians with assistance from Armenia organized a resistance that was effective in some instances.<sup>39</sup>

Operation Ring takes its name from its *modus operandi*. Soviet troops would surround targeted Armenian villages, this would be followed by Azerbaijani OMON or Black Beret forces entering the villages and forcing the Armenians to leave. Fortunately we are able to document these events through the reports of international human rights observers.



This description of events in the Armenian village of Getashen, to the northwest of Nagorno-Karabagh between Azerbaijan and Armenia was typical of what the observers found.

During the deportations, there were numerous civil rights violations of several types. People were killed singly or multiply. There were beatings, rapes, forced *abductions*, and imprisonment. Property and livestock were stolen or bought for an insulting price, such as a car for two roubles. Voluntary requests to leave were obtained at gunpoint. Ears of girls were torn by forcible removal of earrings. We found no evidence, in spite of diligent inquiry, that anyone recently deported from Getashen left it voluntarily.

Most of the witnesses told us that the beatings and killings were carried out by the Azerbaijani OMON (Azerbaijani Special Forces or “black beret units”). But the Soviet army organized the surrounding of the villages and taunted the villagers, “Why have you not left already?” Then they stood aside while the OMON terrorized the villagers. The villagers were left on the Armenian side of the border with only the clothes they were wearing.<sup>40</sup>

These events, like the earlier ones in Sumgait and Baku, were the context in which the self-determination movement of Karabagh was organized. As Azerbaijani attacks escalated and Karabagh forces began to receive assistance from Armenia and its diaspora, the Karabagh forces went on the offensive. In the desperate struggle that ensued, Azerbaijani forces employed long range artillery and GRAD missiles to destroy most of Stepanakert and to inflict heavy damage on surrounding Armenian villages. When the Armenian counteroffensive eventually succeeded, the retaliating Karabagh Armenians inflicted punishing damage on the retreating Azerbaijani forces and towns, like Aghdam, which are now essentially dynamited ruins.

It is the case that Armenians killed civilians in Khojalu four years after Sumgait, occupied and held 10 percent of the territory of Azerbaijan, and created hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijani refugees and internally displaced persons.<sup>41</sup> However, it was Operation Ring, Sumgait and Baku that escalated the conflict to the level of war. These events convinced the Karabagh Armenians that they had no future in Karabagh and could survive there only if they could successfully fight back to defend themselves. Once that conclusion was forced upon them, all of the consequences of war fell tragically into place.

These factors are concealed by western journalism and the establishment analysts and commentators. The exaggeration in the amount of Azerbaijani territory held by Armenian forces, the exaggeration in the number of Azerbaijani refugees, the failure to cite the existence and number of Armenian refugees, distortions in the history of Nagorno-Karabagh, the standing of self-determination in international law, and the use of individual case histories devoid of context all serve to shift the definition of the struggle for Nagorno-Karabagh from a legitimate struggle for self-determination to an illegitimate case of Armenian irredentism or yet another sad, inscrutable case of senseless ethnic bloodshed.

In a work published at the height of the fighting in 1993, Caroline Cox and John Eibner avoid the package of errors that mar much western writing on Nagorno-Karabagh. They note that the Karabagh Armenians have contributed to the toll of human death and suffering. On the basis of the evidence, however, they conclude that there has been a tremendous asymmetry of violence in the struggle for Nagorno-Karabagh, and the Karabagh-Armenians have been the principal victims. They cite Azerbaijan as the primary aggressor and give five reasons for this conclusion:

1. Azerbaijan and the Soviet 4th Army carried out the deportations of Armenians from Nagorno-Karabagh and the Shahumian District.
2. Azerbaijan imposed economic blockades on Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh.
3. Azerbaijan initiated the use of GRAD rocket launchers, which greatly escalated the level of civilian casualties and destroyed housing, hospitals, and other essential facilities.
4. Azerbaijan deployed 500 kg and cluster bombs against civilian populations.
5. Azerbaijan deployed missiles against civilian populations in Nagorno-Karabagh.<sup>42</sup>

### **Oil plays no role**

There is some debate as to how much oil and natural gas Azerbaijan possesses. Establishment analyst and commentator Ronald Suny offered this copious assessment: "One of the great underdeveloped oil reserves in the world lay under the Caspian Sea, and Azerbaijan stood to become a Caucasian Kuwait."<sup>43</sup> Azerbaijani ambassador to the US Hafiz Pashayev goes even further, claiming oil and natural gas reserves far in excess of anyone else's estimates including western oil companies and the US government.<sup>44</sup> Anatol Lieven edits *Strategic Comments* at the

International Institute for Strategic Studies and covered the Caucasus and Central Asia for *The Times* (London) in the early and mid 1990s. Lieven puts the oil resources at 2 percent of the world's reserves and says the fields have significant disadvantages that are likely to result in extraction, transport, and marketing costs that will run at three times the world average.<sup>45</sup> Others offer more sanguine assessments. The International Oil Agency says Azerbaijan "... could become a major oil supplier at the margin, much as the North Sea is today." The agency sees this as strengthening western security by diversifying sources.<sup>46</sup> Edmund Herzig thinks Azerbaijan is most likely to become a medium sized oil producing country. It is the last major unclaimed reserve, Baku offers attractive investment terms and the resource interfaces well with western strategic interests.<sup>47</sup> MacFarlane cites Jan Kalicki, special counselor to the US Department of Commerce and ombudsman for the Central Asia energy sector, who echoes common themes in the interested western public and private sectors:

We are interested in facilitating the development of this region's oil and gas resources, which will be especially critical to meeting the world's future energy demand and ensuring diversification of world oil supplies.<sup>48</sup>

The major disadvantage of the Caspian reserves is that there is no easy outlet to the sea. There has been much political jockeying back and forth to come up with a pipeline route or routes to be able to get the oil to market. Behind the scenes, Turkey vetoes a route through Armenia to the Mediterranean. Russia opposes the route favored by the USA and Turkey that would go through Georgia and Turkey to the Mediterranean; the longest and most expensive route, and disadvantageous to Azerbaijan because of the high transfer fees it would have to pay to Turkey.<sup>49</sup> The USA strongly opposes the cheapest and most direct route that would go through Iran to the Persian Gulf,<sup>50</sup> while the USA and Turkey oppose a Russian route. Azerbaijani President Gaidar Aliev has been skillful at playing his oil resources to gain the maximum political advantage for his country. Aliev probably overestimates the role of oil in determining a Karabagh settlement fully to his liking, yet the oil does provide him with a political resource that he has skillfully employed in three areas: (1) to strengthen his bargaining power with the West; (2) to gain a greater measure of independence from Russia; and (3) to employ oil as a lure for negotiating the most favorable Karabagh outcome. The second instance is freely admitted by western

analysts and commentators since they share the objective of weakening Russian influence, but it is denied in the first instance and, especially, in the third.

### **The Armenian lobby**

Writing on Nagorno-Karabagh contains references to an Armenian lobby that is said to influence US policy in Washington. It is implied that this is a large, influential lobby backed by a sizeable group of Armenian-Americans who employ their great wealth to pressure Washington decision makers. References are found in both the scholarly literature and the media to this lobby. In the media, the references are brief – “the Armenian lobby”, “a powerful Armenian lobby” – with the implication that this lobby backed by Armenian money is an effective tool in influencing US policy on Armenian issues. Academic references are often more detailed and sometimes, but not always, more tempered.

Anatol Lieven cites the Armenian-American lobby as the only group with any serious interest in the region and argues that in any future Karabagh war the US would not be free to back Turkey against Russia (and, by implication, Azerbaijan against Armenia) because of this lobby. Lieven, however, neglects the oil companies – historically one of the most influential lobbies in all of Washington and their interests in the nation’s capital. He also ignores the fact that Turkey, in a very real sense, does not need to lobby as such, given Turkey’s longstanding links with the USA through the NATO alliance and secondary ties.<sup>51</sup>

Similarly, Neil MacFarlane argues that US strategic interests in containing Russia and Iran and gaining access to Caspian energy are frustrated by the Armenians. He writes:

The development of such a policy has been substantially hampered by the existence in the U.S. of a very influential lobby committed to the cause of the Karabagh Armenians. The result has been incoherence. That American policy since 1995 has placed a higher priority than previously on relations with Azerbaijan is the result not so much of the assertion of strategic decision-making over domestic lobbying, but of the growing interest of another domestic lobby – the energy firms involved in Azerbaijan – and its capacity to balance the Armenian lobby. Although many see this as a battle to have been won to all intents and purposes by the energy companies, the continuing strength of the ethnic lobby was evident in 1998 in its capacity to kill efforts to repeal Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act.<sup>52</sup>

At the deeper end of fantasy we have Mohiaddin Mesbahi on the Armenian lobby and Elizabeth Fuller on the prevailing worldview in Azerbaijan itself. According to Mesbahi "...Turkey's historical friendship with the United States did not prevent Washington from taking a clearly pro-Armenian stand in the Azeri-Armenian conflict."<sup>53</sup> It is difficult to understand to what "a clearly pro-Armenian stand" refers. This is how Elizabeth Fuller describes Azerbaijan:

... the emerging national consciousness tends to be defensive, suspicious, and embittered – emotions that have been compounded over the past seven years by the conviction that the Azerbaijani people are the victim of an Armenian lobby that determines the attitude and policies adopted by the international community.<sup>54</sup>

References to a powerful Armenian lobby serve to portray Azerbaijan as a victim of well-funded and well-connected Armenian efforts to promote its case in the centers of power while deflecting attention from the much better established connections of Azerbaijan's ally, Turkey, as well as the resources and connections of Azerbaijan itself. Thus any resolution of the Karabagh conflict that might favor the Armenians, however slightly, is not on the basis of the strength of the Armenian case or the military victories of the Karabagh Armenians but because of a kind of conspiracy in which the Armenians always triumph over the victimized Azerbaijanis.

That the case for a powerful Armenian lobby is a misreading becomes apparent when we consider what the Armenian lobby has been able to accomplish. There is an Armenian-American lobby represented in Washington by the Armenian Assembly and the Armenian National Committee. The leading successes of this lobby have been to secure a high per capita level of humanitarian aid for Armenia and to pass Section 907 that prohibits aid to Azerbaijan until such time as Azerbaijan lifts its blockade of Armenia. Section 907 has been challenged and attempts to overturn it have been gaining more and more votes, especially after former high ranking US government officials have been hired as lobbyists for Baku. It is difficult for the Armenian-American lobby to compete with former Defense Secretary Richard Cheney, subsequently with Halliburton Energy Services, and now Vice-President of the USA, telling Congress that "Azerbaijan's very independence and survival are on the line."<sup>55</sup>

For over two decades Armenian-American organizations have been attempting to persuade Congress to pass a resolution commemorating

the victims of the 1915 Ottoman Turkish Genocide of the Armenian people.<sup>56</sup> For all of its alleged power, the Armenian lobby has never been successful in having such a resolution passed by both houses of Congress. These resolutions have been vigorously opposed by the Turkish government, the State Department, and every sitting US president, and the resolutions have been defeated year after year.

There are two critical points to be made about the Armenian lobby. Both are consistently absent from journalistic and academic accounts. First, although the Armenian lobby is not without influence, it is hardly the Washington juggernaut it is implied or said to be. We can highlight this point by listing what a truly potent, well funded Armenian lobby would have accomplished. The Armenian Genocide resolution would have passed long ago; second there would have been intense pressure on Turkey and Azerbaijan to lift their crippling blockades on Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh; third, Turkey would have been pressured to admit that a genocide was committed against the Armenians during the years 1915 to 1923; fourth, the US would have extended diplomatic recognition to Nagorno-Karabagh; and fifth the US would be actively employing its influence in international mediation circles to promote Nagorno-Karabagh's independence from Azerbaijan.

The Armenian lobby has a limited agenda tailored to the resources available to it. Within this context, the lobby has achieved some notable success; however, the lobby lacks the resources to move very far from its agenda into new areas. That would require a clear paradigm shift in US foreign policy toward the region. In such a paradigm shift, the USA would have to adopt Armenia as its favored regional ally. This would require the USA to reverse five decades of favoritism toward Turkey over powerful Turkish opposition. It is simply out of the question for the Armenian lobby, with its limited resources, to even consider such an expanded agenda.

The second and more important point is that the Armenian lobby, such as it is, is presenting a case that possesses inherent value and appeal. It is a case based on the historical record that overwhelmingly favors Armenian claims to Nagorno-Karabagh, it is a case that can make legitimate appeals to the values of fairness and justice, and it is a case based on military victories that have secured alienated lands and provided for their strategic defense. Attacks on the Armenian lobby serve to conceal the powerful Azerbaijani/Turkish and oil/petrochemical lobbies. They also conceal the legitimacy of the Armenian claim and encourage the view that even limited Armenian success in the nation's capital is substantively baseless and a case of Washington hucksterism.

## The world view of people who have suffered genocide

In 1914 two-thirds of the world's Armenians lived in territories now comprising the Republic of Turkey. Under the cover of World War I, beginning in the spring of 1915, a genocide was unleashed against those Armenians by the Ottoman Turkish state, led by the Ittihad ve Terakki (Committee of Union and Progress, Young Turks).<sup>57</sup> One-and-a-half million Armenians were killed in a premeditated policy of state extermination.<sup>58</sup> Armenians in Soviet Armenia and the post-Soviet Republic of Armenia were affected by events across the Turkish border in three important ways.

First, the Republic of Armenia was invaded by Turkish military forces in 1918 and 1920, and each time those who were unable to escape were captured and slaughtered. These actions were a continuation of the 1894–96 Hamidian massacres and part of the larger genocide that culminated in 1915 and continued in the Transcaucasus, Smyrna and elsewhere through 1923. The Republic of Armenia, in other words, directly suffered Turkish genocide.<sup>59</sup>

Second, as many as 300 000 people from Ottoman Armenia fled across the border to safety from places like Van and other centers of Armenian population in the northeastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire. There are many people in Armenia today who are the children and grandchildren of these terrorized refugees and survivors of 1915. They are keenly aware of 1915. They know that revitalized Turkish forces under Ataturk invaded and threatened to destroy the Armenian Republic after World War I, and they speak of the alliance between Turkey and Azerbaijan which was expressed in a pan-Turkic agenda to take Nagorno-Karabagh and Armenia's southern province of Zangezur. This is part of the consciousness of Armenia and Armenians. It was the backdrop for the massive, united demonstrations of 1988 that brought people on to the streets. No other issue resonated for Armenians like Nagorno-Karabagh because it was the only lost territory, of so many lost territories, that had not been cleansed of its Armenians and offered some reasonable hope to be reclaimed.<sup>60</sup>

The third factor has to do with the response of the international community to the Armenians after World War I. The Armenian genocide was a *cause célèbre* in the West at the time that it was going on, and there were calls for international intervention to provide justice to the Armenians.<sup>61</sup> The first peace settlement with the defeated Ottoman Turks was the Treaty of Sèvres that called for an independent Armenian state created out of Caucasian Armenia and a portion of the Armenian territories in the former Ottoman Empire. The treaty became a dead

letter and was never enforced. It was replaced by the Treaty of Lausanne, ratified in 1923.<sup>62</sup> Lausanne never so much as mentioned the Armenians by name. The Bolsheviki who conquered the southern Caucasus in 1920 and 1921, imposed their own policies on the region. Their decisions were highly detrimental to the Armenians who were weaker, and thus less able to defend their interests, than the neighboring Georgians allied with Germany, and Azerbaijanis aided by Turkey.<sup>63</sup> Nor did Armenia have a regional ally to promote its interests as in the case of Turkey for Azerbaijan. The result for Armenia was further territorial losses. Under the Treaty of Alexandropol, forced upon the leaders of the postwar Republic of Armenia on December 2, 1920, after it had actually been deposed, western lands held by the republic were ceded to Turkey.<sup>64</sup> In addition, contested territories inhabited by sizeable Armenian populations were given to Georgia, Nakhichevan went to Azerbaijan, and Nagorno-Karabagh, despite its overwhelming Armenian majority, was also ceded to Azerbaijan.

There is one sense in which the experience of Nagorno-Karabagh is different from the experience of the Armenian Genocide survivors and their descendents in Armenia. There was no genocide in Nagorno-Karabagh and few survivors settled there. Nevertheless, Karabagh Armenians have an awareness of the experiences of Armenians elsewhere. They also possess a well rooted and not irrational suspicion of outside powers and the longer term meaning of promises to protect the interests of the Karabagh Armenians. The betrayal by the British, the alliances of Azerbaijani leaders with Ottoman and republican Turkey, the massacres of Armenians in Baku and Shushi after World War I and the fact that the Azerbaijanis are a Turkic people, are historical lessons that continue to be current.

To a degree, the commitment to self-reliance and suspicion of outside parties is shaped by the earlier experiences of the Karabagh Armenians. With the end of World War I, Nagorno-Karabagh was *de facto* independent. At this time British forces entered Azerbaijan from northern Iran and consistently promoted Azerbaijani interests with regard to Nagorno-Karabagh. This included a variety of interventions and duplicities that placed the territory under Azerbaijani control.<sup>65</sup> Nowhere was this more apparent than in the fate of Shushi, the former capital city of Nagorno-Karabagh.

The Azerbaijanis today promote the view, and it is often accepted by outside parties to the conflict, that Shushi is a uniquely Azerbaijani city. If Nagorno-Karabagh is to have autonomy within Azerbaijan, the argument is made, then an exception needs to be made for Shushi in



recognition of its special Azerbaijani character. There had been significant numbers of Azerbaijani residents in the city since the late 18th century, but to call the city Azerbaijani or uniquely Azerbaijani constitutes a perverse twist of history in a context where outside parties are typically uninterested in history.

Shushi is an historically Armenian city. The first written record appears in a gospel copied there in 1428 by the Armenian priest Manuel, and the city was at the center of resistance to Turkic Muslim invasion in the 1720s. Armenians won a week-long battle against Turkish forces for control of Shushi November 15–23, 1726.<sup>66</sup> At the dawn of the 20th century, Shushi was the third largest city in the Transcaucasus after Tbilisi and Baku, and it had an Armenian majority. The city boasted schools, churches, and an active publishing complex and theater life. On the eve of the Russian Revolution, Shushi published 21 newspapers and magazines, 19 in Armenian and two in Russian.<sup>67</sup>

The British intervened in Nagorno-Karabagh in various ways to increase Azerbaijani power at the expense of the Armenians. This included forcing the notorious Armenophobe Khosrov bek Sultanov on the Armenians as the governor general of Nagorno-Karabagh and Zangezur.<sup>68</sup> The culmination of these events was the razing of the Armenian sector of Shushi in March and April 1920. Homes were sacked and burnt to the ground and thousands of Armenians massacred. In the words of the high ranking Bolshevik Sergo Orjonikidze, "I shudder to recall the images we saw in Shushi in May, 1920. The beautiful Armenian city was ruined, destroyed."<sup>69</sup> Orjonikidze's words underscore the contrast between the pre- and postwar census figures for the city. In 1914 the city had a population of 42130 of which 22004 were Armenians. In 1922 the city had a population of 9223 of which 289 were Armenians.<sup>70</sup> This is how Shushi became "an Azerbaijani city".

The history of genocide and the failure of larger powers to abide by their promises and commitments are part of the consciousness of Armenians in Karabagh and elsewhere. In some instances, though less commonly, lessons are drawn from other struggles.

Around the time that OMON was really hitting the villages very hard – 1991 – and the fighting was going on, a friend of mine who'd gone to Karabagh and come back, and in those days they were rarer than they are now, had talked to someone about why do you resist, what keeps you resisting? ... The answer was, "Well, who wants to be a Palestinian? Look at how everybody treats them. Look at how

even their fellow Arabs treat them. Who wants to be a refugee? It's better to fight and die here."<sup>71</sup>

*In toto*, the experiences of the Armenians at the hands of stronger powers and the experiences of other smaller, weaker peoples, provide a backdrop that calls for a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict bargained from strength and highly sensitive to security issues. Historian Richard Hovannisian captures these sentiments when he writes:

The sense of being tricked and betrayed both in 1918 and 1920 now reinforces Armenian disbelief in any terms or truce that require withdrawal or disarmament prior to the implementation of firm and permanent guarantees.<sup>72</sup>

The contrast in positions can be seen clearly in attitudes toward two types of Karabagh settlement plans. One calls for a withdrawal of Armenian forces from occupied territories prior to an agreement on the final status of Nagorno-Karabagh. The other calls for a withdrawal as part of a total, overall package settlement plan. First we have establishment analyst and commentator Ronald Grigor Suny:

The emerging consensus was that a "phased" series of negotiated settlements, rather than a fully negotiated "package deal," was the best way to achieve resolution of the conflict. A step-by-step approach – beginning with the withdrawal of the Armenian forces from the occupied Azerbaijani territories outside of Karabakh – would build confidence on both sides that could lead to a long-term solution.<sup>73</sup>

Robert Kocharian, former president of the Republic of Nagorno-Karabagh and the second president of the Republic of Armenia, is reported to have said the following:

If the Karabagh Armenians are required to retreat from the occupied territories before a formal peace settlement is signed, while the outcome of peace negotiations is still unclear, this will extend the length of the front three or four times. If demobilization is a component of the peace process, and the numerical strength of the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh armed forces is reduced, what will happen if the peace negotiations come to a dead end and Azerbaijan launches a new offensive? The risk is simply too great.<sup>74</sup>

Kocharian's position is logical and realistic in terms of past history and the stated objectives of Azerbaijan's leadership, but Suny refers to Kocharian as "more intransigent" and "far less willing to compromise" than his predecessor Levon Ter-Petrossian.<sup>75</sup> This pejorative depiction of Kocharian's Karabagh policy is a standard feature of Western analyses and commentaries. Their authors appear to be dimly, if at all, aware of the history and the issues raised by Kocharian. It is not, surprising, therefore, that their efforts at resolution have all met with failure.

### **The assumption that the developed world is democratic and fair**

As we have seen the establishment spokespersons, be they academics, policy makers, or government officials, hold up western societies as democratic and fair, and contrast them to the societies of the Caucasus; riddled with corruption, in various degrees of authoritarianism, and prone to thorny ethnic conflicts. We can certainly agree that great differences between the Caucasian states and the western industrialized states do exist. However, while the latter are certainly more democratic in form, it is not at all clear that they are more democratic in outcome. What we are dealing with here is a kind of intellectual sleight of hand whereby the developed industrial world has an ideal of democracy which it often fails to achieve at the same time that it holds smaller nations such as Armenia and Karabagh to that same standard. The USA, for example, has two competitive political parties, but both are controlled through campaign contributions from corporations, industry blocs, and elite households. Thus they are parties of the center and the right, and they frequently engage in policies that are contrary to the wishes of a majority of the citizenry. Most Americans, for example, want some form of national health insurance yet they are compelled to live in the only advanced industrial nation that does not provide its residents with the right to health care. Polling results since World War II indicate that Americans oppose wars and foreign interventions by large majorities, yet the country is continually engaged in wars, police actions, and "humanitarian" interventions.<sup>76</sup> There are many such examples, and they are not the benchmarks of democracy.

On the issue of ethnicity and race, the history of the USA is widely known and does not require lengthy comment. It suffices to mention the slavery of African-Americans, the genocide of Native Americans, the barring of Asian immigration from 1885 and throughout much of the 20th century, and deep hostilities directed against Catholics, immigrants from southern and eastern Europe and the Middle East, and all of the current myriad related expressions of such practices in

law, private and governmental organizational policy and custom.<sup>77</sup> We further note that various European nations, also considered strongholds of democracy, are now the home of growing fascist movements with openly racist ideologies and practices directed against immigrants from Eastern Europe and the Third World.

A specific example from the establishment literature on the Caucasus should suffice. Neil MacFarlane, whose work we examined above, makes the point that the societies of the Caucasus are characterized by tremendous inequalities in the distribution of wealth and income. This is taken to be another symbol of the backwardness of these nations and their lack of democracy, compared, presumably, to the West. The data fail to support MacFarlane's case. MacFarlane cites the following figure for Armenia: the wealthiest 5 percent of the population controls 70 percent of national wealth.<sup>78</sup> He does not cite a figure for the US; I will cite it in his stead. The wealthiest 5 percent of the US population controls 60 percent of national wealth.<sup>79</sup> There is no dramatic difference in the distribution of wealth between Armenia, ruled in MacFarlane's view by a rapacious economic elite, and the USA seen as democratic and free. On income, MacFarlane says the richest 10 percent in Azerbaijan account for 24 percent of national income and the poorest 10 percent for 3.7 percent. In Georgia the top 10 percent garner 43 percent of national income.<sup>80</sup> These percentages are actually very similar to income distribution figures for the US. In 1994, the top 5 percent of US households received 20.1 percent of national income. The bottom 20 percent received 4.2 percent.<sup>81</sup>

The position taken by the Western analysts and commentators that the western capitalist states are democratic and fair is not an end in itself. As we shall see below, it serves as the ideological basis for claiming the right to investigate, advise, and adjudicate, that is, to play a disproportionate role in making decisions for others.

### **Postcolonial colonialism and the posture of objectivity**

From the moment of the Bolshevik Revolution, the western industrial states sought to contain and, if possible, reverse Soviet communism while the Soviets sought initially to expand their revolution and later, at least dominate in their own zone of power. Western attempts began with support for counter-revolutionary White forces and the dispatch of US and British fighting forces to the fledgling Soviet Union. Later, Soviet expansion and USA containment became the forces that shaped the cold war. In accomplishing its objective, the West employed numerous weapons, one of which emerged in the realm of ideology and

symbols out of the repressive history of the Soviet Union and the yearning of millions of Soviet citizens for political democracy. In particular, the image of the West as advanced, modern, sophisticated, democratic and free became a major symbol in the cold war, an especially effective one when middle and upper-class standards in the West were paired against the daily frustrations of Soviet life, along with Stalinism and the severe limitations it imposed on civil, religious, and political freedoms.

In the late Soviet and early post-Soviet period, establishment analysts and commentators benefited from their associations with western universities, professional associations, research institutes, and governments that were often seen as superior by many of their Soviet counterparts and viewed as deliverers of hope and democratic change by millions of Soviet citizens. This unfolding of symbols of power, authority, and alleged and imputed knowledge of solutions to intractable problems constituted a form of mystification, not unlike the awe instilled in traditional colonial societies where people were encouraged to view the colonizing nation as superior in all dimensions – language, culture, science, art, and even landscape and terrain.<sup>82</sup>

The attitudes of the establishment analysts and commentators are most often representative of this kind of colonial mindset. They capitalize on the definition of the western nations they represent as democratic and free and ignore inconvenient historical facts and contemporary realities concerning them that would shed doubt on such views. This alleged democracy and freedom when contrasted with the many ills of the post-Soviet states – economies in free fall, declining living standards, unemployment, ethnic strife, and refugee flows – allowed western analysts and commentators, for a period of time, to present themselves and be received as the purveyors of hope and salvation. Mystification is not an unfounded word to describe this process; however, the policies and skills that are to be delivered are not presented as such but as objective, unbiased, disinterested, and the very ones that will bring peace and prosperity.

The view that the western states are democratic and free lends strength to this claim of authority and wisdom. It enhances western power, and extends it to Turkey and Azerbaijan at the same time that Russia and Armenia are let in to the degree that they “co-operate”, while Iran is shut out altogether. The unspoken underlying reality is that terms like democracy and freedom, while having real value as substantive political practices, are operating here as ideological code language for a very different set of practices consisting of stable trade relations, penetration of markets, access to cheap labor, and, in the

case of the Armenian–Karabagh–Azerbaijani territorial conflict, in addition to the foregoing, the secure and expeditious extraction and marketing of petroleum.

Each of the other issues examined in this section also contribute to the ideological strength and practical influence of the Western analysts and commentators and the public and private agencies they directly or indirectly represent. The stances taken by the establishment analysts and commentators accomplish this by helping to overcome what are seen as the ill-conceived, particularistic, and nettlesome positions of the parties in conflict, especially the Armenians and Karabagh Armenians. In their stead, they substitute allegedly grander interpretations of international law and objective analysis that favor Turkey and Azerbaijan, since the latter are seen as having more to offer than Armenia in terms of resources, markets, and favored regional political outcomes.

The insistence that the territorial integrity of existing states carries equal weight in international law with self-determination sweeps aside three inconvenient realities: (1) Nagorno-Karabagh has been an Armenian territory throughout recorded history, (2) its current residents are Armenian, and (3) these residents are firmly committed to independence from Azerbaijan. The further insistence that self-determination can only be exercised under the condition that all parties agree effectively weakens self-determination as a principle of international law to the point where it offers no protection to minorities oppressed by larger states. Such is the position taken by establishment analysts and commentators who present themselves as objective and unbiased.

Dismissing history eliminates one of the strongest arguments in favor of self-determination for Karabagh Armenians. It allows the connections between Nagorno-Karabagh and its overwhelmingly Armenian population and its origins in the ancient Armenian provinces of Artsakh and Utik to be ignored and for the decision to be made on the “objective” criterion of the primacy of territorial integrity.

Indifference to how it began allows establishment analysts and commentators to ignore pogroms, the forced expulsion of Armenians, and Azerbaijani forced resettlement plans. By so doing it becomes possible to shift the focus to Armenian military actions that have secured nearly all of Nagorno-Karabagh plus 10 percent of Azerbaijani territory and to portray the Armenians as aggressors and the Azerbaijanis as victims. The agenda is further promoted by focusing exclusively on Azerbaijani refugees and inflating their numbers while failing to make any mention of hundreds of thousands of Armenian refugees from the Shahumian district, Baku, Getashen, Sumgait and elsewhere in Azerbaijan.

The claim that oil plays no role in the decision that Nagorno-Karabagh should remain within Azerbaijan is to insist on ignoring the obvious. By making this claim, establishment analysts and commentators can convey the appearance of being above material considerations. This further contributes to the appearance of objectivity and strengthens the claim of the western analysts and commentators to the right to adjudicate on the matter of Nagorno-Karabagh.

Reference to an influential Armenian lobby reinforces the claimed legitimacy of the position that Nagorno-Karabagh should remain within Azerbaijan. This canard allows for the creation of a useful appearance – that the Armenian claim to Nagorno-Karabagh lacks intrinsic merit since it can be attributed to the public relations skills of a powerful Armenian lobby. Thus, whatever the Armenians have been able to achieve is due to the activities of this lobby that promotes Armenian interests, and, by implication, because of its alleged power, subverts legitimate Azerbaijani claims.

As survivors of a catastrophic genocide within the last century and more recent attempts to cleanse Nagorno-Karabagh of Armenians, beginning with the pillage of Shushi in 1920, and Azerbaijani policies throughout seven decades of control of Nagorno-Karabagh designed to shift the population balance, Armenians could be expected to fight tenaciously. They could also be expected to view outside, western claims of security of their interests with extreme suspicion. It was the British after World War I who helped install Azerbaijani hegemony over Nagorno-Karabagh, it was the Bolsheviks who assigned Nagorno-Karabagh to Azerbaijan, and it was the Entente powers who failed to honor their commitments to the Armenians for a postwar settlement that included an Armenian state in the former Armenian provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Many Armenians know this history well, and it is a backdrop to governmental decision making on the matter of Karabagh. It was also the precipitant to Levon Ter-Petrossian's ousting as president when he appeared to waver on a Karabagh settlement that would have left Karabagh vulnerable to Azerbaijani repression and eventual full incorporation into Azerbaijan.

The studied indifference of the establishment analysts and commentators to the 20th century Armenian history of genocide and duplicity on the part of outside powers, in some cases the very same powers who now push for a peace settlement, with regard to the protection of Armenian interests misses perhaps the dominant strain of Armenian thinking on the issue of a peace settlement to the Karabagh conflict. It fails to consider why the Armenians are so distrustful of any arrangement

that leaves Nagorno-Karabagh within Azerbaijan, and it actually prevents a peace settlement the West desires in order to safeguard investments, open up markets and allow for the secure extraction and marketing of petroleum.

Western analysts and commentators would have us believe that their positions are well thought out; based on a careful, objective consideration of all relevant factors; and free of bias. It is useful to ask in this context if other policy options are open to them? In other words, if establishment analysts and commentators wish to promote contrary views, can they? Can one promote the view that self-determination is a higher principle of international law than the territorial integrity of existing states, that the cause of the Karabagh-Armenians is just and ought to be recognized in the form of independent statehood, or that the past treatment of Karabagh Armenians at the hands of Azerbaijan is just cause for concluding that their continued forced inclusion in Azerbaijan, whatever the promised levels of autonomy, is an unviable solution that would inevitably open the way to catastrophe down the road, and still be rewarded by mainstream institutions (public and private sector) as establishment analysts and commentators are? The position taken here is that the establishment analysts and commentators considered here are, in fact, *structurally unfree* to adopt and promote such positions unless they are willing to be marginalized within their own professions, that is to forego their current prestigious academic posts for lesser ones along with their grants and consultancies with transnational firms, state departments and foreign ministries, and national security agencies; and their standing with international mediation organizations and the mainstream media as baptized experts.<sup>83</sup>

The links between the establishment experts and commentators and their careers are unpleasant ones to contemplate and stand at odds with the preferred image of the self-reliant, independent, and free-thinking western intellectual. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that such connections and their impact may remain hidden from the very consciousness of some of these experts and artfully concealed from the world at large.

## History

Historical materials are presented elsewhere in this introduction and in portions of the chapters themselves. Therefore, rather than attempting to cover the entire history of Nagorno-Karabagh in a few pages, it is more appropriate to consider a number of key issues and turning points in the history of Nagorno-Karabagh.



Nagorno-Karabagh represents the eastern, mountainous portion of the Armenian plateau. With peaks of up to 4000 meters, the territory lent itself to small autonomous kingdoms, and that is the political form it often took throughout history. At other times it was part of a larger Armenian kingdom such as Tigran the Great's in the first century BC. More specifically, Nagorno-Karabagh (at this time Artsakh, the term Karabagh came into wide use only in the 14th century) was part of the larger, ancient Armenian provinces of Artsakh and Utik that were defined by Lake Sevan in the northwest and the Kura and Arax rivers to the north and south respectively. At various times throughout recorded history the area has been conquered by the Arabs, Seljuk Turks, Mongols, Turkmens, Ottoman Turks, Safavid Persians, and, in the 19th century, the Russians. Nevertheless, the Armenian presence in the territory is ancient and continuous. This presence is characterized by the tradition of autonomous Armenian rule, made possible by the often rugged terrain. Although Karabagh was frequently incorporated into larger empires, it was ruled by autonomous Armenian nobles from the late first millennium AD through to the end of the 18th century. These nobles were called meliks by the Persians beginning in the 17th century, though the practice of incorporation into small autonomous kingdoms was much older.<sup>84</sup> The Armenian claim to Mountainous Karabagh is strengthened further by the architectural remains of Armenian monastic complexes such as Dadivank and Gandzasar (13th century) as well as the many churches, fortresses, and khachkars (burial markers), some of them dating from the 6th to 8th centuries.<sup>85</sup>

### **The ancient history of Nagorno-Karabagh**

The controversy over the ancient history of Nagorno-Karabagh is linked to debates over the origins of the Armenian and Azerbaijani peoples.<sup>86</sup> Studies of Armenian ethnogenesis establish that by the 6th century BC there was a distinct people called Armenian and that the Armenians directly ruled Nagorno-Karabagh from the 4th century BC until the Arshaguni Dynasty was conquered by the Sasanid Persians in 424 AD.<sup>87</sup> Among the classical writers, Strabo, Pliny the Elder, Plutarch, Ptolemy, and Dio Cassius confirm this, as do Armenian historians.<sup>88</sup>

### **The Albanian connection**

Various experts consider Azerbaijani national identity to be a relatively recent development. Tadeusz Swietochowski, a specialist on Iranian

and Caucasian Azerbaijan, writes that:

In 1905 Azerbaijan was still merely a geographical term describing a stretch of land partitioned between Russia and Persia. The only articulated group identity was that of being Muslim, and their collective consciousness expressed itself primarily in terms of the universalistic *umma*.<sup>89</sup>

Alexandre Bennigsen characterizes the “national consciousness” of the Muslim populations on the eve of the Russian revolutions of 1917 thus:

A pre-revolutionary Muslim, nomad, or peasant, had absolutely no consciousness of belonging to a particular nation such as Turkmen, Uzbek, Kirgiz, Kazakh, or Karakalpak. The same may be said about the Volga Tatars or the Azeris. Even the names, “Azeri” or “Tatar”, were not applied this way before the Revolution. The Volga Tatars called themselves “Turks”, “Bulgars”, or simply “Muslims”; the Azeris called themselves “Turks”. So, for the public, the uniting bond was Islam.<sup>90</sup>

The Turkic presence in Karabagh begins with the Seljuk Turkic invasions of the 11th century. The descendants of these invaders of a millennium ago are one of the feeder groups, along with Iranian and other influences, that constitute the present day majority population of the Republic of Azerbaijan. However, these Turkic groups never ruled Nagorno-Karabagh except briefly in the second-half of the 18th century and the very early 19th century.

Politically driven Azerbaijani historians are confronted with the problem of a much older and continuous Armenian presence in Transcaucasia, including Nagorno-Karabagh, and a much older tradition of statehood that was not established for Azerbaijan until 1918. Turkic peoples entered Nagorno-Karabagh in the 11th century, but a presence that dates a millennium is seen as insufficient when compared to the much longer Armenian presence, particularly since the early Turkic settlers failed to displace the autonomous Armenian nobility or produce an Azerbaijani demographic majority.

The response of Azerbaijani historiography is to claim as Azerbaijani progenitors the Caucasian Albanians, a no longer extant people who lived in the south-central and eastern Transcaucasus from the 3rd century BC through the first millennium AD.<sup>91</sup> The Caucasian Albanians were converted to Christianity by the Armenians in the 4th century

and later conquered by the Arabs, Islamicized and eventually assimilated. Armenian historians acknowledge that the Caucasian Albanians in the eastern Transcaucasian lowlands were Islamicized and later Turkified, but they argue that those in the western Albanian regions, including what later became Nagorno-Karabagh, were largely absorbed by the Armenians and to a lesser degree the Georgians. In contrast to this, Azerbaijani historians view Caucasian Albania, in its entirety, as the precursor of modern Azerbaijan, and on this basis, they lay claim to all erstwhile Caucasian Albanian territories, including Nagorno-Karabagh.<sup>92</sup>

Stephan Astourian summarizes the dilemmas and contradictions of Azerbaijani historiography:

Much as they have to face the reality that theirs is a recent national identity, Azerbaijani intellectuals have also felt the need to legitimize their nation as the offspring of old and indigenous Caucasian civilizations. They have had to juggle with their Turkic ethnic and linguistic roots, their predominantly Shiite religion...and their assertedly Caucasian ethnic and even linguistic origins. In order to represent themselves as an old, quasi-indigenous people of the Caucasus, the Azerbaijanis have developed a territorial conception of their ethnogenesis whereby they somehow consider tribal groups of Antiquity, living then on lands which presently form the state of Azerbaijan, as the ancestors of contemporary Azerbaijanis.<sup>93</sup>

### **The Treaty of Turkmenchai in 1828**

In the second half of the 18th century, Turkic speaking Shia Muslims gained a foothold in Nagorno-Karabagh, and their leaders assumed the title of Khan. The first was Panah Ali Khan, followed by his son Ibrahim Khan. Their persecutions included the murders of several meliks and the regional Catholicos of Gandzasar. The years from 1780 to 1806, when Ibrahim Khan was himself murdered, were years of intense persecution and suffering. There was a serious, though temporary, depopulation of Armenians in Karabagh due to persecutions, famines, and massacres by Persian troops. Many Armenians fled to the safety of Ganja or to the southeastern regions of Georgia.<sup>94</sup>

Beginning in 1805, the year the Russians annexed Karabagh (the transfer was ratified by the Treaty of Gulistan in 1813), these Armenians began to return to their abandoned homes and villages in Karabagh. This is an important point because pro-Azerbaijani writers insist that Armenian majorities in Nagorno-Karabagh in the 19th and

20th centuries were artificially created by the 1828 Treaty of Turkmenchai between Russia and Persia. Prior to that time, it is claimed that Nagorno-Karabagh was a continuously Azerbaijani land, inhabited by Azerbaijanis and their alleged Albanian precursors.

The Treaty of Turkmenchai concluded the second of two early 19th century wars between Russia and Persia. Russia gained control of the entire Transcaucasus with the boundary at the Arax River where it remains to this day. Article 15 of this treaty allowed Persian Armenians to cross the Arax into Russian controlled territory, and 45 000 Armenians did take advantage of this provision in 1828–29. However, very few of them settled in Karabagh, and the impact on the population balance of Karabagh was slight.<sup>95</sup> Census figures bear this out. The Russian census of 1823, six years before Turkmenchai, reveals the five districts of Nagorno-Karabagh, roughly corresponding to the traditional melikdoms, to have been overwhelmingly Armenian: Jraberd, eight Armenian villages and no Tatar (Azerbaijani) villages; Varanda, 23 Armenian villages and one Tatar village; Dizak, 14 Armenian villages and one Tatar village; Khachen, 12 Armenian villages and no Tatar villages, and Talish (Gulistan), seven Armenian villages and three Tatar villages.<sup>96</sup> Subsequent census figures in 1832, 1850, 1873, 1886, and 1897 show a steady increase in Armenian and Tatar populations with a strong Armenian majority throughout. From 1823 to 1897, the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabagh increased from 30 850 to 106 363 and the Tatar population increased from 5 370 to 20 409.<sup>97</sup>

### **The 1918–1921 period**

This brief, tumultuous period between the end of the Russian Empire in 1917 and the Sovietization of the Transcaucasian states of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in 1920 and 1921 set the foundation for the later conflicts in the region that erupted in 1988 and after. Armenia was invaded by Turkey in 1918 and 1920, and Armenia was also involved in border disputes with Georgia and, especially, Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabagh, Nakhichevan, and Zangezur. At the end of the period, all the Transcaucasian republics were occupied by the Red Army. The Bolsheviks imposed internal boundary settlements and also agreed upon the borders between the fledgling Soviet Union (now including the Transcaucasus) and Turkey.<sup>98</sup>

Based on the actions of Britain and the Soviets in the Transcaucasus and the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, Armenians developed a deep distrust of outside mediation efforts. In the post-Soviet period, that distrust is extended to Russia, the western industrial states and the

OSCE. That distrust is not unwarranted. Numerous scholars recognize that the decisions to assign Nagorno-Karabagh and Nakhichevan to Azerbaijan were motivated by regional politics. For Shireen Hunter regional politics means "...notably the new Russian Soviet's desire to reach an understanding with the nationalist forces in Turkey under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal...."<sup>99</sup> Alexei Zverev notes that the decision to assign Nagorno-Karabagh to Azerbaijan is frequently attributed to Stalin but actually stems from broader Soviet security issues. These include the desire to appease Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk), to placate Muslim populations then being brought under Soviet rule, to give due consideration to Azerbaijan's larger population and oil holdings, and to recognize that Turkey and Azerbaijan could play a role in promoting Bolshevism in the Muslim east.<sup>100</sup> In an understated way, Edmund Herzig confirms this interpretation when he writes, "...the Bolsheviks were seeking rapprochement with Turkey and therefore tended to support Azerbaijan rather than Armenian claims..."<sup>101</sup>

It is in this period that the Armenians were misled by the representatives of France, Britain, and the Bolsheviks concerning the future of these disputed territories. In the end, only Zangezur of the disputed territories went to Armenia. This was partly because the Armenians occupied and held on to Zangezur and partly because Stalin saw Zangezur as a way of preventing Azerbaijan and Turkey from being linked, and becoming, thereby, a potential threat. It was also a way to sow more seeds for later discontent in a strategy of divide and conquer in the Transcaucasus.<sup>102</sup>

We can also trace back to 1919 Armenian distrust of Azerbaijani intentions and a refusal to compromise on any settlement to the Nagorno-Karabagh dispute that leaves the territory within Azerbaijan. To cite but one example, in August 1919, under threat of invasion and massacre, the exhausted and beleaguered members of the 7th Congress of Karabagh Armenians agreed to submit to provisional Azerbaijani rule in return for Azerbaijani agreement to certain provisions. These included a council, an Armenian assistant governor, Azerbaijani garrisons at peacetime strength in Shushi and Stepanakert only, all movement of military forces by consent of the council, half of the council to be Armenian, no disarming of the population, and Azerbaijani guarantees of cultural autonomy and freedoms of assembly, speech and press. These provisions were almost immediately violated, especially the military ones. Within a few weeks, Azerbaijan invaded Zangezur in an attempt to forge a direct link from Nagorno-Karabagh through Nakhichevan to Turkey.<sup>103</sup>

Autonomy was also a condition of the 1921 assignment of Nagorno-Karabagh to Azerbaijan. As a result of that “autonomy”, Nagorno-Karabagh was completely cut off from Armenia and dependent on the Baku government for all aspects of its administration. It was nothing less than the denial of autonomy that fueled the non-violent rebellion of 1988 and the war that ensued.<sup>104</sup>

## **The book**

Contrasted to the work of the establishment analysts and commentators, the chapters in this volume may be considered works in a different voice. Most of the authors are either natives of Armenia or they are people who have lived and conducted research there for considerable blocks of time. The chapters by Robert Krikorian, Levon Abrahamian, and John Antranig Kasparian are based wholly or in part on participant observation, a time consuming methodology that is rarely employed by establishment analysts and commentators. It requires that the researcher get right into people’s lives – to spend time with them in their kitchens, living rooms, courtyards, workplaces, classrooms and concert halls; to partake of their protests, celebrations and tragedies; and to attend to the details of their everyday lives. In skilled hands, it is a method that is a craft. It opens readers to worlds that would otherwise be inaccessible and unknown. Through the skilled application of this method, Krikorian, Abrahamian and Kasparian are able to provide nuanced analyses and interpretations that would be altogether missed by establishment analysts and commentators who rely to a far greater degree on government and NGO reports and brief interviews with government officials.

The remaining chapters employ more traditional methods of analysis, yet they are characterized by another sort of difference. Although members of such institutions as the World Bank and the OSCE could profit from these chapters, the contributors are not writing exclusively for those constituencies. The commonplace, taken for granted assumptions of the establishment analysts and commentators are not so taken for granted here and often rejected in favor of alternative interpretations. These writers do not assume, for example, that territorial integrity has primacy over self-determination, nor is it taken for granted that Karabagh should be reunited with Azerbaijan. There is no presumption that time is on the side of Azerbaijan, and that oil revenues will make Azerbaijan richer and more powerful, leaving Armenia and Karabagh increasingly isolated and in ever weakened bargaining

positions. As Arthur Martyrossian has pointed out, oil revenues may leave Azerbaijan neither richer nor more powerful, as it is unclear whether the country will follow the Norwegian or the Nigerian model.<sup>105</sup> If the latter, then time is not on Azerbaijan's side as the establishment analysts and commentators insist. Freed of such ideological encumbrances, the contributors provide the reader with analysis, commentary, and, indeed, democracy in a different voice. They do this by offering voice to legitimate perspectives too often buried under the pretense of objectivity.

In Chapter 2, Lalg Papazian's "A People's Will: Armenian Irredentism over Nagorno-Karabagh", Papazian limits her study to the five year period 1988 through to 1993, yet she manages to cover a great deal of ground. Papazian begins with an examination of the political conditions under which secessionist and irredentist movements are likely to arise. She provides a good deal of historical material on Nagorno-Karabagh, some prior to 1920 and most covering Karabagh within the Soviet period, with a concentration on the contradictions that led to sustained protest under conditions of the late Gorbachev years. She then divides the first five years of the Karabagh movement into a pre-crisis period and four stages of crisis from February 28, 1988 to February 28, 1993 by which time Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabagh were in the midst of full scale war. In the remainder of her chapter Papazian provides an analysis of the conflict and the role of the regional powers. Papazian ends with the observation that Nagorno-Karabagh is but one of many global examples of the struggles for self-determination. Because the prevailing rigid and uncompromising standard of territorial integrity dooms many of these peoples to lives of oppression or worse, it is her view that the standard of territorial integrity is going to have to give way to self-determination. As she puts it, "The alternative is too costly."

Robert O. Krikorian, like Papazian, is trained in political science. His chapter "The Anguish of Karabagh: Pages from the Diary of Aramais (Misak Ter-Danielyan)" is matched, in a sense, to Krikorian's own Karabagh experiences in the late 1980s and 1990s when he lived and traveled in the region and spent time with combat units as an observer and researcher. Aramais was a Karabagh Armenian activist in the seminal post-World War I struggles over Karabagh. He had been a frontline fighter in the Armeno-Tatar War of 1905-06, and he later represented the Karabagh Armenians in direct negotiations with Azerbaijan and British occupation forces in Karabagh. Aramais' 1919 diary serves as the backdrop for Krikorian's analysis that provides us with historical

background, first-hand accounts, and comparisons between the earlier and later 20th century Armenian–Azerbaijani Karabagh struggles.

Levon Abrahamian is an anthropologist. He was a participant observer in the 1988 Karabagh demonstrations in Yerevan in the fullest sense of the term as both a participant and a trained social science observer. Abrahamian examines nationalism, ecology, economics, and civil and authoritarian society within a framework for analysis that treats the movement as a fluid and unfolding popular struggle expressing historical themes and political tensions in Armenian and Soviet society. He employs the metaphor of a ball of yarn to consider the various political and cultural strands within the movement, some ephemeral and others longer lasting, and all constantly challenged by representatives of counter-trends of varying strength and longevity. “Civil Society Born in the Square: the Karabagh Movement in Perspective” treats the Karabagh protests in all their richness and diversity. It serves as a useful counterpoint to more mechanical, deterministic accounts that often lack the subtlety Abrahamian brings to his subject.

Like Robert Krikorian, John Antranig Kasparian’s contribution is based on extensive fieldwork in Karabagh. Befitting a geographer, Kasparian is interested in the changing meanings of place in the context of armed struggle and social disorganization and reorganization. He makes the interesting observation that many accounts of the Karabagh struggle, including sympathetic ones, “...place Karabagh at the margins of its own struggle.” The territory is aided by Armenia, attacked by Azerbaijan, and negotiated over by world powers and mediation agencies. There is little attention paid to Karabagh’s own internal dynamic and direction. Kasparian redirects attention to Karabagh. He employs his encounters with three individuals to examine the changing notions of space and place, and he examines these local cases in terms of a theoretical framework drawn from earlier anti-colonial struggles in the Third World.

Armenia enjoyed far greater political stability than Georgia and Azerbaijan during the first five years of post-Soviet independence. Nevertheless, there have been serious political tensions in the country, opening the way to instances of political corruption and rising authoritarianism. Razmik Panossian examines one aspect of this erosion of democracy, the tense relationship between the Armenian Republic and the Armenian diaspora. Panossian focuses his attention on the first post-Soviet Armenian government of Levon Ter-Petrosian and the Armenian Revolutionary Federation or Dashnaksutioun, the most important, powerful, and activist of the Armenian diasporan political



parties. Panossian analyzes seven areas of disagreement: Armenia and independence from the Soviet Union, Armenia's relationship to Russia and Turkey, Armenian genocide recognition and reparations, the future of Karabagh, Armenia's political economic system, citizenship rights for diasporan Armenians, and the role of the diaspora in national governance. Irreconcilable differences between the Armenian government and the ARF led to a serious political crisis in 1994 when Ter-Petrossian banned the ARF; accused top party officials of assassinations, drug running, and government destabilization; and had party officials arrested and tried. It was not until 1998 that the ARF was legalized under the presidency of Robert Kocharian. Panossian's analysis brings to light the origins and details of this crisis that became emblematic of the sometimes troubled relationship between Armenia and its diaspora.

In "Betrayed Promises of the Karabagh Movement: a Balance Sheet", Markar Melkonian provides a thoroughgoing accounting of the degree to which the Karabagh Committee, subsequently the Armenian National Movement led by Levon Ter-Petrossian, lived up to its promises made to hundreds of thousands of demonstrators who rallied in Opera Square, Yerevan in 1988. Melkonian divides those promises into five areas. These are national independence, reversing environmental deterioration, promoting democracy and human rights, creating economic prosperity, and enabling self-determination in Karabagh.<sup>106</sup> Melkonian argues that all of these objectives were severely compromised through a combination of hostile exterior forces, miscalculations, and, above all, a commitment to unregulated free enterprise capitalism. The latter took the form of rapid privatization, a dismantling of the social safety net, deindustrialization, and disinvestment in health, education and other social services. Melkonian analyzes these processes and their economic, political, social, environmental, and gender consequences.

In "Possible Solutions to the Nagorno-Karabagh Problem: a Strategic Perspective" Armen Aivazian addresses the reasons behind the failure of the OSCE Minsk Group to negotiate a successful solution to the Karabagh conflict. He attributes this failure to three factors: (1) theoretical misconceptions in the definition of the conflict; (2) the inability of the negotiators to consider the strategic needs of the parties to the conflict, especially Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Nagorno-Karabagh; and (3) structural flaws in the organization of OSCE itself that leave it woefully unable to enforce any negotiated settlement. Aivazian presents an alternative proposal that would provide Karabagh with *de facto* but not *de jure* independence and return occupied territories to Azerbaijan

while providing real security guarantees to all immediate parties to the conflict. Aivazian explains why such a solution requires permanent Armenian military control over Nagorno-Karabagh and the Lachin Corridor backed by a US–Russian–Armenian defense treaty protecting Armenia from possible Turkish–Azerbaijani aggression. He closes by assessing possibilities for reaching a durable settlement.<sup>107</sup>

Richard Giragosian complements Aivazian’s study by further situating the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict in the context of regional politics and major power rivalries. He critiques mainstream definitions of the conflict, the most common being that it is born of extreme nationalism stemming from “ancient hatreds”. Giragosian and Aivazian both share an emphasis on security issues and provide a critique of international mediation approaches. Giragosian goes further in introducing comparative materials from elsewhere in the world and a more detailed analysis of the roles of the regional and major powers, the United Nations and OSCE.

No claim is made that this collection is complete. An analysis of the role and status of women in the Karabagh struggle and a dissection of petroleum politics are two topics not found here that would have been welcome. Nor is this collection a product, as some will claim, of group or Armenian-think. A diversity of methodologies is employed, and there are differences of interpretation and perspectives among the contributors. The claim that is made is the following: this collection adds to the diversity of viewpoints in an area of inquiry to a great degree constrained by the boundaries of officially sanctioned debate.

## Notes

1. The name Nagorno-Karabagh is of Russian, Persian, and Turkish derivation. Nagorno is the Russian word for mountainous, and the territory is sometimes referred to in English as Mountainous Karabagh. Kara has Turkish roots while bagh is of Persian derivation. Karabagh is rendered as “black garden”. The Armenian name for the territory is Artsakh. We will be using Nagorno-Karabagh, or Karabagh for simplicity’s sake, throughout the volume because Nagorno-Karabagh has become the most common usage in English-speaking academia, policy circles, and journalism. In different historical periods the boundaries of the territory have varied. The first action of the Azerbaijan SSR upon receiving Nagorno-Karabagh in the early 1920s was to create the Nagorno-Karabagh Autonomous Oblast as an island within Azerbaijan. This was accomplished by reducing the size of the territory and incorporating directly into Azerbaijan those parts of Nagorno-Karabagh with large Armenian populations that were contiguous to Armenia. Those were territories to the northwest, west and southwest of the NKAO. When the reader comes across

Karabagh in this volume, this should be understood to be synonymous with the territory Nagorno-Karabagh. This is an important point. Nagorno-Karabagh is the mountainous portion of the larger historic territory of Karabagh consisting of a mountainous sector and the Karabagh plain to the east.

If we keep such matters in mind we are in a position to deconstruct Audrey Altstadt's disingenuous statement that "Official tsarist population records indicate that the population of Karabagh, like other areas of Caucasia, was overwhelmingly 'Muslim' prior to the mass migrations of Armenians (numbering about 57 000) from Iran which were provided for in the Treaty of Turkmenchai which ended the Russo-Iranian War, 1826–1828." While Altstadt's statement is correct as written, she ignores two essential points concerning Nagorno-Karabagh. The same Russian documents make it abundantly clear that nearly all of the Armenians in Karabagh, mountains and plains, lived in the mountainous portion and nearly none in the flatlands. This would give Nagorno (Mountainous) Karabagh an overwhelming Armenian majority. The second point is that few of the Armenians who crossed the Arax river from Persia to Russian Armenia settled in Karabagh. "Nagorno-Karabagh – Apple of Discord" *Central Asian Survey*, vol. 7, no. 4, 1988, fn. 18.

2. Levon Chorbajian, Patrick Donabedian, and Claude Mutafian, *The Caucasian Knot: the History and Geopolitics of Nagorno-Karabagh* (London: Zed Books, 1994), pp. 134–7.
3. An excellent account of the early Karabagh movement is found in Mark Malkasian, *Gha-ra-bagh!* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1996).
4. A collection of eyewitness accounts is found in Samvel Shahmuratian, *The Sumgait Tragedy: Pogroms against Armenians in Soviet Azerbaijan* (New Rochelle, N.Y. and Cambridge, MA.: Aristide D. Caratzas and The Zoryan Institute for Contemporary Armenian Research and Documentation, 1990). See also Malkasian, chapter 3 and Pierre Verluise, *Armenia in Crisis: the 1988 Earthquake* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995), pp. 87–92.
5. Joseph R. Masih and Robert O. Krikorian, *Armenia: at the Crossroads* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1999), p. 10.
6. Malkasian, pp. 99–100.
7. Masih and Krikorian, p. 11.
8. Masih and Krikorian, p. 13.
9. Masih and Krikorian, p. 13 and Verluise, pp. 97–8.
10. The 25 000 person fatality figure is now the most frequently used; one also sees 50 000. For the 100 000 figure and how it was derived, see Verluise, pp. 31–3.
11. Verluise, p. xvi.
12. Markar Melkonian's chapter in this volume offers a detailed critique of the Karabagh Committee's members who became part of independent Armenia's first post-Soviet government, including Levon Ter-Petrosian.
13. The major cause of death was the poorly designed and shoddily constructed buildings whose collapse brought instant death. Few survivors were rescued. The search for survivors and relief in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake was largely co-ordinated by the Karabagh Committee. For a description of the relief efforts and the Committee's role see Verluise.

14. Masih and Krikorian, pp. 35–6 and Verluise, p. 114.
15. Martha Brill Olcott, *The Kazakhs*, 2nd edn (Stanford: Hoover Institute Press, 1995).
16. C.P. Fitzgerald, *The Birth of Communist China* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1964), pp. 186–8.
17. Alexander Motyl, *Sovietology, Rationality, Nationality: Coming to Grips with Nationalism in the USSR* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), chapter 10.
18. I do not wish to imply that these tools of repression are to be taken lightly, only that they call for lesser levels of sacrifice and pain than more severe methods and, therefore, are likely to represent acceptable levels of risk for larger numbers of people.
19. The presentation conforms to sociologist Max Weber's well-known analytical device of the ideal type. Ideal typical presentations are non-normative. They are ideal in the sense that they incorporate the essential features of the subject of analysis, in this case the analysis and ideological underpinnings of a group of writers I am calling the establishment analysts and commentators. The ideal type is the presentation of a phenomenon in its pure form, containing its essential features. Thus, not every analyst considered here would necessarily adhere to every position represented by the group as a whole or to the same degree. Each analyst and commentator would, however, adhere to a broad, common interpretation as well as to many of its details. On a related matter, I should point out that while the positions taken here are generally contrary to those of the establishment analysts and commentators, a distinction needs to be made between the factual information their writings contain and their writings as ideology. Thus at the same time that I present a critique of such writers and their interpretations and conclusions, I may at times rely on them for specific facts. See Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills (eds) *From Max Weber* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), pp. 59–61, 323–4.
20. Neil MacFarlane, *Western Engagement in the Caucasus and Central Asia*, (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1999), pp. 20–1.
21. Edmund Herzig, *The New Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia*, (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1999), p. 115.
22. MacFarlane, p. 4.
23. Herzig, p. 15.
24. The relevant statement from the Final Act is the following: "All the principles set forth above are of primary significance and, accordingly, they will be equally and unreservedly applied, each of them being interpreted taking into account the others." Arie Bloed, *The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Analysis and Basic Documents, 1972–1993*, (Dordrecht, Boston and London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1993), p. 149. Two books that do attempt to preserve the right to territorial integrity while delineating those limited circumstances under which self-determination is a legitimate option are Haig Asenbauer, *On the Right of Self-Determination of the Armenian People of Nagorno-Karabakh* (New York: The Armenian Prelacy, 1996) and Otto Luchterhandt, *Nagorny Karabakh's Right to Self-Determination under International Law* (Boston: Baikar Association, 1993).
25. Such a view is expressed by, among others, heads of state in India, a multi-ethnic state with good reason to be concerned about self-determination

although the concept was the mainstay of its own independence movement. This view also finds academic expression. See, among others, Alexei Zverev, "Ethnic Conflicts in the Caucasus, 1988–1994" in Bruno Coppieters, (ed.), *Contested Borders in the Caucasus* (Brussels: VUB Press, 1996), p. 16. Russia provides an example of a country that has fluctuated between its advocacy of self-determination and territorial integrity within a short time frame. When the agenda was the destabilization of Georgia, then self-determination for the Abkhaz and South Ossetians was the order of the day, but when it came to the rebellious Chechens and Russia's own territorial integrity, self-determination was no longer the guiding principle. Vitaly Naumkin "Russia and Transcaucasia" *Caucasian Regional Studies*, vol. 3, no. 1, 1998, pp. 18–19.

26. Noam Chomsky, *The New Military Humanism: Lessons from Kosovo* (Monroe, Maine: Common Courage Press, 1999), p. 5.
27. I would be remiss in not calling attention to other relevant events since 1980 that reveal a rather one-sided approach to international law: the US invasion of the Caribbean island nation of Grenada, the US sponsored surrogate invasion of Nicaragua, the US invasion of Panama, the Gulf War, and the bombing of Serbia and Kosovo. All of these were violations of a major document in international law, the United Nations Charter. We also note that two states have been created out of breakaway territories in recent decades and admitted to the community of nations. These are Bangladesh and Eritrea.
28. The Asenbauer and Luchterhandt books attempt to assess the claims of the Karabagh Armenians in light of the principles of international law.
29. Neil Asher Silberman, "Promised Lands and Chosen Peoples: The Politics and Poetics of Archaeological Narrative" in Philip Kohl and Clare Fawcett (eds), *Nationalism, Politics, and the Practice of Archaeology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 253. Silberman's recommendation – by no means limited in real life to the assessment of works in archaeology – certainly has simplicity to recommend it, but it is inconsistent with a scientific approach that would call for an assessment of an argument on the basis of its merit. Silberman's formula has two additional problems. First, it is colonial. Academics and researchers from the West are considered to be above bias and, therefore, positioned to judge the work of their presumed to be less objective colleagues from economically less developed regions. Second, although the standard may be applied to Turkish and Azerbaijani scholars, it is the Armenians, for the most part, who bear the greatest burden of it. There are several factors that feed into this. At the core are the existence of Turkey as an independent state throughout the 20th century and its membership in NATO beginning in 1952 that have allowed it to create alliances, institutional structures, governmental communications, and interpersonal networks, including scholarly and student exchanges, that have privileged Turkish perspectives and marginalized Armenian ones in scholarship and journalism on such issues as the Armenian Genocide and the Karabagh conflict. As a result, scholars of Armenian descent frequently face the curious situation wherein they and their work are stigmatized and suspect on the basis of nothing more than their ethnic origin. With less frequency and more privately than publicly similar such criteria are applied to

Afro-American, female, and Jewish scholars writing about their racial, gender, and religious groups. When such criteria are applied and it becomes known that they are applied, they are likely to be called by their correct names which are racism, sexism, and anti-Semitism.

30. Yuri Zinin and Alexei Maleshenko, "Azerbaijan" in Mohiaddin Mesbahi (ed.) *Central Asia and the Caucasus after the Soviet Union* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1994) p. 105.
31. Herzig, p. 10.
32. Herzig, pp. 59–60.
33. Pavel Baev, *Russia's Politics in the Caucasus* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1997), p. 15.
34. Verluise, pp. 87–8.
35. The parallels with lynching are found in Oliver Cromwell Cox's discussion of that phenomenon. See Cox, *Caste, Class & Race* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970 edition of the 1948 original), pp. 548–64.
36. Cox's elaborated definition of lynching is apt: "Lynching may be defined as an act of homicidal aggression committed by one people against another through mob action for the purpose of suppressing either some tendency in the latter to rise from an accommodated position of subordination or for subjugating them further to some lower social status. It is a special form of mobbing – mobbing directed against a whole people or political class. We may distinguish lynching from race rioting by the fact that the lynching mob is unopposed by other mobs, while it tends to be actuated by a belief that it has a constituted right to punish some more or less identified individual or individuals of the other race or nationality. Lynching is an exemplary and symbolic act. In the US it is an attack principally against all Negroes in some community rather than against some individual Negro. Ordinarily, therefore, when a lynching is indicated, the destruction of almost any Negro will serve the purpose as well as that of some particular one. Lynchings occur mostly in those areas where the laws discriminate against Negroes; sometimes, in these areas, the administrative judicial machinery may even facilitate the act." Cox, p. 549.
37. A variation on this interpretation is put forward by several authors who argue that the killings were engineered by the Kremlin and carried out by the Azerbaijanis. Alexei Zverev writes that Sumgait was prepared months in advance and conducted with extreme cruelty. The Azerbaijani police were conspicuously absent and calls to police and ambulance services went unanswered. Zverev also notes that leading Azerbaijani Communist Party functionaries took part in rallies prior to the killings and a local party boss even led the mobs. With KGB operations fully in place in Baku at this time, it is impossible that such preparations were not known to the authorities. Zverev also notes banners at later Azerbaijani rallies proclaiming "Glory to the Heroes of Sumgait", pp. 21, 24. Also see Igor Nolyain, "Moscow's Initiation of the Azeri-Armenian Conflict", *Central Asian Survey*, 13 (4), 1994, pp. 541–63 and Thomas Goltz, "Letter from Eurasia: The Hidden Russian Hand", *Foreign Policy*, Fall 1993, pp. 92–116.
38. Masih and Krikorian, p. 18 and Malkasian, pp. 196–7.
39. For a thoroughgoing description of Operation Ring see David Murphy, "Operation 'Ring': The Black Berets in Azerbaijan," *The Journal of Soviet*

- Military Studies*, 5(1), March 1992, pp. 80–96. For “No Armenians, No Problem”, see p. 91.
40. “Report of an International Delegation from the First International Andrei Sakharov Memorial Congress to Armenia and Azerbaijan”, May 25–31, 1991, unpublished manuscript. Also see Caroline Cox and John Eibner, *Ethnic Cleansing in Progress: War in Nagorno-Karabakh* (Zurich, London, Washington, 1993), pp. 46–50 and Murphy, p. 92.
  41. It is a significant feature of reporting on the Karabagh conflict that the percentage of Azerbaijani territory alleged to be held by Armenian forces ranges from less than 10 percent to over 33 percent. The citations are: Edmund Herzig almost 15 percent, p. 68; Svante Cornell, almost 20 percent, “Geopolitics and Strategic Alignments in the Caucasus and Central Asia” *Perceptions Journal of International Relations*, IV(2), June–August 1999, p. 102; Elizabeth Fuller, up to 20 percent, “Azerbaijan at the Crossroads” in Roy Allison (ed.) *Challenges for the Former Soviet South* (Washington: Brookings Institute Press, 1996), p. 119; Ronald Grigor Suny, 20 percent, “The Fall of a President” *AIM: Armenian International Magazine*, vol. 9, no. 2, p. 14; Oles Smolansky, 20 percent, “Russia and Transcaucasia: The Case of Nagorno-Karabakh” in Alvin Rubinstein and Oles Smolansky, *Regional Power Rivalries in the New Eurasia: Russia, Turkey and Iran* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1995), p. 203; Jonathan Aves, up to 25 percent, “Security and Military Issues in the Transcaucasus” in Bruce Parrott (ed.) *State Building and Military Power in Russia and the New States of Eurasia* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1995), p. 221; Leila Alieva, 25 percent, “The Institutions, Orientations, and Conduct of Foreign Policy in Post-Soviet Azerbaijan” in Adeed Dawisha and Karen Dawisha (eds) *The Making of Foreign Policy in Russia and the New States of Eurasia* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1995), p. 290; Azerbaijan’s ambassador to the US, Hafiz Pashayev, nearly 30 percent, “Shaping Azerbaijan’s Geopolitical Future”, CSIS: Summary of Remarks, July 19, 1999; Fereydoun Safizadeh, nearly 33 percent, “On Dilemmas of Identity in the Post-Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan”, *Caucasian Regional Studies*, vol. 3, no. 1, 1998, p. 42; Zinin and Mareshenko, “Over one-third ... is affected ... in one way or another”, p. 105. Herzig’s almost 15 percent figure is correct if one includes Nagorno-Karabagh; that is not the practice followed here. Elizabeth Fuller gets it right elsewhere: she cites 9 percent in “Azerbaijani Leadership Brooks No Opposition” *Transitions*, 3(2), February 7, 1997, p. 86.
  42. Cox and Eibner, pp. 66–7.
  43. Ronald Grigor Suny, p. 14.
  44. Pashayev. He claims 1 billion cubic meters of gas, for example, in the Shakh-Deniz sector.
  45. Anatol Lieven, “The (Not So) Great Game”, *The National Interest*, Winter 1999–2000, p. 71.
  46. International Oil Agency, *Caspian Oil and Gas: The Supply Potential of Central Asia and Transcaucasia* (Paris: OECD Publications, 1998), p. 3.
  47. Herzig, p. 134.
  48. MacFarlane, p. 20.
  49. Joe Barnes and Ronald Soligo, “Baku-Ceyhan: Bad Politics, Bad Idea”, *Oil & Gas Journal*, October 26, 1998, pp. 30–1. Barnes and Soligo argue that this pipeline would cost \$3–4 billion to construct and would be disadvantageous

to the oil companies. This could be compensated for by US government subsidies though some estimate that these could be as high as \$1 billion annually, p. 31.

50. MacFarlane, p. 55.

51. Lieven, p. 80. On the Turkish connection see Kevin McKiernan, "Turkey's War on the Kurds", *The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, March–April 1999, pp. 26–37. McKiernan writes that the US has sold or given Turkey \$15 billion worth of weapons since 1980. Also, Jennifer Washburn, "Power Block; Turkey and Israel Lock Arms", *The Progressive*, vol. 62, no. 12, December 1998, pp. 20–3.

52. MacFarlane, p. 62.

53. Mohiaddin Mesbahi, "Regional and Global Powers and the International Relations of Central Asia" in Dawisha and Dawisha, p. 237.

54. Fuller in Allison, p. 151.

55. Emil Danielian, "No War, No Peace in Nagorno-Karabakh", *Transitions*, August 1997, vol. 4, no. 5, p. 47. A more complete list of former government officials with a vested interest in a particular sort of Karabagh settlement includes Richard Armitage, former Assistant Secretary of Defense; Howard Baker, former Senate Majority Leader; Lloyd Bentsen, former Secretary of the Treasury; Zbigniew Brzezinski, former National Security Advisor; Lawrence Eagleburger, former Secretary of State; Rosemary Forsyth, former National Security Council official now with Mobil Oil; Henry Kissinger, former Secretary of State; Greg Laughlin, former Congressman; Bob Livingston, former Speaker of the House; Jack Maresca, former US negotiator on the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict now with Unocal; Gerald Solomon, former Congressman; John Sununu; former White House Chief of Staff; and William White, former Deputy Secretary of Energy. These individuals play multiple, overlapping and complementary roles consisting of advising, introducing US corporate and governmental officials to counterparts in Azerbaijan for the purposes of promoting political and business agendas, conducting negotiations, and lobbying to promote the images of Turkey and Azerbaijan in Washington. They help bring about commercial contracts and overturn burdensome legislation such as Section 907. The ability to do this is based on interacting networks derived from years of corporate and government service as well as current positions and interests. Examples of the latter are Baker, Eagleburger and Sununu as advisors to Azerbaijani President Aliiev; Baker and Eagleburger as board members of companies with investments in Azerbaijan (Pennzoil and Phillips respectively); Sununu's ties to a firm with gold mining investments in Azerbaijan; Armitage and Brzezinski's consultancies with oil companies and their dealings with Aliiev on behalf of those clients; Armitage's position as co-chairman of the US–Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce and Baker, Brzezinski, Kissinger, and Sununu's posts on that organization's advisory board. For fuller details and other personages see Peter H. Stone, "Caspian Wells Come in for K Street" *The National Review*, vol. 31, no. 11, March 13, 1999, pp. 680–5.

56. The literature documenting the Armenian Genocide is large and growing. See Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus* (Providence and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1995) and Dadrian's *Warrant for Genocide: Key Elements of*



- Turko-Armenian Conflict* (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Books, 1999). A partial list of sources documenting the Armenian Genocide is found in Richard Hovannisian's older but still useful bibliography, *The Armenian Holocaust: a Bibliography Relating to the Deportations, Massacres, and Dispersion of the Armenian People, 1915–1923* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Armenian Heritage Press, 1978) and the bibliography to Dadrian's magisterial *History*, pp. 428–46. Thirty-seven thousand pages of documents from the US Archives have been compiled by Rouben Paul Adalian (ed.) *The Armenian Genocide in the U.S. Archives, 1915–1918* (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, 1994). For additional archival material, see Vahakn N. Dadrian, "Documentation of the Armenian Genocide in Turkish Sources" in Israel Charny (ed.) *Genocide: a Critical Bibliographic Review* (London and New York: Facts on File, 1991), pp. 86–138; and "Documentation of the Armenian Genocide in German and Austrian Sources" in Israel Charny (ed.) *The Widening Circle of Genocide*, pp. 77–125. See also Permanent People's Tribunal, *A Crime of Silence: the Armenian Genocide* (London: Zed Books, 1985); Vahakn N. Dadrian, "The Naim–Andonian Documents on the World War I Destruction of Ottoman Armenians: the Anatomy of a Genocide", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 18 (1986): 311–60; Vahakn N. Dadrian, "Genocide as a Problem of National and International Law: the World War I Armenian Case and Its Contemporary Legal Ramifications", *Yale Journal of International Law*, 14 (1989): 221–334; Leslie A. Davis, *The Slaughterhouse Province: an American Diplomat's Report on the Armenian Genocide, 1915–1917*, (New Rochelle, New York: Aristide D. Caratzas, 1989); Donald E. Miller and Lorna Touryan Miller, *Survivors: an Oral History of the Armenian Genocide* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993); and Raymond H. Kevorkian and Paul B. Paboudjian, *Les Arméniens dans l'Empire ottoman a la veille du genocide* (Paris: Editions d'Art et d'Histoire, 1992).
57. Vahakn N. Dadrian has examined how the Young Turk Party infiltrated the Ottoman state apparatus and employed its own secret underground networks to organize and carry out the genocide. Dadrian, "The Convergent Roles of the State and a Governmental Party in the Armenian Genocide" in Levon Chorbajian and George Shirinian (eds) *Studies in Comparative Genocide* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), pp. 92–124.
  58. See note 56 above. For a fascinating account of a caught red-handed instance of Turkish denial of the Armenian Genocide see Roger W. Smith, Eric Markusen, and Robert Jay Lifton, "Professional Ethics and the Denial of the Armenian Genocide", *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 9, no. 1 (1995), pp. 1–22. For a Turkish scholar's interpretation of why the Turkish state denies that any genocide was committed against the Armenian people see Taner Akcam, "The Genocide of the Armenians and the Silence of the Turks" in Chorbajian and Shirinian, pp. 125–46.
  59. Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide*, chapters 19–20. See also Marjorie Housepian, *The Smyrna Affair*, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Jovanovich, 1972). Subsequently published as *Smyrna 1922*.
  60. Chorbajian, Donabedian and Mutafian, pp. 7–8.
  61. For a compilation of articles see Richard D. Kioian, *The Armenian Genocide: News Accounts from the American Press (1915–1922)* (Richmond, California: ACC Books, 1985).

62. Levon Marashlian has written a thorough analysis of the treaties in *The Armenian Question from Sèvres to Lausanne: Economics and Morality in American and British Policies, 1920–1923*, Ph.D. dissertation, UCLA, 1992.
63. For economic conditions in Armenia at the time see Richard Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: 1919–1920*, vol. II (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982), pp. 5–7. Also see pp. 92–3 and 128–30 on Armenia's isolation from the western allies.
64. Richard Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle: Partition and Sovietization*, vol. IV (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 391–403.
65. See Chorbajian, Donabedian and Mutafian, pp. 118–24 and Richard Hovannisian, "Historical Memory and Foreign Relations" in S. Frederick Starr (ed.) *The Legacy of History in Russia and the New States of Eurasia* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1994), pp. 237–76 *passim*.
66. L.S. Khachikian (ed.) *The Colophons of the Armenian Manuscripts of the XVth Century, 1401–1450*, vol. 1 (Yerevan: Armenian Academy of Sciences, 1955), p. 384. Armen Aivazian, *The Armenian Rebellion of the 1720s and the Threat of Genocidal Reprisal* (Yerevan: Center for Policy Analysis, American University of Armenia, 1997), pp. 20, 71. Also see A.Kh. Safastrian (trans.) *Turkish Sources on Armenia, the Armenians, and Other Peoples of Transcaucasia*, vol. I (Yerevan: Armenian Academy of Sciences, 1961), pp. 158–9; Ashot Ioannissian, (ed.) *Armenian-Russian Relations in the First Three Decades of the XVIIIth Century: Collection of Archival Documents*, vol. II, part II (Yerevan: Armenian Academy of Sciences, 1967), doc. 346, p. 286; doc. 350, pp. 290–1; doc. 356, p. 296; and S.M. Soloviev, *History of Russia since Ancient Times*, book X, vols 19–20 (Moscow: Social Economic Literature, 1963), p. 315.
67. Chorbajian, Donabedian and Mutafian, pp. 110–11.
68. Chorbajian, Donabedian and Mutafian, pp. 118–24.
69. Chorbajian, Donabedian and Mutafian, p. 127.
70. Stephan H. Astourian, "The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: Dimensions, Lessons, and Prospects," *Mediterranean Quarterly*, vol. 5, no. 4, Fall 1994, p. 90.
71. Related by Khachig Tölölyan. Since we have brought up the Palestinians, it is not inapt to consider how they have fared under a western brokered peace agreement, the 1993 Israel–PLO Declaration of Principles, better known as the Oslo Accords. It is instructive to see the effects of a western brokered peace agreement seeking to balance the interests of an oppressed people and a cherished ally. See Samih K. Farsoun and Christina Zacharia, *Palestine and the Palestinians* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), chapter 7.
72. Richard Hovannisian, "Historical Memory and Foreign Relations" in Starr, p. 244. A thoroughgoing analysis of security issues and the failure of international mediation is presented in Armen Aivazian's contribution to this collection.
73. Suny, p. 14.
74. Ara Tatevosyan, "Nagorno-Karabakh's Army of Iron Will and Discipline", *Transitions*, August 9, 1996, p. 23.
75. Suny, p. 14. For a critique of Suny see Levon Marashlian, "Policies Promoted by Prof. Suny Can Undermine Armenia's Security and Transcaucasia's Security", *The Armenian Reporter*, August 28, 1999, pp. 6, 26.

76. The concept of humanitarian intervention is thoroughly deconstructed in Chomsky.
77. On the Irish, see Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995). On Native Americans, see Ward Churchill, *A Little Matter of Genocide* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1998). On Afro-Americans, see Joe Feagin, *White Racism* (New York: Routledge, 2000) and *Racist America: Roots, Current Realities, and Future Reparations* (New York: Routledge, 2000).
78. MacFarlane, p. 47.
79. Edward N. Wolff, *The Rich Get Increasingly Richer: Latest Data on Household Wealth during the 1980s* (Washington: Economic Policy Institute, 1993).
80. MacFarlane, p. 47.
81. US Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1996), p. 467.
82. For the classic literature see Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963), Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 1967) and Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1965).
83. This is a short list of networks commonly possessed by establishment analysts and commentators. It should not be understood to mean that every establishment analyst and commentator is connected to larger institutions in all of these ways.
84. Robert Hewson, "The Meliks of Eastern Armenia", *Revue des Etudes Armeniennes*, part I, vol. IX, 1972; part II, vol. X, 1973–74; part IV, vol. XIV, 1980.
85. *Gharabagh*, vol. 19, Documents of Armenian Architecture (Milan: OEMME Edizione, 1988).
86. A critique of Armenian and Azerbaijani theories of ethnogenesis is found in Phillip L. Kohl and Gocha R. Tsetschladze, "Nationalism, Politics and the Practice of Archaeology in the Caucasus" in Kohl and Fawcett, pp. 151–8. Kohl and Tsetschladze's critique has quite different implications for Armenian and Azerbaijani claims to Nagorno-Karabagh. In the Armenian case it is marginal since the bulk of it concerns the attempt by some Armenian writers to claim the Urartian empire, 9th to 6th centuries BC, as Armenian. This pre-dates established recognized Armenian ties to Karabagh, that are far older than any recognized claims that the Azerbaijanis can present, going back to the 11th century AD only. The authors shed serious doubt on Azerbaijani attempts to claim Nagorno-Karabagh on the basis of the prior settlements of the Caucasian Albanians. See also Stephan H. Astourian, "In Search of Their Forefathers: National Identity and the Historiography and Politics of Armenian and Azerbaijani Ethnogeneses" in Donald V. Schwartz and Razmik Panossian, eds, *Nationalism and History: the Politics of Nation Building in Post-Soviet Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Centre for Russian and East European Studies, 1994), pp. 41–94.
87. Stephan H. Astourian, "The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict. . . .", p. 87.
88. Strabo, *Geography*, compiled and translated by F. Lasserre (Paris, 1975), book XI, chapter 14, 4; Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, book VI, chapter 15 (translated into French by A. de Grandsagne, vol. 5 (Paris, 1830)), p. 32; Plutarch, *Lives*, vol. VIII, Pompey, chapter 34, 1–4 (coll. G. Bude, Paris, 1973), pp. 206–7; Ptolemy, *Geography*, book V, chapter 12 (ed. C. Muller, vol. 1, part 2e (Paris, 1901)), pp. 931–2; Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, book

- XXXVI (English translation by E. Cary, vol. III (London, 1969), coll. Loeb), pp. 92–3.
89. Tadeusz Swietochowski, *Russian Azerbaijan, 1905–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 191.
  90. Alexandre Bennigsen, “Islamic or Local Consciousness among Soviet Nationalities?” in Edward Allworth, ed., *Soviet Nationality Problems* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), p. 175, see also pp. 178–80.
  91. This reach-back is paralleled by similar efforts in Turkey where the Turks are relative newcomers compared to other national groupings. A favored tactic in this instance is to claim descent from the Hittites with whom the Turks have no historical connection.
  92. Tamara Dragadze, “Azerbaijanis”, in Graham Smith (ed.) *The Nationalities Question in the Soviet Union* (London and New York: Longman, 1990), p. 164; Audrey Altstadt, *The Azerbaijani Turks: Power and Identity under Russian Rule* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1992), pp. xi, 2-6; Chorbajian, Donabedian and Mutafian, pp. 53–64; and Astourian in Schwartz and Panossian, pp. 58–61, 84–8.
  93. Astourian in Schwartz and Panossian, pp. 53–4.
  94. George Bournoutian, *Russia and the Armenians of Transcaucasia: 1797–1889: a Documentary Record* (Costa Mesa, California: Mazda Publishers, 1998), pp. 19, 480; Chorbajian, Donabedian, and Mutafian, pp. 74–6.
  95. Bournoutian, p. 480 and Chorbajian, Donabedian, and Mutafian, p. 77.
  96. Bournoutian, p. 278.
  97. Chorbajian, Donabedian, and Mutafian, p. 77.
  98. The meticulously detailed history of these events is found in the published work of Richard Hovannisian. See Richard Hovannisian, “The Armeno–Azerbaijani Conflict over Mountainous Karabagh, 1918–1919”, *The Armenian Review*, vol. 24, 2–94, Summer 1971, pp. 3–39; *The Republic of Armenia: The First Year, 1918–1919*, vol. I (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971), pp. 83–6, 88–90, and 156–89; *The Republic of Armenia: From London to Sèvres, February–August 1920*, vol. III (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 115–17, 131–72, 185–8, and 193–200. See also Chorbajian, Donabedian and Mutafian, pp. 113–41 and Astourian, “The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict...”, pp. 88–90.
  99. Shireen Hunter, “Azerbaijan: Searching for New Neighbors” in Ian Bremmer and Ray Taras (eds) *New States, New Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 444.
  100. Zverev “Ethnic Conflicts in the Caucasus, 1988–1994” in Coppieters, p. 19. Also see Chorbajian, Donabedian and Mutafian, pp. 136–7.
  101. Herzig, pp. 65–6.
  102. Hovannisian in Starr, p. 244.
  103. Hovannisian in Starr, pp. 245–7. A full text of the agreement is found in Hovannisian, vol. I, pp. 186–7. For more on Azerbaijani violations see Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: 1919–1920*, vol. II, pp. 211–12 and vol. III, pp. 132–3.
  104. On the failed autonomy promised in the early 1920s, see Chorbajian, Donabedian and Mutafian, pp. 141–56; and Luchterhandt.
  105. Related by Arthur Martirosyan.

106. Independence was not an original objective, but it emerged as the Soviet Union appeared and then continued to disintegrate.
107. Aivazian's contribution is part of a growing body of research that begins to pay attention to the limitations of international peacekeeping. See Alan Tidwell, *Conflict Resolved?: a Critical Assessment of Conflict Resolution* (London and New York: Pinter Pub. Ltd., 1999) and Dennis Jett, *Why Peacekeeping Fails* (New York: St. Martin's Press – now Palgrave NY 1999). The authors of such work remain strong supporters of well thought out, historically grounded, and adequately supplied and financially backed peacekeeping efforts.