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TO THE AUTHORS OF ARJPS

The Armenian Journal of Political Science (ARJPS) strives to publish scholarly research of exceptional merit, focusing on important issues (in particular, Post-Soviet Transformation, State-Building, Democratisation and Human Rights, Conflict Resolution, Reconciliation Processes, National Identity and International Integration, New World Order, South Caucasus in the Geopolitical Struggle etc.) and demonstrating the highest standards of excellence in conceptualisation, exposition and methodology. Authors must demonstrate how their analysis illuminates a significant research problem, or answer an important research question, of general interest on political science. Authors must strive for a presentation that will be understandable to as many scholars as possible, consistent with the nature of their material.

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This article provides the legal analysis of the newly signed EU-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and characterizes its potential influence on the Armenian legal system. In particular, the author focuses on CEPA’s place in the domestic legal order (with specific attention paid to the status and the mechanisms of implementation of the binding decisions of the institutions established by the Agreement), the institutional framework of partnership under CEPA, essential elements and conditionality mechanisms of the Agreement, as well as mechanisms of legislative approximation to the EU acquis. Being signed with a country-participant of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) which, at the same time, is a member of the Eurasian Economic Union, CEPA is a unique legal instrument. Within the EaP region, it significantly differs from both Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) concluded with the post-Soviet countries in 90s and Association Agreements (AAs) of new generation signed with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The article makes an attempt to outline the main differences between CEPA and other EU agreements with third countries. It is shown, in particular, that in the same way as AAs with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, CEPA contains two types of conditionality mechanisms: “common values” conditionality and “market access” conditionality. These two types of conditionality serve to export EU values in the former case, and EU acquis (as a set of rules) in the latter case. It is argued that, in order to promote “common” values in Armenian legal order, CEPA uses the following instruments: incorporating values into the so-called essential element clauses; requiring to join to and implement relevant international agreements and making the implementation of values an element of conditionality mechanisms. One of the main elements of ‘market’ conditionality is the requirement to implement relevant legal reforms, in particular, through gradual approximation of Armenian legislation to the EU acquis. The author distinguishes three types of mechanisms of legislative approximation employed by CEPA and provides their detailed
characteristic. Furthermore, it is argued that, in addition to the approximation commitments, other requirements (e.g. the requirement of predictability of legal regulation and legal certainty) can also stimulate further development of Armenian legal system. The author underlines the role of judiciary in ensuring proper implementation of the Agreement.

Keywords
EU-Armenia relations, Eastern Partnership, CEPA, regional integration, legislative approximation, shared values, conditionality

Introduction

Regardless its ‘U-turn’ towards the membership in the Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) in September 2013, Armenia, as one of the participants of the Eastern Partnership initiative (EaP), still aims to preserve active dialog with the EU. In these circumstances, the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA)¹ signed on November 24 2017 and establishing the legal basis for the new format of the EU-Armenia relations becomes an important instrument of further Europeanization of Armenian legal system.

As High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President F. Mogherini observed, the newly signed agreement is “the first of its kind, as it is concluded with a partner country which is at the same time a member of Eurasian Economic Union and in the Eastern Partnership.”² Indeed, CEPA is a unique legal instrument: within the EaP region, it significantly differs

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from both Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) concluded with the post-Soviet countries in 90s and Association Agreements (AAs) of new generation signed with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

Being a unique case of cooperation with both EU and EAEU, today’s Armenia can serve as a laboratory to observe and study the intertwined processes of post-Soviet transformation, Europeanization and regional integration of different vectors, levels and formats. This particularity makes the newly signed EU-Armenia Agreement extremely interesting for scholarly examination.

This article provides legal analyses of CEPA as an instrument framing the EU-Armenia relations and characterizes its potential influence on the Armenian legal system. In particular, the focus is made on CEPA’s place in the domestic legal order, the institutional framework of partnership under CEPA, essential elements and conditionality mechanisms of the Agreement, as well as mechanisms of legislative approximation to the EU *acquis*.

**CEPA’s place in the domestic legal order**

According to Art. 116 (2) of the Constitution of Armenia, international treaties shall be ratified through law\(^3\). Article 5 of the Constitution of RA establishes the hierarchy of norms in Armenian legal order and prescribes that “[i]n case of conflict between the norms of international treaties ratified by the Republic of Armenia and those of laws, the norms of international treaties shall apply” (Art. 5(3)). International treaties contradicting the Constitution may not be ratified (Art. 116 (3)). The Constitutional Court of RA, prior to the ratification of an international treaty, determines the compliance of the commitments enshrined therein with the Constitution (Art. 168 (3)).

On 16 March 2018, the Constitutional Court of RA reviewed CEPA in the light of its conformity with the Constitution and held that there was no contradiction between the Constitution and the

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\(^3\) This requirement to ratify “through law” is one of the novelties introduced into Armenian Constitution as a result of the constitutional reform of 2015; previously, international treaties were ratified through adoption of a decision of the Parliament.
commitments under the Agreement\textsuperscript{4}. CEPA was subsequently ratified by the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia on 11 April 2018\textsuperscript{5}. The Agreement is not yet in force. In accordance with Art. 385 (2), it shall enter into force on the first day of the second month following the date of deposit of the last instrument of ratification or approval. However, the Parties may provisionally apply this Agreement in whole or in part, in accordance with their respective internal procedures and legislation, as applicable (Art. 385 (5)).

Aiming, in particular, “to enhance the comprehensive political and economic partnership and cooperation between the Parties, based on common values and close links, including by increasing the participation of the Republic of Armenia in policies, programmes and agencies of the European Union”\textsuperscript{6}, CEPA replaces the outdated EU-Armenia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) signed in 1996\textsuperscript{7}. It is expected that the new Agreement “will strengthen [EU-Armenia] cooperation in many different fields such as energy, transport and environment, and lead to increased mobility” and will “lead to an improved business environment and to new opportunities in trade and investments”.\textsuperscript{8}

The implementation of the Agreement is to be facilitated through the EU-Armenia Partnership Priorities signed on 21 February, 2018\textsuperscript{9}.


\textsuperscript{6} Article 1(a) of CEPA.

\textsuperscript{7} Article 380 of CEPA.


\textsuperscript{9} European Union and Armenia sign Partnership Priorities, Bruxelles, 21/02/2018 - 14:17, UNIQUE ID: 180221_5, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-
This document will replace another ‘soft’ law document – the ENP Action Plan adopted in 2006 and will “shape the agenda for regular political dialogue meetings and sectoral dialogues as defined in the new Agreement” \(^{10}\). Being in line with the priorities set out in the ENP Review\(^{11}\) and reflecting the focuses of CEPA, the Partnership Priorities include (1) strengthening institutions and good governance; (2) economic development and market opportunities; (3) connectivity, energy efficiency, environment and climate action; and (4) mobility and people-to-people contacts.

As it was stated above, one of the particularities of the Agreement is that it was concluded in the circumstances of Armenia’s membership in another economic integration project – the EAEU. Kostanyan and Giragosian observe that the negotiators of CEPA relied on the text of the failed EU-Armenia Association Agreement\(^{12}\) adjusting it to the new format of the EU-Armenia relations. Thus, the ‘political dialogue’ part of CEPA is similar to that in the EU-Armenia AA; while its ‘economic part’, due to the concurring international obligations of Armenia under the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) Treaty and in contrast with the AAs, does not foresee the creation of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA). Arguably, this not only lows the level of economic integration and narrows the scope of economic cooperation between the Parties, but also significantly influences CEPA’s conditionality mechanisms taking away the incentives of gradual integration into EU Internal Market offered in the AAs.


Although the new Agreement takes “full account of Armenia’s obligations as a member of the Eurasian Economic Union”\textsuperscript{13}, this, however, does not exclude the possibility of potential conflicts between EAEU norms and provisions of CEPA\textsuperscript{14}.

Another important issue is the place of the decisions of the institutions established under CEPA in the Armenian legal order. As it will be shown below, two bodies established under CEPA (namely, Partnership Council and Partnership Committee) are entitled to take binding decisions. Arguably, such decisions can be classified as follows: (1) the decisions of the Council by which the Annexes to CEPA have to be updated to take into consideration the development of the EU legislation to be approximated to (Article 371); and (2) other decisions. According to Armenian constitutional law, implementation of the decisions of the first type presupposes ratification of the amendments to the Annexes in the same manner as the Agreement itself is ratified\textsuperscript{15} (including the preliminary control by the Constitutional Court).

As regards the second type of decisions, the Constitution of Armenia does not contain any provisions specifying the place of the acts of the bodies established under the international treaties in domestic legal order. Arguably, in case of decisions adopted by CEPA institutions, the legal positions formulated by the Constitutional Court in relation to the EAEU Treaty are applicable. In particular, in its Decision DCC-1175 of November 14, 2014 in Case on Conformity of the Obligations Stipulated in the “Treaty on the Accession to the Treaty of May 29, 2014 On The Eurasian Economic Union Signed by the Republic of

\textsuperscript{14} Notably, in the course of negotiations, “to ensure that the values underpinning CEPA remain firm”, the EU rejected a “carve-out clause” proposed by the Armenian side which would allow Armenia “to opt out of the commitments enshrined in CEPA in areas where the Eurasian Economic Union might make new provisions” (Kostanyan H., and Giragosian R., Op. cit. referring to the interview with an EU official (Brussels, 5 September 2016), p. 7).
\textsuperscript{15} See the Decision of the Constitutional Court DCC-1407 cited above (para. 11).
Armenia” Signed on October 10, 2014 in Minsk with the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, the Court pointed out the existence of specific constitutional requirements in Armenian legal order to the acts of international / supranational organizations. In addition to the principles of sovereignty, legal equality and mutual expediency of international cooperation, the Court (1) highlighted that the restrictions on human rights [possibly resulting from participation in a supranational organization] should be in accordance with the norms and principles of international law and (2) recognized that operation of the decisions of supranational bodies in Armenia is possible only within the scope of accordance with the Constitution of RA. The Court formulated the legal position of general applicability holding that “any decision adopted by any supranational body with the participation of the Republic of Armenia which is not in conformity with these requirements in not applicable in the Republic of Armenia. In the case of following these requirements, cooperation of RA with any international or regional organization will not raise the issue of constitutionality”.

In the Decision DCC-1381 of 10 October 2017 on the conformity of the obligations stipulated by the Agreement on the Customs Code of the Eurasian Economic Union signed on April 11, 2017, with the Constitution of RA, the Constitutional Court differentiated between the legal acts of international and supranational nature. While the acts of the first category, in the Court’s view, regulate ‘horizontal’ relations between the subjects of international legal relations, the acts of the second category regulate vertical relations between the state and the subjects within the state, thus directly affecting the individuals. As a consequence, the supranational acts in the process of their implementation can

17 Para. 7 of the Decision.
18 Ibid.
potentially violate the constitutional rights; […]. The evaluation [of constitutionality of such acts] is possible only when there is a practice of application of a supranational act.\(^{20}\)

What regards the interrelation of the decisions of the CEPA’s institutions with domestic legislation, arguably, the analogy with Article 55 of Law of the Republic of Armenia “On International Treaties” regulating the status of acts adopted by the international organizations can be applied. According to this article, the acts of international organizations have to be implemented in accordance with the treaty establishing the organization and their legal force is defined by such treaties. If it is defined that such acts are binding, then, according to Article 55 (3), the relevant national agency responsible ensures the implementation of the decision of an international organization, if necessary: (1) by adopting a normative or other legal act; (2) by drafting a relevant regulatory act of the President, Government or Prime-Minister and submitting it for the consideration of the Government. If it is concluded that the implementation of the decision of an international organization requires adoption of a new or amending of the existing legislative acts, the relevant national agency has to draft such act and submit it for the consideration of the Government. Importantly, in case of a conflict between Armenian legislation and the decision of international organizations, the latter is not applicable until necessary amendments are introduced to the relevant domestic legal acts. The interpretation of this provision in conjunction with other provisions of Art. 55 allows concluding that it is obligatory for the national authorities to adopt the required legislative acts in this case.

\(^{20}\) See argumentation in para. 5 of the Decision.
Institutional framework

The institutional framework of the EU-Armenia relations is regulated by Title VIII of CEPA. The bodies established include: Partnership Council, Partnership Committee, sub-committees and other bodies assisting the Partnership Committee, Partnership Parliamentary Committee and Civil Society Platform. This institutional framework is similar to the institutional framework under AAs\textsuperscript{21}.

According to Article 362 of CEPA, the Partnership Council shall supervise and regularly review the implementation of the Agreement. This body consists of representatives of the Parties at ministerial level and meets at regular intervals, at least once a year, and when circumstances require. The Partnership Council may meet in any configuration, by mutual agreement. The Partnership Council is entitled to examine any major issues arising within the framework of the Agreement and any other bilateral or international issues of mutual interest for the purpose of attaining the objectives of this Agreement. It is chaired alternately by a representative of the European Union and a representative of the Republic of Armenia.

Importantly, according to the same article, the Partnership Council shall have the power to take binding decisions within the scope of this Agreement in cases provided for therein. The Partnership Council may also make recommendations. It shall adopt its decisions and recommendations by agreement between the Parties, with due respect for the completion of the Parties’ respective internal procedures. Furthermore, the Partnership Council has the power to update or amend the Annexes, without prejudice to any specific provisions under Title VI.

\textsuperscript{21} With the exception of the Summit meetings at the highest level which provide overall guidance for the implementation of the EU-Ukraine AA as well as an opportunity to discuss any bilateral or international issues of mutual interest (see Article 460 (1) of EU-Ukraine AA). Article 404 of EU-Georgia AA prescribes that Periodic high-level policy dialogue shall take place within the Association Council and within the framework of regular meetings between representatives of both Parties at ministerial level by mutual agreement.
This body also serves as “a forum for the exchange of information on the legislation of the European Union and of the Republic of Armenia, both under preparation and in force, and on implementation, enforcement and compliance measures” (Art. 362). Thus, one may conclude that the Partnership Council can play significant role in directing and ensuring the effectiveness of the legislative approximation processes.

As Article 363 of CEPA prescribes, the Partnership Council “in the performance of its duties and functions” is assisted by the Partnership Committee. It is composed of representatives of the Parties, in principle at senior official level and chaired alternately by a representative of the European Union and a representative of the Republic of Armenia. It meets at least once a year. The Partnership Council may delegate to the Partnership Committee any of its powers, including the power to take binding decision; additionally, this body adopts binding decisions in cases provided for in the Agreement. The decisions are to be adopted by agreement between the Parties, subject to the completion of the Parties’ respective internal procedures.

Once a year the Partnership Committee shall meet in a specific configuration to address all issues related to Title VI (Trade and Trade-Related Matters).

As Article 364 of CEPA stipulates, the Partnership Committee shall be assisted by subcommittees and other bodies established under this Agreement. The latter include, for example, Sub-Committee on Customs (Article 126) and Sub-Committee on Geographical Indications (Article 240).

Parliamentary Partnership Committee, in accordance with Article 365 of CEPA, consists of members of the European Parliament, on the one hand, and of members of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, on the other, and is a forum for them to meet and exchange views. The Parliamentary Partnership Committee may make recommendations to the Partnership Council and create parliamentary partnership subcommittees.

The Agreement underlines the importance of civil societies and civil-society dialogue for its implementation. In specific areas, the Agreement explicitly indicates of importance of involvement of civil-society organizations in the policy development and reforms of Armenia.
and cooperation between the Parties (see Article 86 of Chapter 15 Employment, Social Policy and Equal Opportunities of Title V). Chapter 21 of Title V is devoted to civil-society cooperation between Armenia and EU and establishes a regular dialogue on these issues (Article 104 of CEPA).

A specific institution – Civil Society Platform – is established to enable the involvement of civil societies into the implementation of CEPA. According to Article 366 (2), a Civil Society Platform is established as a forum “to meet and exchange views for, and consist of representatives of civil society on the side of the European Union, including members of the European Economic and Social Committee, and representatives of civil-society organisations, networks and platforms on the side of the Republic of Armenia, including the Eastern Partnership National Platform”. Article 366 further defines the forms of cooperation between the Civil Society Forum and other institutions (exchange of information and views (Article 366 (5), 366 (7); making recommendations by the Platform to the Partnership Council, the Partnership Committee and Parliamentary Partnership Committee (Article 366 (6)). Article 284 of CEPA specifically indicates that cooperation and dialogue with regard to sustainable development issues that arise in the context of trade relations between EU and Armenia “shall involve relevant stakeholders, in particular social partners, as well as other civil-society organisations, in particular through the Civil Society Platform established under Article 366”.

Apparently, the institutional framework of CEPA is significantly more advanced than one of the PCA and resembles the institutional framework of the association agreements.

**CEPA’s conditionality mechanisms and essential elements**

According to the definition provided by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, a policy of conditionality is “one in which international organizations promise rewards (such as financial assistance or membership) to target states on the condition that the states fulfill one or more conditions (such as policy adjustments or institutional change) set by the international
organizations”; the “dominant logic underpinning EU conditionality is a bargaining strategy of reinforcement by reward”.

In the same way as in AAs with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, in CEPA two types of conditionality can be distinguished: “common values” conditionality and “market access” conditionality. These two types of conditionality serve to export EU values in the former case, and EU *acquis* (as a set of rules) in the latter case.

As S. Poli argues, there are four main ways for the EU to promote its values through external action: (1) considering them as ‘essential elements’ of legally binding agreements with partner countries and associating non-execution clause in case of breach; (2) encouraging the third countries to ratify and implement the legally binding multilateral agreements based on universal values; (3) making the values a prerequisite for receiving financial assistance from the EU (in particular,

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24 The concept of “common” or “shared” values is used in the context of ENP (see European Neighbourhood Policy. Strategy Paper COM(2004) 373 final) and is specifically underlined in the new agreements with EaP countries; in a broader context of relations between EU and third countries, the concepts of “political” or “Human Rights” conditionality are used (see Communication on the inclusion of respect for democratic principles and human rights in agreements between the community and third countries’, Brussels May 23, 1995, COM(95)216 final).


within European Neighbourhood Instrument) and (4) applying sanctions in case of the failure to respect democracy\textsuperscript{27}.

It is suggested that, in part of values promotion, CEPA relies on the first, second\textsuperscript{28} and third ways identified below; however, the third way should be viewed broader than in the classification provided by Poli. Namely, it should be defined as making the implementation of values a prerequisite within the conditionality mechanisms (the incentives of which obviously cannot be restricted to the receiving of financial assistance only\textsuperscript{29}).

According to Article 2 General Principles of CEPA:

1. Respect for the democratic principles, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, as enshrined in particular in the UN Charter, the OSCE Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris for a New Europe of 1990, as well as other relevant human rights instruments such as the UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights, shall form the basis of the domestic and external policies of the Parties and constitute an essential element of this Agreement (emphasis added – A.Kh.).

2. The Parties reiterate their commitment to the principles of a free-market economy, sustainable development, regional cooperation and effective multilateralism.

3. The Parties reaffirm their respect for the principles of good governance, as well as for their international obligations, in particular under the UN, the Council of Europe and the OSCE.


\textsuperscript{28} The second way can be illustrated, in particular, with Article 6 of CEPA stressing the values of peace and international justice and requiring ratification and implementation of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and its related instruments, taking into account the legal and constitutional frameworks of the Parties.

\textsuperscript{29} Although the conditionality based on the “financial assistance” incentive can also be found in CEPA: see Article 344 stating the amount of financial assistance provided by EU to Armenia “shall take into account the Republic of Armenia’s needs, sector capacities and progress with reforms, in particular in areas covered by this Agreement”.
4. The Parties commit themselves to the fight against corruption, the fight against the different forms of transnational organised crime and terrorism, the promotion of sustainable development, effective multilateralism and the fight against the proliferation of WMDs and their delivery systems, including through the EU Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation Centre of Excellence Initiative. This commitment constitutes a key factor in the development of the relations and cooperation between the Parties and contributes to regional peace and stability.

What does the status of “an essential element” (Article 2(1)) entail? According to Article 60 (3)(b) of Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties of 1969, the violation of “a provision essential to the accomplishment of the object or purpose of the treaty” constitutes a material breach of a treaty. As Article 60 (1) of the Convention states, “a material breach of a bilateral treaty by one of the parties entitles the other to invoke the breach as a ground for terminating the treaty or suspending its operation in whole or in part” (italics added - A. Kh.). Basing on the reasoning of this provisions, the essential element clauses in the EU agreements with third countries are usually accompanied with the non-execution clauses. Additionally, the importance of the “commitments” under the essential element clauses are stressed in a preamble.

As one can note, the provision of Article 2 (1) defines the democratic principles, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms as an essential element of the Agreement; it contains an extensive and open-ended list of international instruments in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms (of both binding ‘hard’ law and


31 The rule of law is further stressed in Article 12 of CEPA as a basis for cooperation of the Parties in the area of freedom, security and justice. Under this article, the consolidation of the rule of law includes “the independence of the judiciary, access to justice, the right to a fair trial as provided for by the European Convention on Human Rights, and procedural safeguards in criminal matters and victims' rights’.
non-binding ‘soft’ law nature)\textsuperscript{32} which, according to the Agreement, the Parties must adhere to in their domestic and external policies. The principles of a free-market economy, sustainable development, regional cooperation and effective multilateralism, good governance and respect to international obligations etc. are not included in the essential element clause; however, they are fundamental for the relations under the Agreement.

Another essential element of CEPA is included in Art. 9 Weapons of mass destruction, non-proliferation and disarmament\textsuperscript{33}. This essential element is standard for the EU’s agreements with third countries. As M. Cremona observes, the WMD clauses have been included to such instruments since 2003\textsuperscript{34}. The same “essential elements” can be found, in particular, in the AAs with Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine\textsuperscript{35}.

Art. 379 of CEPA addresses the appropriate measures in case of non-fulfilment of obligations. In case of failing to fulfil an obligation under the Agreement by one Party, the other Party (if a matter in dispute is not resolved within three months of the date of notification of a formal request for dispute settlement) may take appropriate measures. However, the requirement of three-month consultations is not applied in case of violation of one of the essential elements of the Agreement (Article 379 (1) and (3)). According to Article 379 (2), “in the selection of appropriate


\textsuperscript{33} According to Art. 9, “the Parties consider that the proliferation of WMDs and their means of delivery, both to State and non-State actors, such as terrorists and other criminal groups, represents one of the most serious threats to international peace and stability. The Parties therefore agree to cooperate in and contribute to countering the proliferation of WMDs and their means of delivery, in full compliance with, and national implementation of, their existing obligations under international disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements as well as other relevant international obligations. The Parties agree that this provision constitutes an essential element of this Agreement”.


\textsuperscript{35} Article 10 of EU-Georgia AA; Article 9 of EU-Moldova AA; Article 11 of EU-Ukraine AA.
measures, priority shall be given to those which least disturb the functioning of this Agreement”; “such measures may not include the suspension of any rights or obligations provided for under provisions of this Agreement, set out in Title VI” (trade and trade-related matters) with the exception of cases of violation of an essential provision.

It can be concluded from the provisions analysed above that the essential element clauses in combination with non-fulfilment clause and preambular references to the Parties’ commitments constitute one of the mechanisms of value conditionality, according to which the all the provisions of CEPA (including the provisions on economic cooperation and trade relations) effectively operate only if the specific principles are respected by the Parties.

Another specific conditionality mechanism in political part of the Agreement can be found in Article 15 of CEPA under which the Parties are obliged to fully implement Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements. In case of fulfilment of these obligations and provided that conditions for well-managed and secure mobility are in place, the Parties shall consider in due course the opening of a visa-liberalisation dialogue. Taking into account the experience of the EaP associated countries in the field of visa liberalization, the visa liberalization dialogue will focus, in addition to the security benchmarks, on the benchmarks related to fundamental rights\(^{36}\).

As it was stated before, the political part of CEPA reproduces the political part of the failed EU-Armenia AA and is mostly similar (with some reservations) to the political parts of the AAs with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. This is not the case, however, in regard to the economic part of the Agreement and the relevant “market access” conditionality mechanisms. Taking into consideration the absence of the DCFTA incentives and narrower scope of economic and trade cooperation, market access conditionality is significantly “weaker” in CEPA’s case.

According to Article 373 (2), “if the Parties agree that necessary measures covered by Title VI\textsuperscript{37} [including the legislative approximation to the EU \textit{acquis}] have been implemented and are being enforced, the Partnership Council […] shall decide on further market opening where provided for in Title VI”.

The examination of the relevant provisions of Title VI reveals the conditionality mechanisms of different level of specification. For example, in case of establishment\textsuperscript{38}, “with a view to \textit{progressively liberalising} the establishment conditions, the Partnership Committee, when meeting in trade configuration, shall \textit{regularly review the legal framework and the environment for establishment}”. Here the precise benchmarks for evaluation of the implementation of the Parties’ commitments are not specified.

More precise is Article 152 related to the cross-border supply of services. In particular, “with a view to progressively liberalising the cross-border supply of services between the Parties, the Partnership Committee, meeting in trade configuration, shall regularly review the list of commitments referred to in Articles 149 to 151 [market access commitments]. \textit{That review shall take into account, inter alia, the process of gradual approximation}, referred to in Articles 169, 180 and 192, and its impact on the elimination of remaining obstacles to the cross-border supply of services between the Parties” (\textit{italics added} – A.Kh). The listed articles regulate the approximation to the EU \textit{acquis} related to postal services, electronic communication networks and transport services respectively.

Taking into account its role in the implementation of the objectives of the Agreement, the issue of legislative approximation deserves specific attention. In the following part of the article, the mechanisms of legislative approximation will be analysed.

\textsuperscript{37} Trade and trade-related matters.

\textsuperscript{38} Chapter 5 Trade in services, establishment and electronic commerce of Title VI of CEPA.
Legislative approximation under CEPA

The mechanisms of legislative approximation enshrined in CEPA resemble the mechanisms of the AAs, although are less advanced and ambitious due to CEPA’s more modest objectives. At the same time, in contrast with the EU-Armenia PCA containing only one general and legally non-binding approximation clause\(^{39}\), CEPA’s approximation mechanisms are significantly more elaborated, diverse and framed in the provisions of binding nature.

Regardless the previous attempts of legislative approximation in Armenia under PCA and ENP Action Plan and some achievements in specific legislation and policy sectors (especially during the negotiations about conclusion of the failed Association Agreement and DCFTA), this process generally hardly can be defined as successful. The process of legislative approximation lacked coherence, systematic approach and common methodological ground. In addition, as Ghazaryan and Hakobyan observe, the measures adopted by the governmental bodies quite often were “formalistic and deficient and aimed at rather technical fulfilment of the EU’s requirements” and the proper enforcement of the approximated legislation by judiciary faced the problems common to the Armenian legal system generally and inherited from the Soviet times\(^{40}\).

In contrast with PCA, CEPA underlines the importance of not only gradual approximation of Armenian legislation to the EU norms, but also implementation and enforcement of the approximated legislation\(^{41}\). Article 372 of CEPA establishes specific mechanisms of monitoring and assessment of approximation which “shall include aspects of implementation and enforcement” (Article 372 (2)). In addition to the reporting on the progress made with regard to approximation, the assessment “may include on-the-spot missions, with the participation of institutions of the European Union, bodies and agencies, non-

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\(^{39}\) Article 43 of PCA.


\(^{41}\) See, in particular, Preamble and Article 372 of CEPA.
governmental bodies, supervisory authorities, independent experts and others, as necessary” (Article 372 (3)).

Similarly to the AAs, two types of legislative approximation provisions can be differentiated in CEPA: (1) those establishing mechanisms of approximation in the specific sectors of cooperation (transport, energy, environment, employment, social policy and equal opportunities etc.) and (2) ‘horizontal’ provisions supplementing the sectoral approximation mechanisms.

In the first group of provisions, the following types of legal approximation can be differentiated:

- The provisions requiring implementation of the international instruments and compliance with the international standards; these commitments can be general\(^{42}\) or specifically defined\(^{43}\);
- The provisions containing the requirement to approximate to the EU *acquis* without specification of the relevant acts. The binding character and formulation of such requirement varies. According to Article 169, 180, and 192 of Title VI Trade and Trade-Related Matters which are key for the liberalization of cross-border supply of services conditionality, “parties recognise the importance of gradual approximation” of Armenian legislation on postal services, electronic commerce and transport services to that of the EU; according to Article 189, “the Republic of Armenia shall approximate its regulation of financial services, as appropriate, to the legislation of the European Union”. Article

\(^{42}\) For example, under Article 13 Protection of personal data, the Parties “agree to cooperate in order to ensure a high level of protection of personal data in accordance with the international legal instruments and standards of the European Union, Council of Europe and other international bodies”. According to Article 24 Public sector internal control and auditing arrangements, the Parties shall cooperate in the areas of public internal control and external audit, in particular, with the objective of “further developing and implementing the public internal control system in accordance with the principle of decentralised managerial accountability, including an independent internal audit function for the entire public sector in the Republic of Armenia, by means of approximation with generally accepted international standards, frameworks and guidance and European Union good practice, on the basis of the public internal financial control reform programme approved by the Government of the Republic of Armenia;

\(^{43}\) For example, the provisions requiring implementation of the specific Conventions in the field of intellectual property.
Cooperation in the field of technical barriers to trade states that “the Parties shall endeavour to establish and maintain a process through which gradual approximation of the technical regulations, standards and conformity assessment procedures of the Republic of Armenia to those of the European Union can be achieved”. In accordance with Article 81 related to the consumer protection, the parties “shall cooperate in order to ensure a high level of consumer protection and to achieve compatibility between their systems of consumer protection”. Article 70 states that the Parties “shall cooperate to promote agricultural and rural development, in particular through progressive convergence of policies and legislation”. There are also a number of provisions based on “taking into account” and “making efforts” approaches; 

- The provisions containing standard approximation clause with the indication of specific acts of the EU and the timeframes for their transposition (in the Annexes to the Agreement). Such provisions can be found in Title V (Other cooperation policies) 

44 For example, according to Article 30 of Chapter 3 statistics of Title IV of CEPA, “the national statistical system shall respect the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and take into account the EU acquis in the field of statistics, including the European Statistics Code of Practice, in order to align national statistical production with European norms and standards” Efforts shall be directed towards further alignment with the EU acquis in statistics, on the basis of the national strategy for the development of the statistical system of the Republic of Armenia, and taking into account the development of the European Statistical System (emphasis added – A.Kh.). Under Article 33, “efforts shall be directed towards further alignment with the EU acquis in statistics, on the basis of the national strategy for the development of the statistical system of the Republic of Armenia, and taking into account the development of the European Statistical System” emphasis added – A.Kh.). According to Article 35, “Gradual approximation of the legislation of the Republic of Armenia to the EU acquis in statistics shall be carried out in accordance with the annually updated Statistical Requirements Compendium as produced by Eurostat, which is considered by the Parties as annexed to the Agreement”.

45 These are: Article 41 with Annex I (transport), Article 44 with Annex II (energy), Article 50 with Annex III (environment), Article 56 with Annex IV (climate), Article 65 with Annex V (information society), Article 83 with Annex VI (consumer protection), Article 90 with Annex VII (employment, social policy and equal opportunities), Article 361 with Annex XII (anti-fraud regulations).
and Title VII Financial Assistance, And Anti-Fraud and Control Provisions. They do not lead to the opening of the market but may be elements of other conditionality mechanisms. The lists of the EU acts provided in Annexes include such types of the sources of the EU law as regulations and directives. Although in the context of the EU law the difference between these acts is significant (it concerns the, first of all, the direct effect and applicability of these acts), for the purposes of the legislative approximation this difference is insignificant since both types of the acts are to be transposed into domestic legal system and are not directly applicable. Moreover, in contrast with the EU Member States, the obligations of Armenia can be restricted to the implementation of specific provisions and not the whole of the relevant EU acts.

Other areas of cooperation (company law, accounting and auditing, and corporate governance, industrial and enterprise policy, cooperation in the areas of banking, insurance and other financial services) do not presuppose legislative approximation; however, the Armenian legal system may benefit from the improvement of national legislation through the exchange of information and best practices. Furthermore, the legislative approximation can be done on a voluntary basis and go beyond the formal requirements of CEPA.

46 This is due to the specific nature of approximation in contrast with legal processes taking place within EU. As A. Matta notes, there several methods or models of norm/values export “depending on particular integration objectives set in the respective agreements”: “very complex and highly demanding methods such as ‘homogeneity’, ‘mutual’ recognition and ‘binding harmonization’ (aiming at accession to the Union)” and “less demanding but more frequently used method of ‘legislative approximation’ to the EU acquis” (see Matta A., Differentiating the methods of acquis export, Legislative Approximation and Application of EU Law in the Eastern Neighbourhood of the European Union, Routledge, 2014, p. 35). Both approximation and harmonization (in contrast with homogeneity and recognition) “may vary in objectives and intensity depending on the context in which they are used”; “for approximation this variation depends on the level and intensity of the integration objectives towards the EU, such as compatibility or convergence, as well as on the attitude of the actors involved” (Matta A., Op. cit, pp. 37-38).
The second group (‘horizontal’ legislative approximation provisions) includes inter alia Article 370 setting out the general obligation of Armenia to “carry out gradual approximation of its legislation to EU law as referred to in the Annexes, based on commitments identified in this Agreement, and in accordance with the provisions of those Annexes” while making the exceptions for “specific provisions under Title VI”. Article 371 is titled “Dynamic” approximation. It states that “in line with the goal of the gradual approximation of the legislation of the Republic of Armenia to EU law, the Partnership Council shall periodically revise and update the Annexes to this Agreement in order, inter alia, to reflect the evolution of EU law and applicable standards set out in international instruments deemed relevant by the Parties, taking into account the completion of the Parties’ respective internal procedures”. As the Constitutional Court of Armenia held with the reference to its case-law, such revision of the Annexes will be considered as amendment of the Agreement and will require ratification in the same manner as the Agreement itself.

It is important to mention that legislative approximation mechanisms established by Articles 169, 180, 189 and 192 (although not defining the lists of the EU acts for approximation) presuppose specific procedure of dispute settlement. In particular, under Article 342 (2), “where a dispute raises a question of interpretation of a provision of Union law, the arbitration panel shall request the Court of Justice of the European Union to give a ruling on the question provided that question is necessary for the decision of the arbitration panel. […] The ruling of the

47 On the basis of comparative analysis of this provision with the relevant clauses in other agreements with third countries, it may be argued that the established mechanism is rather static than dynamic, since, in as Van Der Loo defines, “there is no obligation to automatically adopt every amendment to the EU acquis that could potentially be relevant to the agreement” (Van Der Loo G., The EU-Ukraine DCFTA, In: Legislative Approximation and Application of EU Law in the Eastern Neighbourhood of the European Union. Routledge, 2014, p. 78).

48 Para 11 of Decision DCC-1407 cited above.
Court of Justice of the European Union shall be binding on the arbitration panel\footnote{Van Der Loo G., The EU-Ukraine DCFTA, Legislative Approximation and Application of EU Law in the Eastern Neighbourhood of the European Union. Routledge, 2014, p. 82.}

Similar mechanisms (although with a wider list of provisions where the specific procedure of dispute settlement is applicable) can be found in the AAs with the EaP countries. Notably, in contrast with CEPA, these provisions contain the lists of the EU acts to be transposed. As Van Der Loo observes in relation to Ukrainian AA, the established mechanism is a novelty in the EU practice of bilateral relations and is called to ensure the uniform interpretation of the EU acquis in such relations.

The focus of CEPA on the implementation and enforcement of the approximated legislation indicates the significant role of judiciary in the process of Europeanization of Armenian legal system. Although there is no strict requirement in CEPA, taking into account the case-law of the Court of Justice of the EU by Armenian judges may be necessary to secure the appropriate implementation of the approximated legislation. Using the EUCJ case-law in the judicial argumentation could be facilitated through certain legislative drafting techniques. In particular, the preambular references to the relevant EU acts in the approximated domestic legislation could serve as a ground for using both these acts and the case-law interpreting them to construct the arguments based on the purposive and ‘legislator’s intent’ approaches\footnote{The said legislative technique is used, for example, in Moldova (see Khvorostiankina A., Legislative Approximation and Application of EU Law in Moldova, Legislative Approximation and Application of EU Law in the Eastern Neighbourhood of the European Union. Towards a Common Regulatory Space? Edited by Roman Petrov, Peter Van Elsuwege, Routledge, 2014, pp. 159-178).}. In the same manner as in case of ECtHR judgments, application of the EUCJ judgments will be challenging for the domestic judiciary. In particular, the application of such source as EUCJ case-law will require not only specific knowledge and skills, but also the change of legal mentality based on the philosophy of legal positivism inherited from the Soviet period\footnote{See, for example: Kühn Z., The Application of European Law in the New Member States: Several (Early) Predictions, German Law Journal, 6(3)m (2005),}. 

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{Van Der Loo G.} Van Der Loo G., The EU-Ukraine DCFTA, Legislative Approximation and Application of EU Law in the Eastern Neighbourhood of the European Union. Routledge, 2014, p. 82.
\bibitem{Kühn Z.} Kühn Z., The Application of European Law in the New Member States: Several (Early) Predictions, German Law Journal, 6(3)m (2005),
\end{thebibliography}
It is necessary to stress that, in addition to the legislative approximation requirements in specific sectors, other commitments are also directed to the improvement of legislative regulation in Armenia generally. In particular, according to Article 308, “[r]ecognising the impact which their respective regulatory environment may have on trade and investment between them, the Parties shall provide a predictable regulatory environment and efficient procedures for economic operators, in particular for SMEs”. Under Article 313, the Parties shall cooperate in promoting regulatory quality and performance and support the principles of good administrative behaviour. Title VI (Trade and trade-related matters) sets out the requirements of legal certainty. Specifically, according to Article 309 (1), each Party shall ensure that measures of general application adopted after the entry into force of this Agreement:

(a) are promptly and readily available via an officially designated medium, including electronic means, in such a manner as to enable any person to become acquainted with them;

(b) clearly state to the extent possible, the objective of and rationale for such measures; and

(c) allow for a sufficient period of time between publication and entry into force of such measures, except in duly justified cases.

Undoubtedly, these provisions have the potential to positively influence the development of Armenian legal system in case of their full and proper implementation. This will require both the improvement of legislatives techniques and establishing and maintaining the high standards of administrative and judicial procedures.

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52 As defined in Article 307 (a), “measures of general application” include laws, regulations, decisions, procedures and administrative rulings of general application that may have an impact on any matter covered by this Agreement.
Conclusion

The newly signed EU-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Agreement is a unique legal instrument regulating the relations between the EU and a country which is a member of another economic integration organization – Eurasian Economic Union. Armenia’s Participation in the EAEU caused the necessity to adapt the text of the failed EU-Armenia Association Agreement to take into consideration the international obligations under EAEU Treaty. As a result, the new Agreement - CEPA - does not presuppose the creation of the DCFTA thus lacking one of the most significant incentives the EU can offer to the countries without membership perspectives and aspirations. This, undoubtedly, weakens the mechanisms of the EU rules and values transfer in comparison with the AAs with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. In addition, in course of implementation of both CEPA and EAEU acts, it is possible that the legal collisions will appear between them and will require resolving using the domestic legal instruments.

Nevertheless, the transformative potential of CEPA is still significant. In addition to the reformation of domestic legislative regulation through its approximation to the EU acquis, proper and full implementation of the provisions requiring legal certainty and predictability, regulatory quality, transparency of regulation, good administrative behaviour etc. will surely contribute to further improvement of Armenian legal system. Apparently, this may be achieved only under the circumstances of comprehensive and systematic governmental approach to the implementation of the required reforms.

Significant role in the ensuring proper implementation of the Agreement will be played by Armenian judiciary, since CEPA stresses the importance of implementation and enforcement of the approximated legislation, as well as maintaining of high standards of judicial procedures based on the principle of the rule of law. It is obvious, that achieving the objectives of CEPA (including the objectives in the economic field) is not possible without proper level of Human Rights protection and fair trial guarantees. Consequently, the systematic changes in the judicial system will be required. Additionally, the implementation of CEPA will demand new skills, knowledge and methodological
approaches from Armenian judges. This is caused, in particular, by the necessity to take into consideration the case-law of the CJEU. Even though there is no such a requirement in CEPA (in contrast with AA and some other EU external agreements), this may be essential for proper interpretation and implementation of the ‘Europeanized’ legislation.
Evaluating Political Regime through Discourse Measurement of Political Culture: The Case of the Republic of Armenia

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The article proposes to evaluate the level of political culture and the nature of current political regime through political discourse. The article argues that the suggested methodology for measuring political culture through the study of political discourse (the discourse measurement of political culture, DMPC) can be an effective and alternative method in the multitude of quantitative methods used in political science. The methodology of discourse measurement of political culture proposes to separate the semantic units in discourse, i.e. words, word combinations, expressions, etc., which can be important in the evaluation of political regimes. The method has been used for the measurement of political culture and evaluation of political regime type in Armenia. The research conducted by the DMPC method proves that Armenia has a semi-authoritarian regime that stands closer to semi-democratic regime. However, it is still characterized by a non-constructive multilateral discourse or its imitation, and the elements of weak participatory political culture continue to dominate politics.

Keywords
classification
political culture, political discourse, political regime, DMPC method, post-Soviet transformation

Introduction

The new challenges in social and political processes stemmed from various internal and external factors, as well as the flawed democratic discourse practiced by modern autocracies requires the development of new and more effective tools for the evaluation of political culture and political regime. The studies on this issue prove that traditional approaches to the evaluation and classification of political culture and political regime can not fully comply with new realities due to rapid
development of new world order and transformations in social and political systems.

Whereas the study of political culture for addressing the problems of democracy consolidation and development has been applied since the 1980s, it is only recently used for the purpose of political regime evaluation and classification. Works on the study of regimes through political discourse address not only authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, but also democratic ones, including some post-Soviet transformation states. Still, there is no complex study on the regimes of post-Soviet states based on this method. Thus, in terms of these studies the general and specific features of this group of countries have not been disclosed yet.

A complex study on the regimes of post-Soviet states should consider both the results of researches based on traditional methods as the basis for comparative studies and the past experience. The latter reveals that while post-Soviet transformation is subjected to a number of general principles of transitology, it has some essential features the ignorance of which brings forth fundamental inaccuracies and flaws both when studying this phenomenon and when making forecasts and adjustments on the ongoing developments.

The study of regime peculiarities through political discourse is explicitly related to political culture since the latter includes political beliefs and relations that are linked to state institutions. Political relations include links between political community, political regime and political actors. Thus, the study of discourse features of political actors can help to reveal the peculiarities of political regimes and turn to the basis for their classification.

Martinez Ramos made a comparative discourse analysis of populism and civic culture in Latin American states concluding that the

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1 Torosyan T., Hasarakakan hamakargi hetkhorhrdayin transphormatsia, Yerevan, HH GAA "Gitutyun" hratarakchutyun, 2006 (in Armenian).
3 Ibid.
study of political discourse practiced in those countries may enable to distinguish features that characterize both the existing political culture and the political regime.\

Among the studies on political regimes, of particular importance is the work "Totalitarian and authoritarian discourses: A Global and Timeless Phenomenon?" which offers an analysis of authoritarian and totalitarian discourses and their aftermath. The study mostly focuses on communist discourse including the cases of former East Germany, former Yugoslavia, Romania, Lithuania, China, North Korea, the Philippines, Burma, Cuba and Tunisia. The objects of comparison are past and present discourses. The study reveals the universal characteristics of totalitarian and authoritarian discourses over space and time.

Totalitarian discourse is based on paternalism, declamation, and manipulative design of political setting. It generally conveys a unilateral "top to bottom" semantics, which provokes a rapturous response of the audience, reducing the communication format to a monologue. Key words of totalitarian discourse function as signals. This type of discourse poses an additional threat shaping mass totalitarian mentality.

Maria Vázquez Semadeni defines political culture "as a practice of a set of discourses and symbols through which individuals or political groups develop their own attitude towards the power, form their political demands turning them into the agenda". This, in its turn, determines the mode of political regime.

Studying the Romanian experience of transition from totalitarian to informative discourse, Luminita Rosca concludes that in Romanian

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media post-totalitarian discourse is a hybrid display of propaganda and information, where the "remnants" of the post-Soviet period are still present, and at the same time attempts are made to fit this within the liberal media\(^9\).

To reveal the discursive features of political regimes, one should consider the three dimensions of political culture – cognitive, affective, and evaluative. Cognitive dimension implies the knowledge on political objects, i.e. how the whole political system works, who are its leaders, and what are the current political problems. Affective elements include affection, rejection, engagement and other feelings towards the political objects. In other words, it refers to the alienation from the political system or to a positive self-identification with that system as a single whole. Evaluative elements include judgments and opinions on political objects\(^10\). All this is shaped in political behavior and thus characterizes the political regime in which the above-mentioned elements become acceptable for one another and applicable in political process.

The analysis of totalitarian discourse is largely based on the study of linguistic peculiarities used in totalitarian regimes which mainly includes the fascist, nationalist-socialist (nazi) and military-bourgeois (communist) regimes. In this respect, of particular importance is Beatrice Turpin's research on totalitarian discourse, in which the author identifies the main features typical to that type of discourse:

- Totalitarian discourse absorbs all sources of information,
- It absorbs both public and private spheres,
- It is a “terrible supremacy”,\(^11\)
- It is associated with violence and death; "it smells of blood",\(^12\)
- It is anti-historical and completely ideological,
- There is no individual in this language, the individual is a “livestock”,\(^13\)


\(^12\) Ibid.

\(^13\) Ibid.
It is mysterious\(^{14}\).

The above-mentioned characteristics give a full picture of totalitarian discourse as a tool used by the government to suppress and subdue the people.

According to Jean Peytard, totalitarian discourse leads to the mechanization of mind\(^{15}\).

Le Bon notes that authoritarian discourse is also distinguished by its exceptional verbal features of mobilizing the crowd using the following factors in that process – persistence, repetition, simplification, standardization, and emotionalism\(^{16}\). These successive phases of verbal process lead the totalitarian ideology towards the recipient's consciousness and impose an appropriate political behavior.

A carefully selected word or frequently repeated formulas have a powerful force\(^{17}\). The power of words is so great that correctly chosen terms are enough to make the most disgusting things acceptable. In this case, even the logics and arguments are powerless against some words and formulas\(^{18}\).

Authoritarian discourse suppresses dialectics and contradictions. Only one voice should be heard. Totalitarianism eliminates any other party and opposition\(^{19}\). The negative pathos has its own place and role in totalitarian discourse. Regardless of its grounds, totalitarian discourse can be understood as domination, which contradicts a social dialogue, rejecting all other values besides those of its own. All arguments are regarded as signs of doubt\(^{20}\). Totalitarian discourse does not look for any argument. It presents opinions as facts pretending that there is no need for them, since everything is quite obvious. In 1940-1990s, the discourse analysis of the leaders of some countries, i.e. the so-called "People's

\(^{13}\) Klemperer V., Op. cit., p. 49.


\(^{16}\) Le Bon G., Psychologie des foules, Paris, Alcan, 1895, p. 73.


\(^{19}\) Turpin B., Op. cit.

Democracies", the Soviet Union, North Korea and Cuba, have shown their thematic and stylistic homogeneity, the most typical feature of which is the existence of some emotional content. These discourses contain propaganda on existing regime and anti-propaganda against other regimes\textsuperscript{21}. According to A. Kacprzak, totalitarian ideologies, drawing upon the conflict, are steadily inclined towards the use of negative pathos expressed in separate linguistic means\textsuperscript{22}.

Analyzing the Soviet discourse, Merinov notes that totalitarian discourse may contain pseudo-democratic elements. Based on the example of the USSR, the researcher points out that the democratic concepts the name of this state contains, i.e. council, socialism, republic, union, completely contradict democracy. Many state institutions, being in fact democratic concepts, such as trade union, election, collective economy, etc. did not correspond to their true meaning as well. They were fake, veiled the reality, and thus the political discourse characterizing these notions was pseudo-democratic. For instance, the slogans "land to the peasant, plant to the laborer" did not correspond to reality, as the peasant was not a landlord; the land was public property just like the plant. The laborers and peasants were deprived of any influence on economic processes. The elections were turned into a voting for a single candidate. The protests were directed exclusively to the defense and mass support of the established political system, to the loyalty and unity between the people and the party. The gap between speech and reality was so deep that in some cases there was a need to clarify the concepts\textsuperscript{23}.

According to H. Arendt, totalitarianism does not seek to impose a dictatorship over the people, but to establish a system in which people are absolutely unnecessary. Complete power can be achieved and then

maintained only in the world of conventional reflexes, i.e. in the world of puppets where people are deprived of the minimal signs of expression of will\textsuperscript{24}.

Words specific to totalitarian discourse generally have the meaning of eternity. Never, forever eternal, unchanging, unchangeable, absolute, untouchable, irrevocable, irresistible, irreversible, non-destructive, incoherent, glorious, etc. are words common to totalitarian lexicon\textsuperscript{25}.

All the words above with their semantic meaning fit into the context of the totalitarian formula suggested by Mussolini: "Everything inside the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state"\textsuperscript{26}.

Authoritarian regimes mostly apply flawed multilateral discourse or its imitation using the lexicon typical to both totalitarianism and democracy. The difference is that "democratic discourse" practiced by the authoritarian regime is largely incompatible with political practice,\textsuperscript{27} and emotional discourse is used to keep people under control. The state often creates an image of outer enemy as an external threat to the stateness, against whom the people's consolidation becomes an important guarantee for the maintenance and continuity of the current regime. All these influences are mediated by political discourse.

The words commonly used in authoritarian and democratic discourses almost coincide to their semantics. Meanwhile, it should be noted that the discourse used in authoritarian regimes mostly differs from political practice, i.e. political speech and practice are not generally identical.

If totalitarian discourse is characterized by monologue full of pathos and emotionalism in which the addressee of discourse (the people) is a purely affected object and can not enter into a real dialogue and, moreover, into contradiction to official discourse, authoritarian discourse generally has flawed multilateral or imitative nature, in which discourse

\textsuperscript{24} Arendt H., Istoki totalitarizma, Moskva, TsentrKom, 1996, s. 150 (in Russian).
\textsuperscript{26} Mussolini B., All within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state, https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/benito_mussolini_109829.
\textsuperscript{27} Ordukhanyan E., Op. cit.
and political practice differ from each other. As to democratic discourse, it largely corresponds to political practice and it is based on the desire to coordinate different political stances, which implies a genuine multilateral consensus.

The above-mentioned theories and cases of different countries show that the traditional approaches on the evaluation and classification of political culture and regimes are largely based on sociological methods, i.e. surveys, interviews, etc. However, the significant influence of competition regarding the formation of a new world order on social processes, as well as the frequent use of flawed democratic discourse practiced by modern authoritarian regimes requires the improvement of the mechanisms for political regime evaluation to provide more accurate results. Traditional methods can not fully meet the requirements of the current situation. Thus, there is a need to develop new, alternative approaches to observe current socio-political phenomena and processes on a broader spectrum, based, in particular, on the study of political culture. The discourse measurement of political culture may serve for this purpose since discourse is the element that exists in every political culture.

The discourse measurement of political culture (DMPC method)

The article proposes to use the DMPC method for the evaluation of political culture. It is a quantitative method that enables to evaluate the dominant elements of political culture through detection and analysis of the features of political discourse, and regarding them in the context of political regime to define the type of that regime.

The discourse analysis of political culture includes the elements of political consciousness, political behavior and functioning of political institutions.

The accuracy of the method has been proved by comparing it with the results of political regime evaluation conducted by other methods.

Political texts circulated by the most important representative state institutions within a certain period of time (preferably at least one year) including key political processes (eg, elections) constitute the
empirical basis of the DMPC method. Political texts of the president, the
representatives of the parliament (ruling and opposition), the pre-election
campaign, as well as civil society may become the object of political
discourse as a single whole of "government-opposition-society" internal
multilateral discourse.

The measurement of political culture through discourse implies
the use of several successive steps, dividing the whole process of
research into five phases:

- The first phase requires the collection of empirical data (political
texts)
- The second phase requires the formation of cognitive map
through the study of relevant texts\(^\text{28}\)
- The third phase requires the analysis of cognitive map by the
method of critical discourse analysis (CDA)\(^\text{29}\)
- In the fourth phase the results obtained, already having been
expressed numerically, are measured by the DMPC formula
- In the fifth phase (optional, on a voluntary basis), the reliability of
measurement results, if necessary, can be checked by comparing
them with internationally recognized indexes of political regimes
(eg, Freedom House\(^\text{30}\), EIU Democracy Index\(^\text{31}\)).

The DMPC method identifies five major semantic elements of
political discourse as variables for quantitative measurement:

\(V_1\) (Tolerance): Within the framework of this variable, it is
necessary to find out the extent to which the discourse encourages
moderate, balanced and tolerant relationship between the citizens and
political forces, emphasizes the supremacy and excellence of ruling
power, the irreplaceability of political leader. The variable is evaluated in
\(\{0;1\}\) range.

\(^{28}\) Ordukhanyan E., Politicheskiy diskurs kak sredstvo politicheskoy
kommunikatsii/philosofiya, politika, kul'tura, Progress-Traditsiya, Moskva, 2011,
pp. 222-236.

\(^{29}\) Fairclough N., Wodak R., Critical discourse analysis. Glasgow University Media
Routledge A Multidisciplinary Introduction, 2, 1980; Kegan Paul. Discourse as


V₂ (Support to political system): Within the framework of this variable, it is necessary to find out the extent to which or by whom political system, implemented policy, democratic value system is encouraged and justified in discourse, the extent to which the discourse restricts the aspirations of other political forces towards the political power. The variable is evaluated in \( \{0;1\} \) range.

V₃ (Political participation): Within the framework of this variable, it is necessary to find out the extent to which and by whom the citizens are encouraged to participate in political life, the form of participation is encouraged in discourse (positive or negative). The variable is evaluated in \( \{0;1\} \) range.

V₄ (Interaction): Within the framework of this variable, it is necessary to clarify the diversity of discourse participants, the nature of discourse (monologue or dialogue, unilateral, multilateral or flawed multilateral, productive or non-productive). The variable is evaluated in \( \{0;1\} \) range.

V₅ (Constructivism and Argumentation): Within the framework of this variable, it is necessary to clarify the extent to which the discourse is constructive or destructive, whether the discourse is contentious or not, whether it is aimed at deepening the conflict or restraining it. It is necessary to clarify the extent to which the discourse is substantiated, based on real facts, the extent to which the opinions are presented as facts, whether they correspond to reality, the extent to which the discourse is influenced by pathos and populism. The variable is evaluated in \( \{0;1\} \) range.

The research on a series of studies regarding the evaluation of political regimes based on political discourse\(^{32}\) has allowed to formulate...
three groups of discourse content and political regime type in compliance:

- Political discourse is totalitarian and implies a patriarchal and a subject political culture (totalitarian regime) when unilateral, monological, without an interaction and coercive.
- Political discourse is authoritarian and implies a flawed participatory or a subject political culture (authoritarian regime) when based on flawed pluralism and interaction, in which the applied policy differs from presented discourse.
- Political discourse is democratic and implies a civic and participatory political culture (democratic regime) when based on pluralism and constructivism, and accompanied by multilateral communication guaranteeing the compliance between applied policy and political discourse.\(^3\)

Based on this classification, the three groups above, in their turn, have been divided into five subgroups to make a more specific classification of political regimes and to increase the accuracy of evaluation within the scope of DMPC method.

According to the DMPC method, political regime is evaluated in 0-5 point scale. The closer the indicator is to 5, the more democratic is the regime and there exists a participatory and civic culture.

Numerical ranges corresponding to the above-mentioned five subgroups of the regimes are as follows:

The range \(0 < V \leq 1\) – an absolute unilateral discourse, a dominant patriarchal and a subject political culture, totalitarian regime,

The range \(1 < V \leq 2\) – a unilateral or flawed multilateral discourse, a dominant subject political culture, stable authoritarian regime,
The range \( \{2 < V \leq 3\} \) – weak (non-constructive, non-productive) multilateral discourse (or imitation of multilateral discourse), a subject and weak (non-productive) participatory political culture, semi-authoritarian or hybrid regime,

The range \( \{3 < V \leq 4\} \) – full-fledged multilateral discourse, participatory and civic culture, semi-democratic regime,

The range \( \{4 < V \leq 5\} \) – stable, constructive and productive multilateral discourse, stable civic culture, consolidated democratic regime.

The proposed classification of political regimes in five groups is conditioned by the general logic of regime classification applied in international practice and literature\(^{34}\). For instance, Freedom House classifies political regimes in five groups: stable authoritarian regime, semi-authoritarian regime, transitional government or hybrid regime, semi-stable democracy and stable democracy\(^{35}\). In this classification, totalitarian regime is not regarded as a separate type of regime whereas its characteristics differ from that of the authoritarian regime. Thus, totalitarian regime has been included in the proposed classification as a separate political regime. At the same time, as semi-authoritarian regime and transitional government or hybrid regime are varieties of semi-authoritarian political regime, the latter is used instead of these two to maintain the proportional division of political regimes.

For all five variables, the choice of the range 0 to 1 is conditioned by the principle of proportionality with 0 to 5 point scale of political regime evaluation. In empirical research, the principle of selecting parity units of equal value for variables is applied in international practice for the purpose of regime evaluation, particularly regarding the Democracy Index of Freedom House\(^{36}\). However, it is not ruled out that after long

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term experiment the equal range of five variables defined by the DMPC method may be revised, if necessary.

In the methodology of discourse measurement of political culture, the subgroup of political culture and political regime is determined by the proportionality of the number of semantic units (words, word combinations, sentences) used in a positive and negative sense with regard to tolerance, support to political system, political participation, interaction, constructivism and argumentation and the general number of units of political discourse.

The empirical basis of the research, i.e. political texts should be analyzed by the method of CDA. In a given discourse, a set of semantic units of language is identified for each of the five variables out of which are separated those used in a positive and negative sense. Further, for each variable, it is necessary to find out the part of the total units positive semantic units constitute.

\[ V_i = \frac{PSU_i}{GSU_i}, \text{ in which } i = \{1, 2, 3, 4, 5\}, \]

PSU is the number of positive semantic units of language; GSU is the number of general semantic units of language. The total index of a particular discourse is determined by the formula below:

\[ V = V_1 + V_2 + \ldots + V_5 = \sum_{i=1}^{5} V_i. \]

The use of DMPC method for political regime evaluation in Armenia

Within the post-Soviet transformation, the development of social and political systems of the former Soviet states takes place in diverse, multi-vectorial ways.

T. Torosyan and H. Sukiasyan distinguish three groups of post-Soviet states. The first group includes the post-Soviet states that have already formed strong democracies. The second "waiting group" is composed of countries still facing civilization and integration choice. The third group is called tough authoritarian or totalitarian group\textsuperscript{37}.

For the countries in the first and third group, post-Soviet transformation is considered to be completed with the second stage. The third stage can

be considered only for the countries of the "waiting group" Armenia is also included in\textsuperscript{38}. Thus, Armenia is still in the dilemma of political regime adjustment. From this perspective, the discourse measurement of Armenia's political culture becomes an important and urgent problem.

The empirical basis of the research is Armenia's internal political discourse of 2017. The focus is on the discourse of representative political institutions, i.e., official speeches, interviews, and press conferences of the Republic of Armenia\textsuperscript{39}. The research particularly addresses 2017 pre-election discourse of RA National Assembly, the parliamentary discourse of RA National Assembly 6\textsuperscript{th} convocation (transcripts of 2017 parliamentary sessions\textsuperscript{40}) – speeches of pro-government and opposition political forces, questions and answers to the government, as well as the discourse of the most famous civil initiatives of 2017 (the students' struggle against the abolition of the Military Deferment Law\textsuperscript{41}). The analysis of discourse of civil initiatives is due to the fact that this discourse often turns into agenda for political institutions promoting inter-party interaction and dialogue.

The cognitive map of Armenia's internal political discourse of 2017 has been drawn based on the analysis of the above-mentioned empirical materials:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Number of semantic units of language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V\textsubscript{1}</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V\textsubscript{3}</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V\textsubscript{4}</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V\textsubscript{5}</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid
\textsuperscript{41} Tarketum linelu e, https://www.azatutyun.am/a/28870098.html, (15.02.2018), (in Armenian).
The data presented on the map allowed to present internal political discourse in the form of numbers where the five variables have been separately analyzed by the DMPC method.

With regard to $V_1$ (tolerance), 83 semantic linguistic units have been registered in Armenia's internal political discourse of 2017, 50 of which used in a positive sense, 33-in a negative sense. Thus, $V_1 = \frac{PSU_1}{GSU_1} = 50/83 = 0.6$.

Figure 1

The percentage of positive applications was 0.6%. In internal political discourse, the use of words associated with tolerance in a positive sense has been more than that in a negative one. The discourse has mostly encouraged a more balanced attitude between the government, opposition, citizens and political forces, though some elements of intolerance mostly against the government's policy have also been detected. Elements of intolerance have also been observed in debates between parliamentarians, sometimes accompanied by physical force. Parliamentary discourse also included many critical speeches by MP's from the opposition parties, which, however, largely maintained tolerance towards political opponents. In some instances, the discourse of the authorities or government supporters displayed linguistic elements about the exclusivity, excellence, infallibility, truthfulness and indispensability of the country's leader. The presidential discourse also focused on the
elements of tolerance. Thus, tolerance was mostly encouraged in the internal Armenian political discourse of 2017.

With regard to $V_2$ (support to political system), 107 semantic units have been registered in 2017 internal political discourse, 51 of which used in a positive sense, 56-in a negative sense. Thus, $V_2=51/107=0.48$.

Positive applications made up 0.48% of the total. In internal political discourse, the use of semantic linguistic units on the effectiveness of political system in negative and positive sense was almost equal. Positive elements have been mostly observed in the discourse of authorities, where the transition to a new system of government was interpreted exclusively in a positive light. At the same time, problematic, dubious, skeptic verbal manifestations of parliamentary system of government have been observed in the discourse of parliamentary opposition. However, there was no speech on a complete rejection or overthrow of that system. The internal political discourse encouraged democratic value system, modernization of state institutions, primarily focusing on the priorities of the armed forces in terms of raising its effectiveness. In presidential discourse, verbal manifestations in support to the political system and the new system of government were introduced exclusively in a positive light. Meanwhile, it should be noted that the discourse of government restricted the
aspirations of other political forces regarding the proliferation of intolerance towards the system. As a result, negative verbal expressions have slightly exceeded the positive ones.

With regard to $V_3$ (political participation), 84 semantic units have been registered in 2017 internal political discourse, 63 of which used in a positive sense, 21-in a negative sense. Thus, $V_3 = 63/84 = 0.75$.

Participation of citizens was one of the key elements in internal political discourse. Participation to political life and political processes was largely encouraged by the representatives of the opposition and civil society, mostly in NA pre-election campaign of 2017 and during some acts and protests of civil disobedience. Regardless of numerous criticisms, extremist manifestations were not observed in pre-election discourse. In that period, the discourse of the opposition encouraged the activity of citizens in elections as an important precondition for the positive changes in political life. The number of voters in 2017 parliamentary elections was 60.93% compared to the number of citizens included in the voter lists, in part due to the intensity of the pre-election discourse of political forces. During the post-election period, the discourse of ruling power included some verbal elements directed to restrain citizens' participation in various political acts, in the name of...

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non-violating the established legal procedures, which provoked a negative reaction of protesters. The presidential discourse contained not many verbal implications with regard to political participation. In this respect, the discourse can be characterized as neutral. The discourse directed to the promotion of political participation prevailed over the others also due to complex socioeconomic situation in the country.

With regard to $V_4$ (interaction), 94 semantic linguistic units have been registered in the internal political discourse of 2017, 54 of which used in a positive sense, 40-in a negative sense. Thus,

$$V_4 = \frac{54}{94} = 0.57.$$

The internal political discourse has attracted many representatives from the government, the opposition and the civil society. Thus, the discourse formally provided the diversity of discourse participants. The discourse included both monologues and dialogues. The discourse of high-ranking officials, in particular the presidential discourse, was largely a monologue, also due to procedural peculiarities. In presidential discourse, the dialogues were mostly in form of interviews. The discourse of the president addressed to the citizens was mediated by the media. As to the dialogue with the representatives of the opposition, the president has been more passive than active. This is also due to the peculiarities of president's office, which does not envisage mandatory dialogues with the representatives of other political forces unlike the government representatives, who, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly, "... in the last sitting on each Wednesday of the four-
day sitting of the regular session answer to Deputies’ questions"\textsuperscript{43}. This, in itself, implies a mandatory dialogue between the government and the parliament. In addition to the parliamentary questions and answers, where the bilateral discourse was not effective enough (ie, most of the proposals submitted by the members of the opposition to the government were not accepted or, in case of criticism, the latter tried to justify itself or to reject them). The government also entered into dialogue with the representatives of civil society (in particular, with the students struggling against the abolition of the Military Deferment Law). In the aftermath of these bilateral discourses, the demands of protesting students were not met but, instead, they were offered to participate in further discussions of that issue. In general, the discourse of the government was not highly effective in terms of the interaction.

In pre-election discourse, the level of interaction was higher as compared to other political processes. Almost all political forces had meetings with voters from different parts of the country. During these meetings, the representatives of the opposition had more interactive in dialogues with voters, and their discourse was more direct and spontaneous. The representatives of the ruling party used mostly pre-designed texts during the campaigns; the public questions addressed to them were not that critical and the complaints were strictly limited. This created an impression of a flawed multilateral discourse. Nevertheless, the internal political discourse, in terms of its intensity, can be considered more active than passive first of all due to the electoral year. Thus, in internal political discourse, the interaction index was 0.58 on the 0-1 point scale.

With regard to $V_5$ (Constructivism and Argumentation), 194 semantic linguistic units have been registered in the internal political discourse of 2017, 49 of which used in a positive sense, 145-in a negative sense. Thus,

$$V_5 = \frac{49}{194} = 0.25.$$  

The percentage of words used in a positive sense amounted to 0,25%. Internal political discourse was mostly characterized by contentious elements, which, however, did not lead to extreme political behavior. At the same time, discourse of conflict, mostly used by the representatives of the opposition and civil society, was not aimed at deepening the conflict between the parties and excluding concessions or consensus. It was rather balanced but did not stand out for its effectiveness. Elements of constructivism have been traced both in the discourse of the opposition and that of the pro-government forces according to their position in political field. However, the discursive constructivism has not generally turned into practical constructivism. For instance, the suggestions made by the members of the opposition were mostly rejected, or even if they were adopted in the bills, were later rejected based on voting results. The parliamentary opposition has been often charged with a non-constructive policy by the parliamentary majority. It is important to note that constructivism implies the willingness of all parties involved in that process to achieve common goals. From this point of view, some constructive political behavior in the discourse of the opposition has been rejected mostly by the parliamentary majority. Thus, the pro-government forces are primarily responsible for the failure of constructivism and, to a lesser extent, the opposition, which unlike the government, does not have administrative levers for the implementation of its programs.
Failed attempts of constructive discourse have also been observed between the civic initiatives and the government. Particularly, the attempts of productive interaction between the students struggling against the abolition of the Military Deferment Law, mostly failed.

Thus, weak constructivism in internal political discourse is first of all due to the above-mentioned circumstances. More often the elements of discourse rejecting constructivism have been traced in the discourse of ruling power, which emphasized that all the decisions were made in party office thereby, by means of discourse, reducing the role and importance of the parliament as a representative body and the most important state institution of constructivism. Meanwhile, there was also an exceptional case of the use of constructive parliamentary discourse in November 2017 on signing an agreement with the EU, when the ruling and opposition parties reached a political consensus on the issue.

In terms of argumentation, internal political discourse was characterized by weak and vulnerable elements. In most of the cases, the allegations made by the government, the parliamentary majority and the representatives of the opposition have been more abstract than argumented. Some approaches suggested have not been fully grounded. For instance, often the arguments presented in parliament with regard to the bills have not been stemmed from the interests of broader public, such as the changes of income tax in the Tax Code. There have also been persistent attempts by some government and opposition figures to present their own opinions as facts. The discourse of the opposition was characterized by a highly emphasized criticism on the bills proposed by the ruling power. From this point of view, the amendments regarding the Military Deferment Law raised criticism and disobedience outside the parliament, in particular among the students. These protests were based on a weak argumentation of the need for the proposed amendments to the law. Thus, the views expressed in governmental discourse often did not comply with the actual situation, and did not meet the requirements of a broader public. The internal political discourse was also rich with the elements of populism. The Government justified many of its decisions and laws adopted by its being a parliamentary majority claiming that the majority of the people have trusted them, which according to formal logic does not presupposes an argumented discourse. Being a political
majority does not always mean being right, and, conversely, being a minority does not always mean to be wrong. The discourse of the opposition has not often been often substantiated as well. It was limited to "criticism for criticism" principle; in some cases being supportive to the parliamentary system of government and then criticizing that system merely stemmed from the fact that it was not the initiative of the opposition but that of the authorities.

Thus, the internal political discourse of 2017 mostly varied from real politics; the dominant opinions of the authorities have been often presented as facts; the discourse was rich in populism which had a strong negative impact on its argumentation. The internal political discourse was mostly devoid of constructivism. As a result, the index of constructivism and argumentation was 0.25 on the 0-1 point scale.

Combining the results of 2017 internal political discourse, the following picture can be drawn:

![The Proportionality of the Internal Armenian Political Discourse in 2017](image)

The proportionality of the internal Armenian political discourse of 2017 shows that the index of "political participation" was the highest
(0.75), therefore indicating the encouragement of political activity in
discourse. At the same time, constructivism and argumentation have the
lowest index (0.25) among all the other components of discourse. Due to
this, the productivity and thus the total index of discourse was rather low.
This means that in general the discourse varied from the political
practice, which points out to its imitative nature.

Thus, to evaluate political regime through the DMPC method
according to the formula introduced, it is necessary to sum the indexes of
all five variables of political discourse. The total sum may enable to
reveal the kind of political culture and political regime shaped in
Armenia.

\[ V = V_1 + V_2 + \ldots + V_5 = 0.60 + 0.48 + 0.75 + 0.57 + 0.25 = 2.65 \]

Thus, the 2017 index of political culture of Armenia amounted to
2.65, according to which the elements of a subject and a weak (non-
productive) participatory culture dominated in the Armenian political
culture, which corresponds to semi-authoritarian political regime, that
stands closer to semi-democratic rather than authoritarian regime.

As to 2017 internal political discourse, it can be defined as weak
multilateral discourse with the dominance of non-constructive and non-
productive elements. Multilateral political discourse mostly had an
imitative nature, filled with populism.

The table below shows the place Armenia occupies among the
five groups of political regime classification (2,65 point), which defines
the type of political discourse, political culture and political regime in
Armenia.
Figure 8

Types of Political Culture and Political Regime in Armenia (point - 2.65)

- $[0 < R \leq 1] \rightarrow$ fully unilateral discourse, dominant parochial, subjective political culture, totalitarian regime
- $[1 < R \leq 2] \rightarrow$ unilateral or fake plural discourse, dominant subjective political culture, consolidated authoritarian regime
- $[2 < R \leq 3] \rightarrow$ weak (destructive, inefficient) plural discourse (or plural discourse imitation), subjective and weak (inefficient) participant culture, semi-consolidated authoritarian regime
- $[3 < R \leq 4] \rightarrow$ fully plural discourse, participant culture and civic culture, semi-consolidated democratic regime
- $[4 < R \leq 5] \rightarrow$ sustainable, constructive, efficient plural discourse, sustainable civic culture, consolidated democratic regime

Point of Armenia: 2.65
To verify the accuracy of research, the result of political regime measurement in Armenia conducted by the DMPC method has been compared with that of 2016-2017 Armenia's indexes of Freedom in the World (Nations in Transit) and Economist Intelligence Unit (Democracy Index).

According to Freedom House report (Nations in Transit 2017), Armenia's democracy score of 2017 is 5.39\(^4\) which corresponds to semi-authoritarian regime. Similar results have been obtained from EIU democracy index of 2016, according to which the score of political regime in Armenia was 3.88\(^5\) which characterizes it as an authoritarian regime. Thus, the results of political culture measurement obtained by the DMPC method and the indexes of Freedom House and Economist Intelligence Units are in line with each other. This shows that the proposed method is effective and, if necessary, can be applied in other countries as an additional or auxiliary method to carry out similar measurements. At the same time, unlike the indexes of Freedom House, Economy Intelligence Unit and several others, the novelty of the DMPC method is that it allows not only to clarify the type of political regime but also to reveal the elements that dominate the political culture and political discourse of a particular society. In the course of the application of this method, the type of political regime is determined by the evaluation of the relationship between political culture and political discourse. Therefore, unlike other methods, the DMPC method analyzes political practice in the context of "political regime-political culture-political discourse" trinity. However, it should be noted that the effectiveness of this method is conditioned not only by the precise selection and application of its tools, but also by the objective analysis of the empirical material. The researcher should by highly attentive to the objective perception of discourse in its interpretation and should avoid including his subjective perceptions on political institutions and processes in discourse analysis.

Conclusion

The research reveals that

- The totalitarian discourse is characterized by monologue full of pathos and emotions where the addressee of discourse, i.e. the people, is a purely affected object and cannot enter into real dialogue, especially into contradiction with the official discourse. The latter does not "tolerate" any other discourse, it is unilateral and encourages full commitment and support of the people to political power and the established political regime.

- The authoritarian discourse includes the elements of both totalitarian and democratic discourse. However, it has largely a flawed multilateral or imitative nature where the discourse and political practice vary from each other. In contrast, democratic discourse is mostly in line with political practice and it is based on the attempt to coordinate different political stances providing for a genuine multilateral consensus.

- The proposed DMPC method can be used for the evaluation of political regime and political culture based on political discourse analysis. Comparison of the results obtained by this method with those of well-known international indexes testifies to their comparability.

- The result of the research conducted by DMPC method proves that a semi-authoritarian regime has been formed in Armenia where a non-constructive, non-productive multilateral discourse or the imitation of multilateral discourse are still prevailing and the elements of weak participatory culture continue to dominate politics.
Formation of Armenian Political Parties in the Context of Restoration of Independence

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The process of the restoration of independence along with Nagorno-Karabakh's self-determination issue was the first major political problem the Armenian political parties faced. The article examines the formation of a multiparty system in Armenia in the context of that process. Armenian political parties took their part in the process while having principle disagreements concerning the alternatives of road, timeline and means of achieving the independence. Definitely seeking to independence, Armenian political parties were suggesting completely different roadmaps of handling the process. Simultaneously, these disagreements led to inter-party ideological debate. Thus, this article has an objective to discuss the debate by presenting comprehensive attitude of parties towards independence. It is important to identify the role of political parties and the fight between them in the process of independence in terms of studying the history of the Third Republic and the formation of a multi-party system in Armenia. With the approaching referendum on independence, the stances of the Armenian political forces were crystallized and finally, on the eve of the referendum, all Armenian political forces came to an agreement.

Keywords
Independence, the Republic of Armenia, stateness, post-Soviet transformation, collapse of USSR

The issue of Armenia's independence became a key component of the Armenian policy agenda in the last years of the Soviet Union, in particular during the pan-national awakening started in 1988. The idea of independence was institutionalized in the 1960s, the most massive manifestation of which was the creation of an underground National United Party (NUP) in 1967. The party united a group of devotees with a common goal of realizing the idea of independent Armenia¹. It is impossible to underestimate the creation and functioning of the NUP and secret groups, associations and political organizations pursuing the same

¹ Harutyunyan V., Aylakhohutyuny khorhrdayin Hayastanum, Yerevan, Van Aryan, 2014 (in Armenian).
ideas. Moreover, the influence of the NUP was noticeable even after the restoration of Armenia's independence. Ashot Navasardyan, the founder of the Republican Party of Armenia (RPA) and its leader since 1997, and later Andranik Margaryan who has been heading the party for 10 years were members of the NUP governing body. Some members of the RPA governing body have joined the underground party in the Soviet years. The members of the NUP, in particular its leadership, were being subjected to "heavy blows" by special services of the USSR, i.e. fictitious trials, exile, imprisonment. Nevertheless, the idea of independence was gradually covering new layers of the society. In 1990, when the democratic forces came to power in Armenia, independence finally turned to a central issue of political agenda. It has acquired a predominant status over all the other problems of the Republic.

The idea of independence started to widely circulate on an institutional level at the PANM founding congress held in November 7, 1989, becoming a part of party program. Though separate political organizations, among which the Union for National Self-Determination (UNSD), RPA, and Constitutional Law Union (CLU) have already raised the demand for independence, the pan-national movement was more focused on solving the problem of reunification of Artsakh and Armenia under the Soviet administrative and political influence. As a result of the latest 1990 elections of the Supreme Soviet of the Armenian SSR, a considerable number of candidates entered into the parliament. Most of them appeared in political arena thanks to the Artsakh Movement and did not sympathize with the communist authorities. The abolition of the Soviet power in Armenia took place by a peaceful "velvet revolution"; the Communists lost the majority in the parliament. Due to a good sense of the leadership of the Communist Party and the PANM, Armenia succeeded in avoiding serious internal conflicts in contrast to the other two South Caucasian states - Georgia and Azerbaijan. In those countries, the central problem was the inability of the Communists to abandon their power and the desire to maintain it at all costs. In contrast, the ruling Communist Party in Armenia, under the influence of a massive

\[2 \text{ Hayastani Hanrapetutyun, March } 14, 1991 \text{ (in Armenian).} \]

\[3 \text{ Liparityan Zh., Petakanutyun martahravernery: hay qaghaqakan mitqy ankakhutyunits i ver, Yerevan, Nairi, 1999, p. 32 (in Armenian).} \]
nationwide wave of Artsakh, transferred power peacefully to the PANM, and the latter assumed responsibility avoiding personal revenge.

**Inter-party debate and consensus**

The major political forces formed in Armenia by the promotion of the Artsakh movement, in particular, PANM, UNSD, RPA, etc. unhesitatingly sought to independence. This can also be interpreted within the underground political struggle by their leaders, participation in 1988-90 movement, etc. It was clear for them that the Union would yield its positions, and the issue is only about the form and timing of the process. Meanwhile, the situation in the Armenian Diaspora was quite different. The attitude of the Armenian political organizations of Diaspora (traditional political parties) towards the movement started in Armenia has not been unequivocal. Still, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (ADLA), the Social Democrat Hunchakian party (SDHP) expressed a common position in October 1988, speaking on behalf of the three organizations as a reaction to the events taking place in Armenia. In that statement, the three political organizations demanded from the authorities of the Soviet Armenia to make the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh a priority, and to initiate its just resolution. The political parties of Diaspora called on the people of Armenia and Artsakh to avoid such extreme actions as labor strikes, student strikes, etc. which undermined country's internal order as well as the normal course of economic, industrial, educational and cultural life. The collective unity of all Armenians above everything else, political parties emphasized the importance of protecting national interests with determination and foresight⁴. This call revealed that at the initial stage of the movement the organizations of Diaspora misinterpreted the events taking place in Armenia. Such a psychological understanding was also dominant in 1991 on the eve of the declaration of independence, expressed by the ideological contrast of PANM and ARF.

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⁴ *Droshak*, 13, October 12, 1988 (in Armenian).
Prior to that, in the parliamentary elections of May 20, 1990, the PANM won parliamentary majority. L. Ter-Petrosyan, one of party leaders, was elected as a Chairman of the Supreme Council of RA on August 4, 1990 and Vazgen Manukyan as a President of the Council of Ministers of RA on August 13, 1990. A few days after the changes of power, the Supreme Council adopted the Declaration of Independence of Armenia. Based on the decision of August 4, 1990, the Supreme Soviet of the Armenian SSR created a committee of 15 people to prepare the Declaration of Independence of Armenia⁵. The forces participating in social and political life of the Republic, such as the CPA, CLU, RPA, hurried to submit their proposals to the Committee of the Supreme Soviet, and the joint version prepared by the committee was submitted to the Supreme Soviet on August 20⁶. More than a quarter of a century later, it can be argued that in terms of legal and political perspectives, the choice of any issue and that of a single word included in the Declaration was carefully weighed. It was in complete harmony with world experience, the most successful example of which is the Declaration of independence of the United States⁷. It has often served as a basis for the message addressed to other nations and states adopting the Declaration of Independence; as an application for equality with other states⁸. The issue of the Armenian Genocide was of particular interest during the adoption of the Declaration. Based on political principles, the PANM, under the leadership of L. Ter-Petrosyan, opposed the inclusion of that issue in the Document. Still, a group of deputies, among whom H. Simonyan with its important contribution, insisted on the need to include the issue of the Armenian Genocide in that historical document. Finally, by mutual consent, it was decided to make the provision of the Armenian Genocide one of the key components of the Declaration of Independence⁹. On

⁵ Hayastani Hanrapetutyun, October 9, 1990 (in Armenian).
August 23, 1990, 183 out of 187 deputies approved the text of the Declaration. After final revisions, on August 24, the Declaration on the Independence of Armenia was approved by a new voting (192 for and 2 abstentions)\textsuperscript{10}. One of the most important provisions of the Declaration concerned the applicability of the USSR laws. It was highlighted that the laws of the USSR, which had not been approved by the Supreme Soviet of RA, could not be applied in Armenia. A year later, the Supreme Soviet put the issue to a national referendum.

The intensification of pressure by the USSR leadership after the declaration of independence was not surprising. It covered almost all areas, i.e. legal political, economic, etc. Among them is the law signed by the USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev on April 3, 1990. The law stipulated a new procedure for the independence of the republics\textsuperscript{11}. It did not, however, prevent Lithuania from "demonstratively declaring the independence of the republic" right on the eve of its signing\textsuperscript{12}. January 16, 1991 decision of the USSR Supreme Soviet on conducting a referendum on the preservation of the USSR on March 17 of the same year can also be considered a step towards suspension of independence of the USSR member states\textsuperscript{13}. No matter how paradoxical it may seem, but that decision of the USSR was important for the achievement of Armenia's independence. It unwittingly raised the question of the independence of Armenia, given the fact that prior to it, the discussions on the referendum of independence did not get a practical form. According to the ruling PANM, the Soviet Union referendum was merely a step towards strengthening the positions of the Soviet central authorities without any chance of changing the real course of events\textsuperscript{14}.

\textsuperscript{10}Khorhrdayin Hayastan, August 26, 1990, (in Armenian).
\textsuperscript{11}Izvestiya sovetov Narodnykh deputatov SSSR, April 7, 1990, (in Russian).
\textsuperscript{13}RA Supreme Soviet Bulletin, 2, (982), 31.01.1991, p. 52.
\textsuperscript{14}Argumenty i fakty, 14, 1991 (in Russian).
Based on March 1, 1991 decision, the referendum would not be held on the territory of Armenia referring to the fact that it contradicts the right of nations to self-determination. By the decision of the RA Supreme Soviet, the results of the USSR referendum could not have legal force for Armenia. Instead, the Supreme Council of RA simultaneously adopted another decree: "On holding the referendum in the territory of Armenia on secession from the USSR". A referendum was scheduled on September 21, 1991. At the same time, the presidency of the SC was granted a right to hold referendum earlier in case of drastic changes of the situation. The proclamation of independence was envisaged to comply with the USSR laws ensuring the legal compliance of the process and the effectiveness of the propaganda carried out by the Armenian social and political organizations. Thereby, the PANM and the political forces supporting it referred to the need to avoid the occurrences, highlighting the urgency of overcoming the lack of preparedness of the state, political organizations and the people. As in other Soviet republics, Armenia also had an "atomized" party system; none of the many political organizations that existed in the country had noticeable priorities. The political parties of Armenia can be conditionally divided into three groups according to their stance on independence. The first group included the radical independence proponents, among which UNSD, RPA, CLU. They put the idea of independence above all, with a clear goal of achieving it as soon as possible. The political parties of this group related the future of Armenia to the achievement of independence. The second group, mostly represented by the ARF, proclaimed itself "the most moderate independents". Having always had the imperative of independence in its program, the ARF gave greater importance to the idea of "united Armenia", from which the Armenian claim stemmed. The ARF considered that independent Armenia could not be proclaimed without Artsakh, and other occupied territories of the Armenian people. The ARF related the realization of national aspirations to its "Free, Independent

15 RA Supreme Soviet Bulletin, 5 (985), 15.03.1991, p. 3.
17 Ter-Petrosyan L., Yntrani (Yeluytner, hovdvatsner, hartsazruytsner), Yerevan, 2006, pp. 176-177 (in Armenian).
and United Armenia" formula. The third group, headed by the PANM, perceived the realization of the "dream of independence" "calmly, without emotions". The party believed that sharp and unbalanced steps would inevitably undermine the process of independence and offered escaping direct confrontation with the authorities of the union on the path of independence. This approach was first of all contrary to the approaches of the UNSD, which was reflected in timing of Armenia's independence referendum. First of all seeking to legally neutralize Article 72 of the Constitution of the USSR on the right of independence of republics, the above-mentioned law of Gorbachev envisaged that the nationwide referendum on independence was held not earlier than 6 months after the Supreme Soviet decision. However, Article 9 of the same law prescribes that in order to succeed from the Union the republics should have followed a process that would last five years after the referendum. The PANM offered to achieve independence in compliance with the provisions of the USSR law and therefore suggested holding a referendum on independence in September. It expected that in case of a positive outcome of the referendum, the USSR leadership would be bound by its own laws and would recognize the new legal status of the republics. The Communist party also supported the proposal of the referendum as it was obviously in a state of expectation, given the processes taking place throughout the country, especially the uncertainty over the future of the Union. In spite of this, the UNSD insisted on the idea of conducting a referendum as soon as possible, and a number of independent MPs of the Supreme Soviet proposed to hold a referendum in April-May, 1991. The proponents of this idea took into account the rapid development of events in the USSR, the danger of being left out of

24 Hayq, March 5, 1991 (in Armenian).
the major processes taking place. Realizing that the tactics of creating artificial obstacles to the road of independence may easily fail, the USSR central authorities have decided to propose a New Union Treaty to the member states. The initiative seemed to save the Soviet Union from the collapse. To this end, on June 18, 1991, the USSR central authorities introduced the draft of the "Treaty on Sovereign States" composed of 26 provisions. Here again the disagreements of the Armenian political parties came to light. The Communist Party of Armenia, which persistently refused to join the initiatives of the supporters of independence, insisted on signing the New Union Treaty. The ARF also held such a position. It was widely expressed in party's official press in which the PANM was criticized for accelerating the process of independence. The PANM had serious reservations regarding the signing of a New Union Treaty. According to Eduard Yegoryan, if Armenia joined the Treaty it would turn to an adjunct of a new unity, and the independence would simply remain an illusion. The PANM considered the interconnection between the referendum on independence and the New Union Treaty to be artificial given a series of disagreements and uncertainties over the Treaty. During the Union discussions, the PANM held the view that the strengthening of Armenia's position was only possible with the decisive victory of "yes", granting the Republic a more sovereign and free status. The CPA, still not split up, seriously resisted the PANM's policy striving to achieve that all political forces of Armenia back the idea of signing the New Union Treaty by common consensus. Imagining the existence of Armenia only with a powerful force behind, the Communist party was explicitly stating that Armenia's future is only possible within a renewed federation. Another opposition party of the PANM - the ARF - also believed that the USSR could play a major role in the settlement of the Armenian issue. This opinion was highly influenced by the political and ideological shifts of the CPA.

29 Ibid.
following the change of party's leadership. Since the start of the pan-
national movement in 1988, the ARF was advocating for the initiatives of
the Armenian Soviet authorities on the protection of national and political
rights\textsuperscript{32}.

One of the political parties of the Diaspora - Democratic Liberal
Party of Armenia (ADLA) - did not exclude the possibility of joining the
New Union Treaty stressing the need to act as an independent subject of
international law. The approaches of ADLA and PANM in this issue
seemed identical\textsuperscript{33}. The PANM saw the future of the Soviet Union based
on the principle of cooperation between independent states\textsuperscript{34}. It was
proposed to introduce a common system of horizontally interconnected
states in which decisions would be made on the principles of consensus
and equality. Thus, the issue of joining the New Union Treaty as a subject
of international law has gained fundamental importance for the PANM\textsuperscript{35}.

The ARF, one of the major political actors, did not reject the idea
of independence, but was convinced that in the foreseeable future
independent Armenia had to be found in a renewed Soviet system\textsuperscript{36}. The
fact of RA Supreme Soviet President Levon Ter-Petrosyan's signing
under the statement of Novo-Ogaryovo was viewed by the ARF as a
manifestation of the PANM to share a common position; "Independence
with realistic assessment of real forces"\textsuperscript{37}. The ARF referred to the
independence without "united Armenia" with some reservations. Preferring all the troubles brought about by the USSR, the ARF
considered the creation of "united Armenia" as part of that geopolitical
unit to be quite possible. Thus, he welcomed the aforementioned
statement, believing that it was within the logic of his proposed policy\textsuperscript{38}.

\textsuperscript{32} Harutyunyan S., Antsyali ev nerkayi masin, Yerevan, Noyyan Tapan, 2011, p. 209.
\textsuperscript{33} Hayastani Hanrapetutyun, July 11, 1991 (in Armenian).
\textsuperscript{34} Ter-Petrosyan L., Op. cit., p. 175.
\textsuperscript{35} Soyuz, 12, 1991 (in Russian).
\textsuperscript{37} Azatamart, 18, 1991 (in Armenian).
\textsuperscript{38} Yerkir, September 20, 1991 (in Armenian).
Nevertheless, Ter-Petrosyan's participation in meeting with the leaders of the USSR member states held in Novo-Ogaryovo in July 23, 1991 was a diplomatic courtesy and not a practical step towards the creation of a new union\(^{39}\). The PANM considered that the Union Treaty relied on the ignorance of the achievements of the already gained sovereignty by the republics and the establishment of a new unified order from scratch\(^{40}\). In this regard, the position of the PANM is best illustrated in the following statement by the Head of the Supreme Soviet of Armenia L. Ter-Petrosyan: "The Soviet Union, due to internal and external circumstances, must comply with the international laws of social development. Regardless of how events will develop, what kind of temporary retreats will happen, the Union will sooner or later collapse. It is desirable and likely that the destruction is made in a natural, bloodless, civilized way and that the Union would turn into a solidarity of peoples, such as the cooperation of European countries"\(^{41}\). In summer 1991, the situation in the USSR was so intense that changes were taking place at blazing speed, with the potential for revision every second. On August 19, 1991, the last blow to the viability of the Union was inflicted, from which the USSR could no longer recover. On August 18, 1991, the State Committee on the State of Emergency (SCSE) was established on the grounds of "stabilization of the situation in the country". The members were USSR senior officials under the leadership of the vice-president G. Yanayev, who openly stated their position to take the political power into their hands. Yanayev later admitted that the main goal of the SCSE was the prevention of the signing of a New Union Treaty, which would further weaken the Union\(^{42}\). The seizure of the state power by the way of such a palace revolution put the USSR's end. Three days later, the Russian democratic forces restored the public order, returning the power to the legitimate president of the USSR, Mikhail Gorbachev. As a result, the


power remained in the hands of a man who did not have the desire to resist the USSR division or to prevent it\textsuperscript{43}.

At the stage of the Soviet Union agony, this crisis caused anxiety in Armenia as well. The opposition parties (ARF, UNSD, CLU, CDU, RPA) critically approached the cautious position of the PANM. Within the framework of a rally organized at Yerevan's Liberty Square, the parties demanded to convene a special session of the Supreme Soviet and to discuss what happened in the days of the revolution. The political parties proposed not to wait till September 21, but by applying the March 1 decision of the Council, to declare Armenia an independent state with Artsakh. This event marked the political correlation of Armenia in 1990-1994, i.e. the framework of the political parties opposing the ruling PANM. A number of other demands also turned into controversial issues of domestic politics in a short period of time. These were recognition of independence of Artsakh or its reunion with Armenia, cancellation of the provisions related to the treaties of Moscow and Kars, as well as the agreements on the Sovietization of Armenia and the creation of the USSR, convocation of the Constituent Assembly, etc\textsuperscript{44}.

In the days of the SCSE coup attempt, the UNSD, the ARF and other political parties opposing the PANM were demanding to hastily present their official assessments\textsuperscript{45}. Nevertheless, the PANM and the leadership of Armenia chose a wait-and-see stand, which was positively assessed even by its ideological opponents\textsuperscript{46}. Levon Ter-Petrosyan, as the chairman of the Supreme Soviet, was calling for coldness, and PANM refused to hastily condemn SCSE, claiming that such an act would have "severe consequences" for Armenia. The overthrow of the coup d'état could have been a long process first of all covering small states seeking independence. Therefore, the decision not to be tempted by the statements of Armenia's neutrality and democracy protection may have been of a preventive significance in case of the triumph of the coup attempt.

\textsuperscript{44} \textit{Yerkir}, September 3, 1991 (in Armenian).
\textsuperscript{45} \textit{Ankakhutyun}, August 30, 1991 (in Armenian).
\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Ghazaryan R.}, Hashvetu em, Yerevan, 2003, p. 10 (in Armenian).
On August 26, 1991, when the failure of the coup was already known, several members of the Supreme Soviet of RA suggested the immediate declaration of Armenia's independence. It is noteworthy that until September 21, 1991, the idea of the referendum held by the authorities of Armenia was supported by the founders of the future National Democratic Union, i.e. Tigran Sargsyan, Davit Vardanyan and the then head of the government Vazgen Manukyan. After all, a compromise was reached; a call to the Armenian citizens by the Supreme Council of Armenia to vote for independence in a referendum of September 21. The August events made it clear that the USSR steadily goes towards the sunset. Looking back at 1991 March events, it should be noted that the process of holding its own referendum on independence was under way in Armenia. To this end, a meeting of the Armenian political organizations was held in March 4, 1991. All the influential parties of Armenia, among which the PANM, CPA, ARF, ADLA, UNSD, RPA, etc took part in it. Levon Ter-Petrosyan, the Chairman of the Supreme Council of RA and Vazgen Manukyan, the President of the Council of Ministers of RA also joined the meeting. In fact, apart from the Communist Party, all other political organizations had no objections to holding a separate referendum on independence in Armenia. This can be considered as the first major manifestation of inter-party solidarity or consensus on the way to independence. The process took place on July 10, 1991, two and a half month before the referendum, when the leading political and social organizations of the Supreme Council of RA (PANM, RPA, ADLA, Conservative Party of Armenia (CPA), Christian Democratic Union of Armenia (CDU) and UNSD) issued a joint statement on the referendum of independence. It was an appeal to the Armenians by which these organizations, with a determination to bring the nation-wide struggle to its logical end, expressed willingness to be fully involved in the establishment of a national independent statehood of the Republic of Armenia. The PANM, UNSD, ADLA, RPA, CDU and CPA emphasized that national development and prosperity could be ensured only under the conditions of independent statehood. "No" voting

49 Azg, March 6, 1991 (in Armenian).
was considered unacceptable by the parties. According to them, the rejection of independence in a popular referendum would be catastrophic; in that case the whole republic and people would be inevitably forced to rely on the mercy of the "others"\textsuperscript{50}. That is why, adopting common position, the major political actors of Armenia encouraged the people to say "yes" to independence, realizing the dreams of the ancestors and the free and dignified future of the coming generation\textsuperscript{51}.

The position of the PANM on the proclamation of independence was unequivocal. It held the view that the empire was collapsing and Armenia should avoid finding itself under the ruins at any cost. The party explained that its goal was not to go to confrontation with the union authorities. The agenda was the establishment of separate bilateral relations with the Soviet Union and the states beyond its borders\textsuperscript{52}. The cautious attitude of the ARF towards the independence was largely conditioned by the anti-Armenian stance of Turkey (its Western neighbor), in particular with the concern of a new genocide\textsuperscript{53}. The ARF and its allies warned that it was only the powerful state machine of the Soviet Union that undermined Pan-Turkism, and in case of Armenia's secession, it would find itself under serious danger. In this context, the term "Neo Pan-Turkism" was put into action, according to which the idea of creating a Great Turan was no longer viable and was subjugated to another system of Turkic peoples union. The idea was to create an EU-like structure for Turkish-speaking peoples\textsuperscript{54}. The ARF's position was represented by its leader Hrayr Maroukhyan, who stressed that it was an unfavorable time to demand independence, given the need for Russian support\textsuperscript{55}.

\textsuperscript{51} Hayastani Hanrapetutyun, July 11, 1991 (in Armenian).
\textsuperscript{52} Argumenty i fakty, 14, 1991 (in Russian).
\textsuperscript{53} Manukyan V., Gnatsqits trchelu zhamanakn e. Vorn e mer janaparhy, Yerevan, Arevik, 1990, pp. 7-43.
\textsuperscript{54} Khurshudyan L., Haykakan hartsy, Hamazgayin hay krtakan ev mshakutayin miutyun, Yerevan, 1995, p. 85.
\textsuperscript{55} Droshak, 7, July 19, 1989 (in Armenian).
In that period, the independence of Armenia was often associated with anti-Russian stances, thus distorting the real chain of events. The debate narrowed between pro-Russian and anti-Russian stances, between the ability to maintain an independent statehood alone, and the age-old complex of deprivation of that ability. In 1988-1990, Armenian intellectuals were often publicly expressing their cautiousness on the alienation from Russia. And this was quite natural given the time-specific features. The counter-argument of the overcautiousness, turning almost into obedience, was the vision of sovereignty and independence. Eventually, there was a confrontation between the ideological perceptions of surviving with the support of "others" and building its own future.

The ARF considered that the RA Supreme Council's decision on holding the referendum on Armenia's independence was a logical continuation of the "Declaration on the Independence of the Republic of Armenia". It emphasized the fact of the establishment of independence rather than its restoration, which demonstrated the unique case of Armenia thereby maneuvering regional disputes with Turkey that seemed inevitable. The political party linked the success of the referendum on independence to legal justification as well as to political and national support. The PANM obviously viewed independence as a necessity for the nation. It was convinced that the Soviet Union had replaced the independence of Armenia with a simple autonomy and principles defining it that had no practical application. The party attached great importance to the consistent application of the term "independence" to pursue the idea of independence in people's consciousness.

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59 Manukyan V., Speech at Liberty Square, September 23, 1988 (in Armenian).
60 Manukyan V., Gnatsqits trchelu zhamanakn e…, p 26.
Ideologically, the ARF's struggle for "united Armenia" was aimed at freedom and independence of the whole homeland. The Armenian Cause was proclaimed by the party as the major goal of the Armenian nation, which could never come down to its own parts, just like the independence and freedom of the Armenian nation - to a part of it. In the same way, "united Armenia" could not mean joining one part of it (for example, Artsakh) to another (Republic of Armenia). Consequently, though Artsakh and Armenia expressed the Armenian Cause without the other parts of the Homeland, they could not encompass the major goal of the Armenian nation. Thus, it was concluded that no part of the Armenian Cause could contradict to the other, such as Artsakh to Western Armenia, Nakhijevan to Javakhk, etc. The ARF, in fact, viewed the solution of the Armenian Cause in the context of a chain of events, considering the establishment of "united Armenia" and further collective independence as a priority. The ARF directly linked the independence of Armenia to the return of the Armenian territories occupied by Turkey. The party believed that without historical lands there could not be an independent and free Armenia. In contrast, the PANM considered the return and union of territories of historical Armenia impracticable in that particular period. Thus, it associated the position of ARF on the issues of "united Armenia" and remaining within the USSR to that held by the Communist Party. The PANM strictly opposed the organizations that demanded the cancellation of the Moscow and Kars agreements. The party believed that such an "adventure" at the time of state establishment could threaten Armenia's security. The party temporarily considered unrealistic to overload the state policy of Armenia with the issue of the Armenian Claim highlighting that the newly-created state had no ability and right to take such heavy burden on its shoulders. Considering the Armenian Claim as a “strait to be blocked in the empire's bonds”, the party declared

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61 *Azatamart*, 24, June 18, 1992 (in Armenian).
the achievement of independence as a priority, linking its future to the success and power of the state.\textsuperscript{65}

One of the main arguments of the political forces referring to declaration of independence with some reservations was the organization of the economy. As the Communist Party claimed, the USSR would continue to survive, and if Armenia left apart from its economic system, it would face a disaster. The ARF, in its turn, was concerned about the issue of hostility between Armenia and its neighboring states. The core argument of this concern was related to the Armenian Cause and Claim as a key issue of the Armenian nation, the solution of which was only possible in case of being part of a powerful empire.\textsuperscript{66} In contrast, the PANM considered the collapse of the USSR inevitable, and emphasized the prospect for building free economic relations with other states. According to PANM, the contradictions with Turkey and Azerbaijan, already turned into hostility, were temporary. It considered that the land claims could not prevail over independence, while normalization of relations with neighbors seemed more and more realistic. The cornerstone of the party was that independent statehood was the supreme value for every nation enabling it to overcome its challenges step by step.\textsuperscript{67}

The PANM considered the liberalization of the economy as the best way to expand Armenia's sovereignty and to secede from the USSR on favorable occasion. The party opposed the option of confederation claiming that this form of state is unstable. The PANM did not view the future of the USSR in a positive light believing that under such geopolitical conditions, and especially with such economic opportunities, the USSR had no chance of survival. It also rejected the idea that Armenia's economy could develop if it remained within the USSR. Pointing to low economic indicators of the Soviet Union, the representatives of this political wing considered the collapse of the Union inevitable and proposed the path of independence to avoid new strokes.\textsuperscript{68}

\textsuperscript{65} Yegoryan E., Ter kangnenq mer vaghva orvan, Yerevan, Nairi, 2003, p. 73 (in Armenian).
\textsuperscript{67} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{68} Manukyan V., Gnatsqits trchelu zhamanakn e…
Other political parties were also involved in the heated debate on the issue of independence, among which the UNSD's position was the most radical one concerning the delay of referendum. The party called on the people to take advantage of the opportunity provided and to proclaim independence. The UNSD and the CLU came out with the suggestion of proclaiming Armenia's independence with Nagorno-Karabakh. It was proposed to make constitutional amendments to the borders of the state, including Shahumyan, Getashen and NKAO in the administrative district. At the same time, these political parties wanted to send an official request to the UN to ensure peacekeeping troops in the Persian Gulf along the new frontiers of Armenia thereby securing the reunited Armenia's independence. The CLU was not limited by the achievement of independence, considering it merely a means of solving urgent national issues and nothing more. Another traditional political organization, the ADLA, considered the establishment of freedom and independence as a priority. It fully supported the efforts of the authorities towards the achievement of independence. The party referred to September 21, 1991 as a "focal point of attention" that would stand out for a true expression of the people's will as a necessary condition for continuing the process of independence. The ADLA's position on the referendum of independence was indisputable; it considered the supreme right to independently determine its political status as a priority. The National Democratic Union (NDU) which had been separated from the PANM during the period of referendum, maintained a principal stand on this issue. The party was inclined to believe that independence was not the end point of the process but merely the intermediate link within the framework of the "global nation" concept. The RPA considered independent state as a necessary condition for the Armenian renaissance, and the September 21 referendum as a unique opportunity for it. The CDU considered that the index of the internal Armenian unity is the

71 Ibid.
73 Hayastani Hanrapetutyun, December 16, 1990 (in Armenian).
consolidation of political parties having various contradictions\textsuperscript{74}. The position of the Communist Party of Armenia was radically different. It sharply opposed the PANM's policy of succeeding from the USSR and declaring independence. The CPA did not imagine the possibility of Armenia's existence after September 21, and thus denied the idea of the achievement of independence at all\textsuperscript{75}. In contrast to this, the ARF announced that it sought not a declarative, but a practical independence. Different stances of the PANM and the ARF in this issue brought a new wave of controversy; the first criticized the latter for being "against the independence" and the latter criticized the first for "random acts".\textsuperscript{76} At the same time, it should be underlined that partly due to the August condemnation, the ARF finally adopted positive stance towards the declaration of independence. Accordingly, the visit of Hrayr Marukhyan/the representative of ARF bureau to Armenia in those days was a sign of positive stance on the historical event of September 21. Marukhyan considered the high-level support for independence as an important starting point for the Armenian people to carry the process of independence in a more secure way\textsuperscript{77}. A number of the Armenian political organizations among which the UNSD, RPA, ADL, CLU, ARF, CDU, PANM, jointly created a Coordinating Council on the referendum of independence. The creation of the latter pursued the goal of achieving the highest positive outcome of the Referendum. Considering the deprivation of independence as the greatest misfortune of the nation, the Armenian political forces have urged citizens to restore their lost statehood through the right of self-determination. To this end, the Council was established\textsuperscript{78}. However, the activities of the latter should not be overestimated given the peculiarities of the multi-party system at that time, in particular the fact that political parties dealt solely with the issues of communication and mutual assistance, leaving apart vertical communication between social groups and the state\textsuperscript{79}.

\textsuperscript{74} Hayastani Hanrapetutyun, July 11, 1991 (in Armenian).
\textsuperscript{75} Hayq, June 21, 1991 (in Armenian).
\textsuperscript{76} Hayastani Hanrapetutyun, July 13, 1991 (in Armenian).
\textsuperscript{77} Yerkir, September 20, 1991 (in Armenian).
\textsuperscript{78} Ankakhutyun, August 23, 1991 (in Armenian).
\textsuperscript{79} Lawson K., Political Parties and Linkage, New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 1980, p. 187.
The referendum on independence was held on September 21, 1991. Out of the 2,163,967 citizens entitled to take part in the referendum, the number of registered voters was 2,056,758 (about 95.5 percent). 2,042,627 citizens (94.39 percent) voted for, 10,002 citizens (0.46 percent) against the independence. 4,129 ballot papers (0.19%) were declared invalid. Two days later, on September 23, the Supreme Council of Armenia made a historical decision: "Being faithful to the Declaration on the Independence of Armenia, relying on international standards of human rights and nations' self-determination, with a view of creating democratic and legal social system, based on the results of the referendum on seceding from the USSR on September 21, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia declares the Republic of Armenia as an independent state".

The development of events in the next 26 years showed that the restoration of independence of the Republic of Armenia was the issue on which the Armenian political parties, despite some initial disagreements, adopted a common position.

Conclusion

The Armenian political organizations were conditionally divided into three groups during the period of restoration of independence. The first group included RPA, UNSD, CLU, the active proponents of independence. The second group headed by the ARF viewed independence only in the reunification of the lands of historical Armenia. The third group, among which the PANM, related the achievement of independence to the policy of "peaceful course and escape of confrontations". In 1988-91, conflicting road maps of the independence were introduced and the contradictions between political parties reached their peak. At the same time, all of the above-mentioned political powers referred to the idea of independence with some reservations, seeing the ideal way to achieve it in the context of their own projects and visions.

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Nevertheless, prior to September 21, 1991, tactical contradictions were sidelined by the preference of all parties for full independence. Almost all parties were positive about the September 21 referendum. Only the Communist party was an exception, which did not imagine Armenia's existence independent from Russia. Nearly all political organizations played a pivotal role in the achievement of Armenia's independence by advancing this process with a unique inter-party solidarity. The preliminary reservations and cautiousness of Armenian political forces towards independence were significantly overcome by the victory of the PANM in 1990 parliamentary elections. The change of power in 1990 proved that Armenia has chosen the path of independence and the secession from the Soviet Union. Thus, the inter-party consensus on the issue of independence was an exceptional phenomenon that was of no less importance on the path of the achievement of independence.
How has the Turkish state's official discourse of the Armenian genocide evolved during the Erdogan era?

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Turkey has failed to recognize the massacres of 1915 as genocide for over one hundred years. The reasons are profound and extend deep into the sense of identity that Turks and the Turkish state have sought to form since the birth of the country. The article considers why the denial has been the case in the face of the overwhelming historical evidence and whether there have been any potential changes under the leadership of Erdogan. It argues that the Turkish state's official discourse of the Armenian genocide has evolved during the Erdogan era, meanwhile stressing that it is important not to overstate the extent to which the discourse has evolved. Although Erdogan has adopted a softer and a more conciliatory tone at times, he has stayed consistent on the fundamental issue of recognizing the term genocide throughout this process.

Keywords
The Armenian genocide, denial, Erdogan, Turkey, official discourse

The Armenian genocide has been considered to be the “first modern genocide”, because it involved “creating a national state through the annihilation of foreign elements”¹. Indeed, the Armenian genocide is often addressed in eerily familiar terms to the Nazi Holocaust, with historians and past Turkish leaders referring to the "Armenian question" and highlighting both the internal and international aspects of it². The Armenians had a rich cultural history, but were also familiar with persecution for many centuries before the twentieth century as they tended to be located on the strategic crossroad between the West and the East³. Throughout its history, Armenia was conquered by Romans,

Greeks, Persians, Mongols, Byzantines, Russians and Arabs before becoming absorbed into the Ottoman Empire in 1453 under the rule of Sultan Mehmed II. During the sixteenth century Armenia was subject to competition from Persia until an armistice agreement was reached and Western Armenia was apportioned to the Ottoman Empire and Eastern Armenia fell into the hands of Persia.

During the Ottoman era the abuses perpetrated against the Armenian minority steadily intensified, culminating in the Armenian genocide that began in 1915. Turkey has failed to recognize these events as genocide for over one hundred years and this article will consider why this has been the case in the face of overwhelming historical evidence and whether there have been any potential changes that can be detected as having taken place in the Erdogan era. The article will begin by briefly providing an overview of the genocide before considering the idea of denial from a theoretical standpoint as well as Turkey’s history of denial. It will then move on to consider any potential changes under the leadership of Erdogan as well as important international and domestic factors affecting the debate over the Armenian genocide. It will be argued throughout that the changes under Erdogan have largely involved a softening of tone and a more conciliatory message that is in tune with Turkish public opinion, but at a fundamental level there continues to be a lack of genuine movement towards accepting the term genocide that is unlikely to change in the near future.

Overview of the Armenian genocide

Whilst the Ottoman Empire was an inclusive project in which religious minorities were tolerated and certain Armenians were able to attain high office within government, the situation for many Armenians living outside an urban environment tended to be very different. In such rural

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6 Tas L., Legal Pluralism in Action: Dispute Resolution and the Kurdish Peace Committee, London, Taylor & Francis, 2016; Saltman R., Sacred Humanism
environments Armenians were subject to religious persecution at the hands of the Muslim majority and were often forced to convert to Islam as well as being kidnapped and subject to exploitative taxation. This increasing level of persecution culminated in the slaughter of between 100,000-200,000 Armenians under Sultan Abdul Hamid II between 1894-1896 and an additional slaughter of 30,000 Armenians in the Adna region in 1909. Historians have debated whether one should view the Armenian genocide that was to follow as constituting one continuous trend of persecution dating back to the sixteenth century or whether the influence of the Young Turk movement with its nationalist and ethnic emphasis marked a radical departure in the persecution of the Armenian minority. However, regardless of the underlying motivations in April 1915 the Armenian genocide began with the Turkish authorities issuing arrest warrants for a range of Armenian intellectuals. The weight of the evidence in relation to their slaughter and a campaign of subsequent extermination of the Armenian minority is indisputable: reports from US consular officials, a range of archival materials belonging to a host of countries, records of trials of the perpetrators of the genocide, eyewitness accounts from survivors and Western witnesses, media coverage and investigations by historians all corroborate the broad outlines of what took place during this period. Between 1-1.5 million Armenians were either directly killed or died as a result of being forced into deportation convoys and many Armenians were forced to convert to Islam, with women in particular often being raped and forced into marriages with Turkish men.

Conceptualizing the denial of the Armenian genocide by the Turkish state

The concept of denial and “genocide denial” in particular is clearly a key concept within this analysis and it is important to clarify its precise meaning and the ways to understand this term. According to Schrodt, there are two reasons for denial; people can either deny facts out of ignorance or can deny facts by deceit. Denials out of ignorance are arguably more forgivable and understandable, because it proceeds from the starting point that denials are based upon an insufficient amount of knowledge. However, denials by deceit and what Schrodt refers to as “impostors” is very different, because in order to deny something on this basis it is necessary to share some level of facts and methodology with those advancing the opposite position. Schrodt refers to this as the denial paradox, because “in order to deny something, you need to first know about it.” After the formation of Turkey in 1923 there was a clear desire on the part of senior leaders to create new structures and institutions and in this context these leaders provided no space for acknowledgement of the Armenian genocide.

This “nation-building project” undertaken by Ataturk, the founder of Turkey, sought to engender a deep sense of cultural fellowship and a strong national identity, and the denial of the Armenian genocide in its immediate aftermath must be appreciated in this institutional and ideological framework. As Kaya points out, denial operated at a systemic level in the institutions of Turkey during its foundation, because not only would Ataturk not accept that the Armenian genocide had taken place, but he also sought to deny the existence of non-Turkish minorities

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within Turkey, which stood in sharp contrast to the Ottoman Empire\textsuperscript{20}. Once in power, Ataturk promoted a modernization, secularization and Westernization agenda and it is perhaps not surprising that one part of his attempt to modernize Turkey was involved a concerted effort to forget and deny the Armenian genocide\textsuperscript{21}. He founded the Turkish Historical Society in 1931, which would control the official history of the Turkish state and one example of the fictitious history that would emerge from this body would be later estimates suggesting that only 150,000 people were killed during the Armenian genocide\textsuperscript{22}. However, the Turkish Historical Society played a far more all-encompassing role than merely addressing the Armenian genocide, because it sought nothing less than a fundamental rewriting of Turkish history\textsuperscript{23}. Ataturk even changed the Turkish alphabet in a bid to move the Turkish language away from its Ottoman roots, liberating it in his words from the “yoke of foreign tongues”\textsuperscript{24}.

This meant that future generations were not able to appreciate the history of the Ottoman Empire to the same extent, because they were hindered from understanding Islamic languages that featured in Arabic scripts\textsuperscript{25}. The toleration and diversity of the Ottoman Empire were struck from official Turkish history and the aim was to portray Turkey as a modern and powerful nation with an ethnically homogenous population\textsuperscript{26}. This “distorting of the historical record” had profound implications for the role of Armenians within the Ottoman Empire and the ways in which Turkish schoolchildren as well as others came to understand Turkey's past\textsuperscript{27}. There were no mentions of Armenians until the Middle Ages and

\textsuperscript{20} Kaya M. S., Op. cit.
\textsuperscript{24} Papadakis Y., Echoes from the Dead Zone: Across the Cyprus Divide, London, I. B. Tauris, 2005, p. 27.
\textsuperscript{25} Papadakis Y., Op. cit.
\textsuperscript{26} Bobelian M., Op. cit.
they only featured rarely in more recent history and naturally the Armenian genocide “went unspoken”\textsuperscript{28}. In addition to this intellectual erasure, the Turkish government systematically sought to wipe any physical trace of the Armenian presence off the face of the earth, including through the destruction of Armenian architecture and monuments\textsuperscript{29}. This state-sanctioned behavior generated a substantial amount of institutional momentum that continued long after the death of Ataturk\textsuperscript{30}. Jones points to significant funding dedicated to public relations and in particular American university endowments that were seen as capable of erecting a defensible position in relation to the Armenian genocide denial\textsuperscript{31}. It is important to understand, therefore, that the denial was not merely a cultural process that emerged organically as a result of the thinking and wishes of ordinary Turkish people and that throughout the history of denial there has been a concerted effort by the Turkish state to drive the narrative in relation to the events of 1915.

It is also necessary to understand the history of denial by the Turkish government in the context of the presence of other ethnic minorities in Turkey. In this sense it is necessary to appreciate the potential implications that the admission of guilt could have for the relationship between Turkey and other ethnic minorities within its borders as well as for the goal of generating homogeneity in the country. The Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 granted protected status to Armenian, Greek and Jewish minorities in Turkey, but persecution of these minorities continued\textsuperscript{32}. Research conducted by the Armenian National Institute demonstrates that since 1923 the treatment of minorities by the Turkish government has oscillated between neglect and repression and that during the Second World War all of these minorities were subject to

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.
exploitative taxation\textsuperscript{33}. Violence has also erupted against minorities and in 1955 the majority of Greeks were expelled from Turkey after violent clashes in Istanbul\textsuperscript{34}. Many Jews have also escaped to Israel to avoid persecution and the net result of persecution, neglect and marginalization after the Second World War has been a fifty percent fall in the Armenian population of 150,000 between the end of the First World War and the mid-1990s\textsuperscript{35}. One further minority population brings an added dimension, because the ongoing violence against Kurds by the Turkish government and military clashes between Kurdish groups and the Turkish government highlight the role that Turkish national security plays in relation to the treatment of minorities\textsuperscript{36}. This means that any potential concessions, for example in the form of recognizing the Armenian genocide, could be interpreted as potential signs of weaknesses by other minority groups, which ultimately could threaten the survival of the Turkish state and the territorial integrity of the country.

It is clear, therefore, that the reasons why Turkey has failed to accept the Armenian genocide are profound and that they extend deep into the sense of identity that Turks and the Turkish state have sought to form since the birth of the country. The extent of the attachment to denial is evident from the fact that Turkey's stance in relation to the Armenian genocide has remained largely consistent for over a century\textsuperscript{37}. The Turkish government has responded to calls to recognize the genocide with a mixture of silence and denial and Alayarian argues that this type of “social amnesia” can only occur in a context in which a substantial amount of rewriting of history has occurred\textsuperscript{38}. Alayarian points to a set of deliberate cover ups and a rewriting of history from a cultural and intellectual perspective that includes inaccurate records, propaganda, forged documents, destruction of archives, bribery of intellectuals and

\textsuperscript{33} Armenian National Institute, Op. cit.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.
penal measures taken against a range of individuals. Returning to the theme of denial by deceit highlighted above, it is clear that successive Turkish government and Turkish institutions have had significant knowledge of events during the Armenian genocide and therefore claiming that their denials are based upon ignorance is wholly unconvincing. The story might be somewhat different for the Turkish population, which has for successive generations been provided with a fictitious history of its country, but in the digital age it seems increasingly unlikely that ordinary citizens would not have access to the facts regarding the genocide.

However, the denials of Turkish leaders in the past on the question of whether the events in 1915 constituted genocide have been emphatic and unambiguous. In 1994, Turkish Prime Minister Tanju Ciller stated “it is evident today that the Armenian claims are unfounded and illusory in light of historical facts. Armenians were not subjected to genocide in any way.” A central plank of the Turkish denial is the argument that the events of 1915 did not constitute a genocide and that instead they were part of a civil war and wartime relocations. The nature of the emphatic denials are understandable in the sense that the Turkish government has for generations either sought to silence history or erase it and given the large amount of institutional resources dedicated to this project a sudden admission of guilt or concessions would clash fundamentally with a range of vested interests. The extent to which the Turkish government sought to repress debate in relation to the Armenian genocide within its own borders became apparent in 2005 when Article 159 of the Turkish Penal Code was replaced by Article 301. Article 301 stated that “public denigration of Turkishness, the Republic or the Grand National Assembly of Turkey shall be punishable by imprisonment of

between six months and three years". Despite the obvious issues of liberty and freedom of expression that could be seen as being violated by this law, it also led to a number of noteworthy cases in which journalists such as Hrant Dink became embroiled in legal action for refusing to adhere to Article 301. Dink refused to stop using the word genocide and in an environment of increasing death threats against him by the Turkish nationalists he was eventually assassinated on 19 January 2007 in front of the offices of his own newspaper.

**Potential shifts in the Erdogan era**

When one considers the weight of the evidence presented above and the consistency as well as the ferocity of Turkish denials of the Armenian genocide it seems virtually impossible to discuss potential strong shifts and a significant amelioration of the tension at the state level, but there is some evidence to suggest that this process has been occurring in contemporary Turkish politics and society. At a personal level, Erdogan has experience of falling foul of the law and of identity politics, as during the 1990s he was arrested and jailed for reading a poem with religious metaphors at a public rally. However, in public the tone of Erdogan towards the question of accepting and recognizing the Armenian genocide appears to be a continuation of previous generations of Turkish leaders. It is important to begin the analysis of the Erdogan era by assessing his public statements on the issue, because as leader of the country his views and pronouncements set the tone for political discourse in Turkey. When compared to the statements of earlier Turkish leaders that offered an adamant and forthright objection of Armenian claims.

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Erdogan's rhetoric has certainly been more conciliatory by comparison\textsuperscript{50}. However, it is important to stress that it is only by comparison to earlier statements that the tone in particular is different and that in relation to the content of the messages there continues to be significant continuity with earlier denials.

A few months before assuming the Presidency, Erdogan offered a set of “unprecedented condolences” to the grandchildren of Armenians killed by Ottoman soldiers in the First World War\textsuperscript{51}. He cited the “inhumane treatment” that Armenians had suffered, and this statement was significant for a number of reasons\textsuperscript{52}. Firstly, the timing was significant as the statement was released on the eve of the 99\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of the start of the 1915 massacre\textsuperscript{53}. Secondly, it was important at the conceptual level, because it signalled a break with the old nationalist portrayal of Armenians as “traitors”, because one does “not offer condolences to traitors”\textsuperscript{54}. Thirdly, and most significantly, this break with past discourses illustrates a potential willingness to step forward from the traditional position of denial that has characterized almost one hundred years of rhetoric on the part of Turkish leaders\textsuperscript{55}. Since this point Erdogan has reiterated his belief in the necessity to find common ground between Armenians and Turks and has stated that “we will always remind and remember the culture of cohabitation between Turks and Armenians which has a history of almost one thousand years”\textsuperscript{56}. It is important to note as will be highlighted below that Erdogan

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{52} Rethink Institute 2014, 2015 Turkey Country Report. Washington, Rethink Institute, p. 70.
continues to refuse to use the term genocide in relation to the killings of Armenians in 1915, but his comments on a visit to the Armenian Patriarchate of Turkey on 15 April 2016 offered a significant softening of tone and stance in comparison to previous Turkish leaders. He stated that “I welcome this commemoration which is taking place once again in Turkey, the most meaningful place to share the grief endured by the Ottoman Armenians, as well as to honor their memories.”

However, it is important to note that despite the significance of this statement President Erdogan continues to refuse to employ the term genocide to refer to the killings and at times his rhetoric on the subject has remained eerily reminiscent of earlier phases of Turkish denial, arguably progressing to belligerence when he feels cornered by the international community on the subject. He has stated that requests to accept that the events were genocide would “go in one ear and out from the other” and that Turkey will “never” accept the accusation that these events constitute genocide. One important dimension must be recognized in relation to Erdogan's statements, regardless of whether they are viewed as a continuation of existing Turkish denials or as a break with the past, is the Armenian response. The response of the Armenian National Committee in the United States, for example, has been scathing. According to Aram Hamparian, the Turkish government under Erdogan is merely “repackaging its genocide denials.” He went on to state his position unambiguously claiming that “the fact remains that, as this cold-hearted and cynical ploy so plainly demonstrates, Turkey is, today, escalating its denial of truth and obstruction of justice for the Armenian genocide.”

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57 Ibid.
58 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
61 Turkish PM offers..., Op. cit.
62 Ibid.
63 Ibid.
have been met with strong opposition by the Armenian foreign ministry. These comments in 2016 were interpreted by the Armenians at an official level as an attempt to “equalize victims of war and those who became victims of genocide” and according to the Armenian government “Turkey's denialist stance further deepens the gap between the Armenian and Turkish people, while the best way to fill it is facing history and repentance”.

Understanding potential changes in the Erdogan era

Despite the fervent Armenian rejections of a potential softening in tone under the leadership of Erdogan it would appear to be an overstatement on the part of advocates of the Armenian position to claim that there has been no change in relation to the stance on the Armenian genocide under Erdogan. One pivotal dimension that needs to be borne in mind in relation to the potential change of stance under Erdogan and Armenian rebuttals is the extent to which debates regarding the Armenian genocide have assumed an international character in recent years. There have been a range of parliamentary resolutions in European countries in addition to those of the European Parliament that have sought to recognize the Armenian genocide. As Terzi points out, this has injected a modicum of instability into Turkish discourses and the overall consciousness of the Turkish population towards the events of 1915, because it challenges the internal history propagated by the Turkish state that the killings were the result of mutual hostilities and traditional warfare. At present, 26 countries officially recognize the Armenian genocide and whilst this is still a relatively low number the response of the Erdogan administration towards international efforts to recognize the Armenian genocide raise concerns about the potential for genuine

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64 Erdogan: Turkey is..., Op. cit.
65 Ibid.
68 Ibid.
reconciliation on this issue. Petasis credits a “vigorous and aggressive campaign by the Armenian diaspora to get the genocide recognized” as being responsible for a marked shift in the international landscape and in 2015 a range of events put President Erdogan under substantial international pressure.

When Pope Francis referred to the Armenian genocide as the first genocide of the twentieth century in 2015 Turkey withdrew its ambassador from the Vatican for a period of ten months, which is considered a substantial period of time in the diplomatic community. However, as the 100th anniversary of the Armenian genocide approached in 2015 the comments of Pope Francis served merely as a harbinger for events to come. In April 2015, the Austrian Parliament officially declared that the events of 1915 constituted genocide and the Turkish reaction to this was emphatic. Turkey withdrew its ambassador and produced a terse statement that spoke of “the outrage” caused by the declaration and argued that it would have “permanent negative effects on Turkey-Austria relations”. The passage of a resolution by the German Parliament on 2 June 2016 drew the ire of Turkey's government once more. The reaction was very similar, as the ambassador was recalled from Berlin and discussions of damaged bilateral ties featured heavily in the course of the Turkish response. The response of Erdogan to the

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73 Ibid.

74 Ibid.


German resolution is noteworthy, because it represented some of the strongest condemnations of the international attempts to recognize the genocide by him and illustrated the extent of continuity between him and previous Turkish administrations\(^77\). Describing international efforts to recognize the genocide as “blackmail” being used as a “stick against Turkey Erdogan underscored his central message in relation to the issue in plain terms: “I am addressing the whole world. You may like it, you may not. Our attitude on the Armenian issue is clear from the beginning. We will never accept the accusations of genocide”\(^78\).

It is important to recognize that such rebuttals and retaliations on the part of the Turkish government are part of a long history of reacting angrily towards international condemnations\(^79\). During the 1990s and early 2000s, the European Parliament, Cyprus, Greece, Italy and the senates of Russia and Belgium all employed the term genocide to refer to the events of 1915 and in 2001 the French government adopted a bill recognizing the Armenian genocide\(^80\). Turkey withdrew its ambassador from France and cancelled a $200 million military intelligence contract\(^81\). There are clear consistencies between this behavior and the ways in which the Erdogan government has reacted to international condemnation and as a result one must question whether shifts in tone under Erdogan have led to any substantial changes of action. When one considers that Turkey has sought to offer a more conciliatory tone, arguing that Turks and Armenians must “work jointly to find ways forward” and that “Turkey is willing to do its part” then there seems to be a conspicuous lack of action backing up these softer sentiments\(^82\). However, the question of the Armenian genocide has a domestic as well as an international dimension and this is important to bear in mind when considering the ways in which the Erdogan government has approached

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\(^78\) Ibid.


\(^80\) Ibid.

\(^81\) Ibid.

and framed the issue. Firstly, from the perspective of the Turkish public and electorate opinion polls have revealed how the Turkish public tends to approach the question of whether the events of 1915 ought to be classed as a genocide A poll conducted by the Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies (EDAM) in Turkey in 2014 found a mixed picture in relation to how the Turkish government should respond at the policy level to the Armenian genocide\(^8\) (EDAM, 2015).

Only 9.1% of Turks believe that the government should recognize the events of 1915 as a genocide, but significantly there is a clear recognition on the part of Turks that a substantial number of people lost their lives during this period\(^4\). This is significant, because it is likely that in earlier periods many Turks might not even have been aware of the massacres and that therefore they would not have had any view on the issue at all. A further 9.1% believe that Turkey should apologize to the Armenians without using the term genocide and 12% believe that regret ought to be expressed without using the term genocide\(^5\). 23.5% believe that all the Ottoman citizens that lost their lives need to be viewed equally and 21.3% believe that no steps need to be taken regarding the Armenian issues whatsoever\(^6\). The final 25% of Turks claimed that they were unaware of the issue or had no response to give\(^7\). In this context, President Erdogan is reflecting the views of the Turkish public quite accurately when he adopts the type of position that he has adopted, offering apologies and a conciliatory tone, but unwilling to cross the red line for many Turks, which is invoked by employing the term genocide.

Within Turkey itself it is important to recognize that despite the intransigence there have been efforts over the past twenty years to begin a meaningful public dialogue\(^8\). In 2001, a Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Committee was formed and a year before Turkish and

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\(^4\) Ibid
\(^5\) Ibid.
\(^6\) Ibid.
\(^7\) Ibid.
Armenian historians met and corresponded openly. In 2008, under much fanfare began a period referred to as “football diplomacy” that started with a visit to an Armenian-Turkish football match by Turkish president Abdullah Gul to which the Armenian President reciprocated by attending a match in 2009 in Turkey. At that time there was hope for a normalization of relations and a re-opening of the Turkish-Armenian border. However, whilst the Erdogan era may have begun with a softer tone towards the Armenian genocide domestic political developments in recent years have also began to exert an influence upon the issue as political instability within Turkey has increased. Questions over Turkey's human rights record, continuing conflict with Kurds, a refugee crisis brought on by the conflict in Syria as well as an attempted military coup against Erdogan have all undermined political stability in the country. A constitutional referendum on 16 April 2017 won narrowly by President Erdogan continues to highlight deep schisms within domestic Turkish politics. In this context it is arguable that President Erdogan has less room for manoeuvre and compromise, particularly when criticism is amplified by the international community. This is because such international condemnation tends to lead to retrenchment and a hardening of attitudes within Turkey, which is something that Erdogan must be responsive to as Turkey's highest elected political representative.

Conclusion

This article has argued that the official discourse of the Turkish state has evolved during the Erdogan era, but that it is important not to overstate the extent to which the discourse has evolved. A cynical

References

95 Finkel A., Op. cit
96 Finkel A., Op. cit
perspective towards Erdogan's official position would be to argue that it represents nothing more than a superficial change and many advocates of the Armenian position have put forward this argument with considerable justification. In circumstances when Turkey has been subject to intense international pressure to recognize the genocide Erdogan has left little doubt that he is unwilling to move down this path. However, as the article has shown it is important to recognize a number of historical, political, cultural and social dimensions that are relevant to the question of the Armenian genocide within Turkey. Since the formation of the Turkish state a very particular form of identity politics has been inextricably linked to the question of the Armenian genocide as Turkish leaders have sought to erase the past of the Ottoman Empire from the Turkish collective consciousness. This rewriting of history has had profound effects upon the culture, politics and society of Turkey and the nationalism that it has engendered sits uncomfortably alongside the impulse of recognizing past atrocities committed against minorities, particularly when certain minorities continue to exercise a perceived existential threat against the Turkish state and Turkish homogeneity.

In this sense, it is perhaps not surprising that genocide denial has remained remarkably consistent feature of Turkish politics and identity for over one hundred years and it is impossible to call it anything other than denial when one considers the weight of historical evidence demonstrating that the events of 1915 were indeed a genocide. Without question Erdogan has adopted a softer and more conciliatory tone at times, but on the fundamental issue of recognizing the term genocide he has stayed consistent throughout this process. When the perceptions and feelings of the general public in Turkey are considered Erdogan is putting forward a relatively representative view that many Turks hold towards the Armenian question, which also reflects a slight softening but general unwillingness to accept the term genocide. International pressure over the past few years seems to have been counter-productive in many ways, hardening positions on both sides and leading to an inflammation of tensions and rhetoric from
Erdogan as he seeks to justify this Turkish perspective. In this context it seems overly optimistic to argue that reconciliation can be achieved in the short-term, because given the range of impediments to further reconciliation and the extent to which the adoption of the word genocide appears to be a polarizing issue there seems to be little room for further reconciliation in the near future.
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Development in Troubled Neighborhoods: Qualified industrial Zones an Exit Strategy for Armenia and Turkey

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The purpose of the article is to study the legal, political and economic aspects of the establishment and development of qualified industrial zones (QIZ) with the participation of Armenia and Turkey. The existence of such special areas that host companies producing goods granted duty-free access to the US markets can promote the development of trade and economy as well as the solution of political problems between participating countries. The article focuses on the experience of US-Jordan-Israel and US-Egypt-Israel QIZs and analyzes whether the cases under study can serve as an effective model for Armenia and Turkey in terms of normalization of bilateral relations through regional economic cooperation.

Keywords
Armenian Turkish relations, negotiations, Qualified Industrial Zones

Introduction

Located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, Caucasus is where East and West meet in a most diverse and contrasting fashion. For ages, Caucasian nations shared a long history and many common cultural practices. Problems facing the Black Sea South Caucasus region today are complicated and all-embracing, with their origin dating back to the change of the political system in the early 1990s, including problems of democratization and the establishment of market economy, historical disputes and territorial conflicts that have turned into stalemates.

Today, at times of global financial recession, the opportunity cost for maintaining a stalemate is, probably, as high as never. In this regard, alternative dispute resolution mechanisms are gaining momentum by offering economy-driven approach to managing and resolving conflicts. The idea of reconciliation and development through business and investment is not new in international practice. It is a well-known fact
that no language speaks to the heart of people as effectively as economic gain and shared benefit. In this regard, the legal aspect of such cooperation becomes crucial in ensuring effective enforcement of arrangements.

An important factor in fostering bilateral relations through economic cooperation between the states is the existence of free trade agreements, and over time, participation in free trade agreements has become much more widespread\(^1\). A general assumption in economy is that free trade contributes to prosperity, so, in development theory, free trade is viewed as an essential element in efforts to spread the blessings of economic development to countries afflicted with serious poverty\(^2\).

The last decade has witnessed increased attention, condemnations, and justifications to the rapid developments in the Armenian-Turkish relations. Whether ratified by the two states’ Parliaments or not, the Armenian-Turkish protocols on normalization of bilateral relations signed in Zurich in October 2009 did play a role in changing the psychological realities in the region by initiating extensive discussion around the relations between the two states.

The purpose of the research is to study the legal aspects of establishing and developing qualified industrial zones - areas that host companies producing goods granted duty-free access to US markets, between states burdened with conflicts and unresolved recriminations about the past. The research will study the experience of the US-Jordan-Israel Qualified Industrial Zone (QIZ) in Jordan and US-Egypt-Israel QIZ in Egypt, whereby goods produced with a certain amount of local content and Israeli value are exported to the US quota-free and duty-free.

The research will analyze whether the cases under study can serve as an effective model for Armenia and Turkey in terms of reconciling hostile neighboring nations through regional economic cooperation. This,


in light of the recent geopolitical changes in the region, could be viewed as an alternative dispute resolution (exit strategy) tool.

The Origin of Qualified Industrial Zones: International Practice

Qualified Industrial Zones are designated geographic areas within a certain state and the products of the companies located within these zones are granted duty-free access to US markets\(^3\). The concept of a Qualifying Industrial Zone was initiated by the Clinton administration in 1996 with the aim of reinforcing peace and stability in the Middle East through regional economic cooperation that would benefit hostile Arab countries and the State of Israel. For this purpose, the US administration authorized duty free entry into the US market for industrial products originating in QIZ of Jordan since 1999 and Egypt since 2004, manufactured jointly with the State of Israel.

In 1996, a historical agreement between Israel and Jordan was signed, with the first paragraph of the agreement declaring:

“...In recognition of the requirements in section 9 of the United States-Israel Free Trade Area implementation Act of 1985, as amended (the "Legislation"), and Proclamation No. 6955 of the President of the United States of America (the "Proclamation"), the Governments of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the State of Israel hereby agree to the creation of the "Qualifying Industrial Zone", and request that the Government of the United States designate it as a "Qualifying Industrial Zone" under the legislation and Proclamation".\(^4\)

The Agreement was to come into force upon the completion of the necessary legal procedures by the Parties completed on March 13, 1998\(^5\). By this agreement, the State of Israel and Kingdom of Jordan agreed to the creation of the Qualifying Industrial Zone to be located in the duty-free zone in Jordan in conjunction with the Israeli side of the border-crossing at the Sheikh Hussein - Nahar Hayarden Bridge. After the approval of the project by the United States, this zone would provide

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\(^5\) Ibid.
duty-free treatment to products jointly produced by Israelis and Jordanians that meet the requirements of US legislation. The US interest was to support the peace process in the Middle East, and the development of the region could help to establish peace through fostering domestic exports of the concerned parties. According to Ibrahim Saif, the QIZ arrangement was created to promote peace through economic integration within the region.\(^6\)

The agreements provided that both Jordanian and Israeli manufacturers each contribute and maintain at least one third of the minimum 35% content required under the legislation and Proclamation for duty-free treatment in the United States; or, each contribute and maintain at least 20% of the total cost of production of goods eligible for duty-free treatment, excluding profits, even if the costs cannot be considered as part of the 35% minimum content requirement for this purpose. Costs may include originating materials, wages and salaries, design R&D, depreciation of capital investment, overhead including marketing expenses, etc.

Later, as a result of Jordanian efforts the percentages making up the minimum 35% requirement were modified as follows:

1. From a manufacturer located within the QIZ, a minimum of 11.7%
2. From Israel, a minimum of 8% for all products (7% for high tech products), the remainder of the 35% content requirement, namely 15.3% should be obtained through any combination of input from a Jordanian QIZ, Israel, USA and the West Bank/Gaza Strip.

In less than ten years, qualified industrial zones resulted in a number of benefits, such as:

- Exports from Jordan to the United States grew from $15 million in 1997 to more than 1 billion dollars in 2004.
- Jordan’s QIZ’s are the country’s strongest engine of job growth. Jordan estimates that more than 40,000 jobs have been created

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within its QIZs. Investment in Jordan’s QIZs is currently at between $85-100 million and is expected to grow to $180 to $200 million.

- Following the QIZ, The United States and Jordan negotiated a full FTA that the U.S. Congress approved in 2001.

Having observed the positive economic results of the QIZ agreement between Israel and Jordan and bracing for the phasing out of the quantitative quotas on textile (The WTO Agreement on Textile and Closing, ATC) that posed a great threat to the international competitiveness of the Egyptian textile and ready-made garment industry, the Egyptian Government decided to accommodate the concerns of the Egyptian producers and employees of the industry through negotiating a QIZ protocol. The agreement was signed in Cairo on December 24, 2004, and entered into force in February 2005.

The positive immediate results were dramatic: if the total Israeli export to Egypt in 2004 were 29$ million, in 2005 it climbed to 93.2$ million, some 300% jump-off. During 2006 the total Israeli exports to Egypt continued to climb and exceeded 125$ million. The total Egyptian exports to the U.S. that was 1,283$ million in 2004 acceded 2$ billion in 2005 and continued to climb during 2006.

Normalization of the Armenian-Turkish Relations: A Need for an Exit Strategy

The Armenian-Turkish relations have long been characterized by bitter mistrust and tension due to a number of unresolved issues that include the mass killings of Armenians in 1915 which most scholars have qualified as genocide although the government of Turkey has denied that judgment and has supported prosecution of Turks who have spoken out about the issue. Relations came to their worst peak in 1993 when Turkey sealed off its border with Armenia in solidarity with its close ally Azerbaijan.

after a conflict over a breakaway Nagorno-Karabakh. Tensions between Armenia and Turkey furthermore aggravated by subsequent infrastructure projects bypassing Armenia, such as Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline and Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railroad, as well as Armenia’s decision to re-commission its nuclear plant located 16 km away from Turkey’s border.

In 2008, during a meeting with members of the Armenian Diaspora in Russia, President of Armenia Sargsyan made a groundbreaking statement inviting the Turkish president to visit Armenia to watch the World Cup qualifying match between Armenia and Turkey. Through what later came to be referred to as “football diplomacy,” Armenia and Turkey embarked on a road to formal negotiations to settle their bilateral relations.

With talks between Armenian and Turkish diplomats already underway for months, the Armenian-Turkish rapprochement became a subject of heated discussion in local and international media, as Armenian and Turkish officials confessed that the two countries had never come this close to a plan regarding a final normalization. According to the Turkish Foreign Minister, the move was in line with the government’s “Zero Problems with Neighbors” policy. Yet, there has been much controversy domestically, as well as internationally, over the cost of the rapprochement, as officials released contradictory statements about the reconciliation process. While Armenian side spoke about

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establishing relations without preconditions\textsuperscript{14}, Turkish officials insisted that the Turkish-Armenian border could be opened only after Armenia “restores Azerbaijan's territorial integrity” and gives up “distorting history”.\textsuperscript{15}

On October 10, 2009, the protocols on normalization of the Armenian Turkish relations were signed in Zurich. Although, as noted, the texts of the protocols contain no provision regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, or Genocide recognition, the signing of the protocols was about to be postponed due to a last-minute dispute over wording in the statement to be made by the Foreign Ministers. The U.S. State Secretary, Hillary Clinton, and other diplomats present at the ceremony acted immediately to mitigate the wording crisis, and, with a three-hour delay, the protocols were finally signed with no oral statements following the signing ceremony\textsuperscript{16}.

Yet, years into post-Zurich relations, the protocols still remain unratiﬁed due to political reasons that are linked to historic disputes and geopolitical alliances in the region. Should Turkey and Armenia ratify and then implement the protocols, the geopolitical picture of the South Caucasus would change dramatically. However, most analysts today question the possibility of such developments unless the West puts pressure on Ankara to ratify the documents. However, by that time, Turkish prime-minister remained adamant: “if you want to resolve Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, you should also resolve the Turkish-Armenian issue. Otherwise, you will fail to resolve it”.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{14} Interview of the President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan to BBC correspondent Gabriel Gatehouse, \textit{The President of the Republic of Armenia (Official Website)}, August 31, 2009, http://www.president.am/events/press/eng/?id=33.
\textsuperscript{17} Turkish PM Erdogan makes a condition to White House in terms of resolution of Turkish-Armenian issue, ANS TV, \textit{Today.az}, 04.12.2009, http://www.today.az/news/politics/57954.html
In a televised address broadcast on Armenian public Television on April 22, 2010, on the eve of the 95th anniversary of the commemoration of the Armenian Genocide, President Sargsyan declared that, since Turkey is not ready to move forward without preconditions and within a reasonable frame, it is in the best interests in the Armenian nation to suspend the ratification of the protocols: “From this moment on, we consider the current phase of normalization exhausted”. According to Sargsyan, Armenia’s political objective of normalizing relations with Turkey remained valid.

In other words, so far, the status quo remains the most probable outcome of the Zurich protocols. Status quo implies a situation, when the protocols remain unratified, the diplomatic relations remain unestablished, international legal documents and agreements remained under reservations and the common border is still kept closed.

In this regard, both Armenia and Turkey, as well as the powers mediating the peace deal would need to start rethinking the normalization process through an effective exit strategy to save face. In this regard, business could provide an additional impetus for the much needed reset button in the Armenian-Turkish normalization.

Back in 1991, a group of Armenian Diaspora figures and Jewish-Turkish businessman Ishak Alaton made the first attempt to break the ice with a project to rehabilitate the Turkish Black Sea port of Trabzon and open a new supply route to Yerevan. Although this project was never completed, Turkish and Armenian businessmen still found a way to operate, trading indirectly through Georgia and Iran. The value of Turkey-Armenia trade has risen to at least $120 million in 2007 from

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18 Serzh Sargsyan, Televised Address of April 22, Yerevan, Armenia (in Armenian).
19 Although they thought they had official political support, defensive nationalism in the Ankara establishment and media quickly sank the project. “The leaders met all of us, approved the project, then got frightened by the press and lied about it....on just one day, 29 February 1992, there were thirteen newspapers and 27 articles attacking me. It wouldn’t happen today”. Crisis Group interview, Ishak Alaton, Istanbul, 25 February 2009.
about $30 million in 1997\(^{20}\). According to a study, opening the border could more than double this to $300 million\(^{21}\).

For Armenia, having an open border with Turkey could boost foreign direct investment in Armenia by lowering perception of its risk and isolation\(^{22}\). Electricity from existing and planned new plants would find a ready market in eastern Turkey, and sales of Armenian electricity to Turkey were agreed in principle during Turkish President Gül’s visit. It is estimated that Armenian exports could rise between 18 per cent and 50 per cent\(^{23}\) and heavier industries would become more viable\(^{24}\). In the medium term, one calculation is that 4,800 new jobs would be created, while real GDP would rise 2.7 per cent and real disposable income 1.8 per cent\(^{25}\).

According to the co-chairman of the Turkish-Armenian Business Development Council (TABDC) Kaan Soyak, there are many projects that could be launched jointly by Armenian and Turkish business community. One of these projects is the establishment of a qualified industrial zone between Turkey and Armenia for cooperation in the

\(^{20}\)Soyak K., Turkish Armenian Business Development Council (TABC), interview with *Today’s Zaman*, 16 February 2009.

\(^{21}\)The Brussels-based Turkish company Unit Group signed a memorandum of understanding for Turkey’s purchase of electricity from Armenia during President Gül’s Yerevan visit. It does not know, however, when this can start due to political problems and permit and other technical arrangements that need to be completed. Crisis Group telephone interview, Unit Group official, Istanbul, 20 March 2009. Armenia’s energy minister, Armen Movsisian, said he hoped to start selling 1.5 billion kw/hours of electricity annually “as soon as possible”. “Armenia Report”, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (REF/RL), 20 March 2009.


\(^{24}\)Gültekin B., The Stakes of Opening the Turkish Armenian Border, French Institute of Anatolian Studies, Research Program on Turkey-Caucasus, October 2002.

In the Former Soviet Union, Armenia used to be the center of textile industry, and it is still active in the textile business abroad. Also, according to Soyak, Armenia has a very effective marketing network in the United States, which can work to the advantage of both sides of a qualified industrial zone or free zone in both Turkey and Armenia. “In Turkey, we have machines and fabrics, and there is a labor force in Armenia. It is possible to produce cost-effective textiles and sell them to the United States without taxes or customs tariffs”.

To establish a qualified industrial zone through US legislation, TABDC has been working with US congressmen for years to map out the details of the project. Since 2001, meetings have been held with both US Rep. Robert Wexler, co-chairman of the US-Turkish Caucus in the US Congress and Frank Pallone, co-chairman of the US-Armenian Caucus in the US Congress.

Moreover, Soyak maintains that having a qualified industrial zone with Armenia is a good chance for Turkish businessmen to boost customs free export to Russia, and the biggest ambition of this trade would be reaching the 7 million Armenian Diaspora dispersed worldwide – particularly aiming at markets of Brazil, Argentina and Canada. According to the TABDC Chairman, there are 1.2 million Armenians in U.S. and 2 millions in Russia, and a very affluent diaspora in Canada, Argentina and Brazil. Reaching these new markets could mitigate recession.

As published in the International Crisis Group Report, a new border industrial zone has already been delineated near the railway inside Armenia that could offer Turkish manufacturers the possibilities of exploiting U.S. trade benefits, including textile quotas that are not close to being filled, and of bypassing high taxes on domestic Turkish exports.

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27 Ibid.
to Russia\textsuperscript{29}. If the border with Azerbaijan is opened as well, Armenia could become a genuine regional trading partner and transit country, and the size of its economy could double\textsuperscript{30}.

Ambassador Rouben Shougarian thinks that it was thought that the membership of Armenia to EEU could save the situation. But the absence of communications and transportation systems and unresolved territorial conflicts will not allow to come to a significant result. At the same time with Iran, Armenia doesn’t have political problems but Iran has high customs and this country is still under sanctions\textsuperscript{31}.

The experience of Israel-Egypt and Israel-Jordan initiatives suggests that, apart from the economic gain, qualified industrial zones have the potential to serve as powerful tools both in foreign policy and in sustainable development in the region.

**Stakeholder Analyzes**

To weigh the potential risks and benefits of a policy, a stakeholder analysis is usually conducted, considering the interests and positions of all parties involved. Establishing a qualified industrial zone between Armenia and Turkey is a policy that affects the following stakeholders:

**1. Armenia:** Suffering from an economic isolation by two of its four neighbors since 1993, Armenia has to rely on Georgia and Iran for trade. The disruption of transit into Armenia during the Georgia-Russia conflict in August 2008 highlighted how vulnerable Armenia's supply chains for key goods, such as gasoline, are to instances of regional instability.

Besides, there has long been strong pressure on the part of the EU and US to normalize relations with Turkey, and in 2009, even Russia has joined the club.

\textsuperscript{29}Crisis Group interview, Kaan Soyak, co-chairman, Turkish-Armenian Business Development Council, Ankara, 2 April 2009.


For Armenia, the alternative to coming to an agreement with Turkey is to continue to rely on Iranian and Georgian roads for land transportation, which means a great deal of extra cost for foreign trade. Not only does Armenia suffer from the high cost of transportation but also from political uncertainty surrounding Georgia and Iran, whose stability is often questioned in light of the Russian-Georgian war, as well as the US-Iran conflict over the nuclear agreement, agreed under Obama and brought back into the agenda by Trump. Failure to come to an agreement with Turkey means isolation from regional energy and transportation projects bypassing Armenia, while Azerbaijan's economy and military budget, on the contrary, will continue to grow and surpass the Armenian capacities. The increasing gap between the two countries' capacities will, most likely, lead to escalation of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (as happened in April 2016) with a possible outbreak of long scale war, which, at this time, Armenia would need to be better prepared, considering the large asymmetry in resources. On the other hand, should the stalemate go on any longer, chances are the Armenian lobbyist organizations will successfully pass the Genocide resolution in the US Congress and ensure stronger pressure on Turkey on the part of the Western powers.

Last but not least, the closed border between Armenia and Turkey should not be viewed as closed border just between two neighbor countries. From geopolitical point of view, closed Armenian-Turkish border also means a closed border between Armenia and NATO, South Caucasus and NATO, between Armenia and Black Sea Economic Cooperation Council, South Caucasus and Black Sea region, Turkey and Eurasian Union, and finally European Neighborhood Policy member country and EU membership candidate country. Most importantly, Armenian-Turkish border is the border of CIS and NATO and The Collective Security Treaty Organization, a security alliance that includes Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan Kirgizia, Russia and Tajikistan.

2. **Turkey**: As an aspiring regional mediator, Turkey is interested in stabilizing and reinforcing its influence in the volatile region. In order to speed up its accession to the European Union, the ruling AKP Party has sought a peace process with Cyprus, trying to end the conflict in the eastern Kurdish region and mending ties with Armenia by pursuing a
“Zero Problems with Neighbors” Policy. By pursuing the normalization policy with Armenia, Turkey hopes to push the EU to play fair when it comes to Turkey’s EU membership plans. The EU demanded that border conflicts among its member states are eliminated, and many EU members have also pressed Turkey to recognize the 1915 massacres as Genocide. Also, should Turkey succeed in its Zero Problems with Neighbors Policy, Ankara’s role as a broker and stabilizing influence would be boosted in a volatile region. Also, if we take into consideration the fact that Turkey did not decrease the number of the neighbors without problems, the QIZ could help him to develop relations with one of them.

Though, arguably, in its deal with Armenia, political considerations are primary for Turkey, there are also certain economic benefits that Turkey will most probably gain from an open border with Armenia, including a rise in the volume trade.

By establishing a QIZ with Armenia, Turkey will develop Eastern regions of the state, particularly the Kars region. Yet, opening up to Armenia might entail more economic risks for Turkey than benefits. Armenia’s total trade volume of $4.7 billion is barely one tenth that of Azerbaijan, and its economy cannot make a significant impact on Turkey’s $142 billion exports and $205 billion imports. Yerevan markets are already saturated with Turkish goods from indirect trade through Georgia and Iran. Some in Turkey, therefore, have suggested that opening the border only makes sense within the context of a full regional south Caucasus development plan, including Russia and Iran. Still, the border opening would boost small businesses and develop the economy

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34 Azerbaijan’s overall trade is $39.8 billion, of which $32.3 billion is exports. The trade figures are taken from the “World Factbook”, Central Intelligence Agency, and are from 2008.
of depopulated and sometimes isolated eastern border towns like Kars, İlgırd, Trabzon and Erzurum, where Turkish traders have long been unhappy about delays at Georgia’s busy border and high transportation costs. In Kars, more than 100,000 signatures were collected from people supporting an open border with Armenia as a step toward opening the Caucasus at large. Communities in Kars and İlgırd particularly want to sell dairy products, fruits and poultry across the border. The fine, ancient Armenian churches, the ancient Armenian capital of Ani and other heritage sites just over the border in Turkey could boost tourism, attracting tours not just from Armenia but also from wealthy members of the Diaspora and other foreign tourists.

**3. US as a Global Superpower:** US ties with Turkey, a key American ally, have repeatedly come under strain because of the draft resolution in the US Congress lobbied by the American Armenians to name the World War I killings as Genocide. Retreating from his campaign promise, Barack Obama, in his April 24 address of 2009, avoided the juridical term “genocide” by using the Armenian term Meds Yeghern (Great Calamity). Obama, in spite of his campaign promise to recognize the Armenian Genocide, did not use the term within his two terms as a president and eight messages to the Armenians every April 24. So did President Trump during his first message to the Armenian people on April 24, 2017. Also, the US will clearly benefit from a more stabilized region and Armenia, freed from the status of Russia’s pawn, and thus becoming a viable candidate to be part of an alternative energy route for the allies in Europe.

Arguably, for the United States the establishment of QIZs will have more of political and geo-political rather than economic benefits. Yet, economic presence of US in the South Caucasus region cannot be underestimated. The economic interests of Russia in the South Caucasus

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36 Transport adds 50 per cent to the cost of local products to Armenia, more than double the usual additional cost. In 1996, some 30 enterprises in the Trabzon Free Zone wrote to Turkey’s foreign ministry to complain about “improper passage fees” collected by Georgia. Gültekin B., Op. cit.


are so strong, that by establishing qualified industrial zones, US will gain an easy way of involvement in the region’s economy with a potential success story. Both, in case of failure of the protocols, and in case of their ratification by parliaments of Armenia and Turkey, a QIZ initiative looked a viable option. By granting a QIZ status to cities of Gyumri in Armenia and Kars in Turkey, US could extend its regional influence and increase economic dependence of Armenia and Turkey. At the same time, high quality, moderately priced textile, apparel, organic agricultural products or even high tech may find a decent niche in the US market. The viability of the QIZ project is also reinforced by the advantage of bringing the Armenian and Turkish lobbies and Washington together to work towards a joint goal. By working together to pass the necessary legislation in US Congress, two groups bring added value to the project, which gains a strategic regional importance.

4. Russia as a Regional Superpower and Georgia as a Regional Transit Monopolist: Russia also stands to gain from the Turkey-Armenia deal by limiting the role of Georgia and its ally the US in the region. The war between Russia and Georgia in August 2008 made the opening of the Armenia-Turkey border look more attractive to both Moscow and Ankara for economy, political, and security reasons. Moreover, as Armenia became a member of the Eurasian Economic Union, it has the only land border with Turkey. Although formally, Georgian government has welcomed the Armenian-Turkish peace talks, the status of Georgia as a transport monopolist for Armenia will be undermined if the border is opened, and its importance as an energy bridge and focus of the attention of great powers could diminish, especially if Armenia-Azerbaijan relations improve.

As a major geopolitical deal, the Armenian-Turkish agreement involves a number of other stakeholders, whose interests, perceptions and positions are likely to affect both the behavior of the primary parties and the outcome of the negotiation process. The major stakeholders are:

Armenian Diaspora: Despite all economic and geopolitical limitations, Armenia's economy imbalance has been somewhat mitigated by its large Diaspora, widely dispersed throughout the world, which excelled in generating international support for Armenia in the development, funding and implementation of humanitarian aid programs,
as well as in mobilizing private transfers, remittances and foreign investment. In general, there has been a broad consensus that the Diaspora is one of the most fundamental resources for the economic, social and political development of Armenia\(^{39}\).

For the Armenian Diaspora, it seems that the Armenians do not gain much by opening the borders, but lose a lot by opening a debate over the tragic events of 1915, which is an unforgivable betrayal. The Armenian National Committee of America, the largest and most influential Armenian American grassroots organization, voiced concerns that Armenia, blockaded by Turkey and under intense economic and diplomatic pressure, is being forced into accepting terms that threaten its interests, rights, safety, and future, referring to the proposed historical commission as “a tactic long pursued by Ankara to cast doubt on the historical record of the Armenian Genocide, intended to serve Turkey’s drive to roll back the growing tide of international recognition of this crime against humanity”\(^{40}\). According to the statement released by ANCA, the protocols undermine the right to freedom and self-determination of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic; surrender the historical rights of the Armenian nation to a just resolution of the Armenian Genocide. For these, and other reasons noted in the ANCA’s point-by-point analysis of the Protocols, the ANCA opposed what it believes is a results of pressure applied upon Armenia to accept a set of “reckless and destructive concessions”.\(^{41}\)

**Republic of Azerbaijan:** When, in 1993, Armenia took control of territories around the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave, Turkey closed the border with Armenia. In 1993, Turkey joined Azerbaijan in imposing a blockade on Armenia in the attempt to force Yerevan to abandon its military and political support of the Nagorno-Karabakh authorities.

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\(^{41}\) Ibid.
Turkey later added two new preconditions before it would consider establishing diplomatic relations and raising the blockade: that Armenia accepted the 1921 treaty of Kars between Kemalist Turkey and Soviet Russia (which established the current state borders)\(^{42}\), and that Armenia ceased pursuing international recognition of the genocide. Turkish government has promised the Azeri government that the border will not be reopened until the conflict is resolved, and Armenian forces withdraw from the territories outside the enclave. However, in practice, Turkish negotiators have put the issue aside, viewing it as a parallel process handled through mediation by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Withdrawal of the Armenian troops is not mentioned as a condition in the protocols for establishing formal diplomatic relations and opening the border, which, according to the BBC South Caucasus analyst, Tom Esslemont, is a move that has left Azerbaijan feeling isolated\(^{43}\).

Azerbaijan has many times warned Turkey that, should it improve relations with Yerevan before the Nagorno-Karabakh issue is resolved, Azerbaijan would look for alternative energy routes and increase the price of gas for Turkey, which it has been selling at one-third of market prices for many years. By choosing not to improve relations with Armenia, Turkey will enjoy all benefits of its fraternity with Azerbaijan, preserving the “one nation, two states” concept of relations.

**Legal Framework for the Regional Cooperation**

The first and the most important step towards establishing a QIZ is signing a Free Trade Agreement with US. The FTA can be signed between either both Armenia and Turkey and US, or between Armenia and US, or between Turkey and US. Alternatively, in addition to these combinations, Armenia and Turkey might consider cooperating with an FTA country that has experience in QIZ practices. In this case, the

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\(^{42}\) Treaty of Kars (Treaty of Friendship between Turkey, the Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia, the Azerbaijan Socialist Soviet Republic, and the Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia).

cooperation with US would extend to Armenia-Turkey-Israel, or Armenia-Turkey-Jordan, respectively.

An extremely important role can be played by the Armenian lobby, which has its influence upon the US policy in the region. Shortly after gaining independence from USSR, Armenia signed an agreement on trade relations with the US, according to which, Armenia received the status of a most favored nation and non-discriminatory treatment. In 2003 Armenia became a member of World Trade Organization.

With the proposal of establishing a qualified industrial zone between Armenia and Turkey on the agenda, obtaining an FTA with US seems a likely option for Armenia, especially in light of the recent shift in the balance of power in the Black Sea/South Caucasus Region.

After obtaining an FTA with US, Armenia can create QIZs in Gyumri and Kars. To do so, Armenian and Turkish governments will have to sign an agreement on implementing the QIZ project, covering the following important issues:

1. The opening of the mutual border between cities of Kars and Gyumri (distance between the cities are 41 miles).
2. Joint use of the existed Kars-Gyumri railroad, jointly reconstructed.
3. The content and the products to be produced in both qualified industrial zones.
4. The methods of the transportation of the products through the territories of both states.
5. The method of the transportation of the labor force.
6. The content of labors, citizenship, gender.
7. The content and the size of the investments.
8. The legal status of foreign labors in receiving state.
9. The opening of the offices of special trade representative.
10. Other issues concerning the cooperation.
12. Control mechanisms over the process

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13. Possibility of using Armenian energy and labor force and Turkish investments.

An important element of developing a qualified industrial zone is having sound bureaucracy and tax regulations. The flow of both, national and international direct investments in newly established QIZ is the key to success and development of QIZs and economies of Armenia and Turkey. High tax rates are causing negative environment for potential investments that are looking for “low taxes in stable countries”. It goes without saying that tax exemptions can cause negative environment such as corruption, discrimination between companies and fraudulent activity among market players, especially in developing countries such as Armenia and Turkey.

The parties may agree on creating special tax exemption mechanisms within the territories QIZs, which will help to involve local and foreign investments. Granting special tax regimes to companies located only in QIZs will not cause negative effect on the entire business environment in both countries.

Parties may also agree on concrete mechanism, which will help them to involve more and more investments. For example, parties may agree that each of them shall grant all the national and international investments in QIZs tax free status within the first year of their activity, or if the investment is more than a certain amount of money (for example USD 50 million), or if the factory or a business has more than 3000 labors etc.

It is also important to grant a tax and custom free access of all products made in QIZs to the systems of transportation of both countries such as railways, airports, ports etc. In this regard, the mutual reconstruction and operation of Gyumri-Kars railroad can be crucial. All these possibilities are not contradicting the agreements signed by Armenia after entering into the Eurasian Economic Union.

Conclusion

Many things have changed dramatically in the world and the region, since the beginning of the football diplomacy, where Armenia played very active and constructive role in negotiation process with Turkey. The
situation changed in the Middle East and Arab countries, the civil war in Syria, the creation of the ISIS and the refuge crisis are the new challenges that the world, as well as Turkey and Armenia are facing. Armenia became a member of the Eurasian Economic Union, the Kurdish referendum took place in September 2017 and the Russia-Turkey as well as Turkey-US relations are in turbulence due to many unresolved issues and problems.

Though the protocols were pre-signed but never ratified by the national parliaments of both states, Armenian president Sargsyan, during his two speeches in the United Nations General Assembly sessions in 2015 and 2017, mentioned that Armenia will not keep the Protocols in its agenda until the end of April 2017.

Though it is generally recognized by the international community that the failure of the Armenian-Turkish Protocols are the fault of Turkey, which did not move forward after the pre-signing of the Protocols in Zurich, that very fact does not necessarily mean anything for Armenia, as it still doesn’t have the borders opened and still suffers from the blockade imposed by Turkey. For that particular reason, the concept of the QIZ is a key opportunity for Armenia and the establishment of the QIZ is still the best option for neighbor states to normalize their relations, and to prove the world that normalization is possible even in the case of Armenia and Turkey.
The article indicates the prerequisites for the development of Armenia's nuclear power industry drawing upon the study of archival materials. It shows the significance of Armenia's energy complex in the development of the united electric power networks of the South Caucasus from the 1960s to the collapse of the USSR. The article analyzes the role of the nuclear power plant (NPP) in the establishment of Armenia as an energy surplus state. It further provides the reasons for energy crisis of the Republic of Armenia in the early 1990s, focusing, in particular, on the reasons for the closure and restart of the station. The main geopolitical problems of the Armenian NPP operation are revealed through studying the electric power market of the South Caucasus and indentifying the export opportunities of Armenia. The article also examines the main problems of nuclear fuel supplies to the Armenian NPP concluding by the recommendations regarding the long-term development of nuclear energy in Armenia.

**Keywords**
Armenian nuclear power station, geopolitical problems, electricity export, South Caucasus, nuclear fuel

**Introduction**

Since the mid-20th century, nuclear power has been one of the key and meanwhile ambiguously evaluated branches of world energy due to its direct impact on international relations and geopolitical processes. The essence of "atomic geopolitics" can be briefly described as such: the existence of developing nuclear energy in a country indicates its energy self-sufficiency and a high level of energy security, while its absence or gradual freezing is typical to countries with a low level of "energy sovereignty" dependent on external supplies of energy resources and
electricity. This also applies to countries with a developed energy system that choose to conserve nuclear power plants. For instance, Germany refused nuclear power after the accident at the Fukushima-1 NPP in 2011. This was followed by a sharp increase in consumption of traditional energy resources - gas and coal, which, in its turn, determines the desire to continue a stable cooperation with the Russian "Gazprom" - the main supplier of natural gas to Germany. The availability of nuclear energy also indicates the export capabilities of the country. The export of energy resources or electricity is an important prerequisite for the geopolitical positioning of the state. Moreover, the presence of an atomic complex increases the strategic importance of the country and provides additional security mechanisms to cope with external threats. Thus, in terms of the development level of the nuclear power industry, states can be conditionally classified into three major groups:

1. “nuclear protectionism” (or absolutism);
2. “nuclear liberalism”
3. “nuclear discrimination”¹

Nuclear power is a priority for the countries of the first group, and for its development the states take all the necessary legislative, political, financial, and economic measures. One of the characteristics of protectionism is that the state prevents the access of the private capital (especially foreign) into the nuclear sector, treating it as a zone of state's strategic interests. Moreover, the state controls not only the operation of nuclear power plants and the supply of electricity, but also the production of the equipment for the operation of the stations. This mostly stems from security considerations. Special taxation is often applied to the industry of this group of countries, or taxes are not applied at all. Russia and China can be included in the group of nuclear protectionists’ countries. In such countries, not only the production of the necessary equipment, but also the process of NPP construction is carried out by companies with a predominant share of state capital.

For the countries of the liberal group almost identical conditions are created for the development of all spheres of energy. The role of the state in the industry is limited only to the functions of control and in

matters related to security: certification, monitoring, licensing, etc. The development of the industry depends on objective conditions, and the main actor is private capital, which excludes a state monopoly. However, this does not mean that the state remains on the sidelines of nuclear energy. The only specificity is that within the framework of this model the state is inferior to the private sector in terms of participation including financial one. The nuclear industry is open to foreign investment, which is often fixed at the legislative level. As for equipment, there is also competition between foreign and domestic suppliers. The countries of this group are, among others, the United States, Canada, Finland, etc.

The third group includes countries that openly impede the development of the nuclear industry for a number of reasons. Most of those reasons are reduced to environmental ones. However, interests of companies involved in hydrocarbon energy and, in fact, forming an international anti-nuclear lobby should not be excluded. The main feature of this group is not only the lack of state support, but also the creation of discriminatory conditions for the functioning of the industry. This is manifested in the additional taxation of companies operating nuclear power plants, the artificial creation of an unfavorable investment climate in the industry, the support of hydrocarbon or renewable energy, etc. This group includes Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, Taiwan, Austria, among others.

None of the presented models is absolute for a single country. Often the boundary between them is very vague. This is explained by the change in the economic and geo-economic situation. For instance, China, with a predominantly protectionist model, is actively looking for foreign markets to supply Chinese-made equipment, while the US (during Trump’s presidency), being in the liberal category, does not hide its skepticism about the export of the American nuclear technologies. There are also countries that strongly develop nuclear power applying the basic principles of both a protectionist and a liberal model. A clear example is India, which created favorable conditions for the implementation and further operation of its main nuclear project – Kudankulam NPP, meanwhile inviting foreign companies (‘Rosatom’ from Russia) to participate in the construction of the facility.
Nuclear power is proclaimed a state monopoly in Armenia fitting mostly in a protectionist model. Today, the nuclear power plant is not only one of the main electricity producers in the country, but also an important guarantor of its energy independence and energy security. According to the Law on Energy of RA (Chapter 2, Article 6), "nuclear power is a state monopoly. The state bodies authorized by the Government of the Republic of Armenia control the activities of forming the organizational, legal and technical systems of nuclear and radiation safety. The issues of nuclear energy, as well as its impact on the environment and security are regulated in accordance with international treaties and the legislation of the Republic of Armenia"².

According to the "Energy Security Concept of the Republic of Armenia", “energy security is a complex of political, economic, legal, organizational, methodological and other measures ensuring high-quality and reliable energy supply at economically reasonable prices to meet the state's needs on an everyday basis, as well as in emergency situations and during the war³. When addressing the main risks and threats that could potentially impede the full functioning of the country's energy security system, the concept focuses on the exploitation of the Armenian NPP. In particular, the emergence of obstacles in the process of building a new nuclear block instead of acting one is considered as a key threat capable of violating the logic of the country's energy development.

The Armenian nuclear power plant, being a guarantor of country's energy security, is considered to be one of the leading factors for increasing the economic and, thus, political competitiveness of Armenia in the region. Under the Soviet regime, the RA energy system was designed as an energy surplus, covering part of the region's needs. Due to this, today Armenia is able to ensure the uninterrupted export of electricity to neighboring countries. The Republic of Armenia has all the necessary resources to become a key player in the regional electric power market in case a power deficit occurs in countries such as Georgia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Iran and Iraq. However, there are serious problems regarding the bilateral relations with its two neighbors and geopolitical

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developments, which resulted in the exclusion of Armenia from a number of transport and energy (mainly pipeline) regional projects in the 1990s.

Under the Soviet regime, Armenia was the leader among the electricity producers of Transcaucasia. Since the mid-1970s, it has become its permanent exporter to neighboring countries, which was largely due to the launch of the Armenian NPP. Today, country faces a set of problems, the main of which are reduced to the search for funds for the construction of a new unit and the development of an optimal scenario for the future of the Armenian nuclear energy. In this context, of particular importance is Armenia's interaction with the key geopolitical actors of the region, in particular, with Russia, as well as the formation of effective methods of participation in diplomatic and media battles initiated with regard to the operation of the Armenian NPP mostly by Turkey and Azerbaijan. To identify the main geopolitical problems of the Armenian NPP operation, the article regards below the historical prerequisites for its construction.

**Energy system of Armenia as part of the United Power Grids (UPG) of the Transcaucasia**

The energy system of the Soviet Armenia until 1960’s was based on the use of hydro resources, since the early 1960’s. - the development of thermal power. The generation of electric power at thermal power plants (TPPs) in 1970’s accounted for 73% of total consumption in the republic, 15% - for hydroelectric power stations (HPPs) and 12% - for flows from the Transcaucasian republics. The restructuring of the energy base contributed to a certain loss of the pace of energy development, which led to the country's lagging behind the average for the USSR norms for the specific consumption of electricity per capita⁴. The construction of a nuclear power plant was a central task in the new model of the country's energy development designed not only to cover the domestic demand, but also to form a power system capable of exporting electricity to all the countries of Transcaucasia, as well as beyond the region.

⁴ The National Archives of Armenia (NAA), f. 1599, inv. 1, c. 727, p. 9.
During 1959-1965, the scheme of electricity supply of the Caucasus was adopted for the implementation, according to which the construction of the main stations was concentrated in the Georgian and Azerbaijani power systems. This scheme was based on an unjustified assumption of a large hydroelectric power station Inguri (introduced in 1968) and on an erroneous position that the transfer of electricity to the places of consumption was cheaper than the transfer of high-calorific fuel. Based on this assumption, the project of the construction of the Sevan power plant in Armenian was rejected. At the same time, coverage of a significant share of electricity consumption (up to 35%) in the republic was planned to be implemented through the systematic transfer of electricity from Azerbaijan through the transmission lines, the capacity of which was estimated at 360 MW. The error was partially corrected by the installation of two condensation units at the Yerevan Thermal Power Plant (CHP) (2 x 150 MW), which resulted in the flow of electricity instead of the planned 2.6 billion kW.h decreased in 1965 to 1.3 billion kW.h, in 1966 it amounted to 1.16 billion kW. h, and in 1967 - 0.663 billion kW. h. The early commissioning of two units of the Hrazdan TPP also contributed to the reduction of overflows\(^5\). Thus, in the specified period, an attempt was made to form such an energy system of the Armenian SSR, the logic of which predetermined the republic's maximum dependence on external supplies. The Transcaucasian power systems were connected by single power lines (one from each republic), connected at the Akstafa switch point. In addition to this basic interconnection, there were also a number of lower voltage links that played a secondary role. The only exception was the Ararat-Nakhchivan-Julfa single line, which is the only source of energy supply for the Nakhichevan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

In general, the power consumption in Transcaucasia during the mentioned period demonstrated steady growth (Table 1).

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\(^5\) NAA, f. 1599, inv. 1, c. 467, pp. 50-51.
Table 1

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The effect of the unification of power systems in 1965-1966 was estimated at 1.9%, which made it possible to take the isolated work of the Armenian SSR as a basis for considering the development of the Armenian energy system for the future. At the same time, it was realized that the implementation of such a model would inevitably lead to an overestimation of reserve capacity in comparison with that needed for the Armenian energy system. Bearing in mind that deficiency was predicted for the other two power systems of Transcaucasia (especially for the Azerbaijani SSR), it is natural to assume that the main power reserve should be concentrated in the Armenian SSR. It should be emphasized that the role of the association of power systems was mainly identified in emergency situations that occurred in separate systems of all three republics, allowing to effectively use the total reserve capacity of the three systems. Mutual assistance of the republics allowed to significantly reduce the consequences of major accidents, including the simultaneous failure of two and then three 150 MW turbine generators at the Tbilisi condensing power plant (CPP) in 1965-1966. In the perspective, integration with the power system of the North Caucasus was also considered. For the development of a unified system, the construction of high-voltage lines Kirovakan 2-TbilCPP, as well as Agdam-Shinoir, was also considered as a necessity. Its construction, however, was based on the position of “Azglavenergo”, which considered the project to be unreasonable, in spite of the fact that the mentioned line was supposed to provide reliable electricity supply to a number of areas of the Azerbaijan SSR, including Nagorno-Karabakh and Nakhichevan.

In the early 1970s, it became obvious that electricity generation in Armenia should be carried out at four types of power plants - HPPs, HPPs, HPPs, HPPs.

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6 NAA, f. 1599, inv. 1, c. 467, pp. 54-55.
7 NAA, f. 1599, inv. 1, c. 467, p. 56.
TPPs, CPPs and NPPs. With the launch of the NPP in the Armenian SSR, there was already an excess of electricity. Moreover, in view of a slowdown in the commissioning of new capacities in the Transcaucasia, the Armenian energy system began to be positioned as a backbone for the whole region.

The preconditions for the development of the project of the Armenian NPP

The first block of the Armenian nuclear power plant was put into operation in 1976, the second one - in 1980. Two WWPR-440 water-water power reactors were installed at the station with the capacities of 240 and 400 MW. Initially, it was assumed that the calculations should be carried out to the level of 1975 when the plant's capacity would be 800 MW with two 400 MW reactors. Similar calculations were made based on the fact that for 20 post-war years (from 1945 to 1965), electricity consumption in the Armenian SSR increased by 9.5 times, which corresponded to an average annual increase of 12\%. Moreover, when designing the start-up scenario of nuclear power plant, electric power consumption in the Nakhichevan ASSR was also taken into account. This was generally carried out from the “Armglavenergo” network and was estimated at 65 MW, 30 MW of which should have been covered by the nuclear power plant. At the same time, the introduction of the Karmir-Vanek hydropower station on the Araks River, jointly built by the USSR and Iran, was also taken into account in 1970. It was assumed that the mentioned HPP would produce 25 MW in summer and 14 MW in winter to the Nakhchivan ASSR. The adoption of a maximum of 65 MW as a whole corresponds to a power consumption of 285 million kW. At the same time, according to the "Scheme for the Development of the Azerbaijan Power System for 1966-1970," electric power consumption in the Nakhchivan ASSR should have amounted to 400 million kW. h. Such a high growth in consumption (in 1965 it was only 57 million), is apparently due to intentions to put into operation a plant for the

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\[8\] NAA, f. 1599, inv. 1, c. 460, pp. 6-8.
production of soda, scheduled in Negrom (near Nakhichevan)\textsuperscript{9}. In general, the level of electricity consumption in the Armenian SSR with the Nakhchivan ASSR is determined in the following amounts (Table 2, billion kWh)\textsuperscript{10}.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armenian SSR</td>
<td>7,1</td>
<td>11,0</td>
<td>17,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakhchivan ASSR</td>
<td>0,1</td>
<td>0,19</td>
<td>0,30</td>
</tr>
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</table>

In 1968 it was planned to construct nuclear power plants on the basis of longer-term prospects. While earlier the project was limited to calculations only till 1975, in the mentioned period the prospective loads till 1980 were considered. The calculations showed that in that period the increase in the energy consumption of the country would be covered by increasing the capacity of nuclear power plants above 1800 MW, and consequently, the energy of the Armenian SSR would be deficit-free\textsuperscript{11}. It was planned that the annual increase in power consumption would amount to 800 million kW. h in 1975 to 1300 million kW. h in 1980\textsuperscript{12}. The design was carried out taking into account the fact that by the time the first units of the NPP were put into operation, the construction of the Hrazdan CPP had already been completed, and Hrazdan TPP had been expanded from 100 to 300 MW. Thus, the state would fully ensure the generation of the electricity needed. At the same time, the project was based on an important provision, according to which the bulk of electricity before and after the launch of nuclear power plant would be generated at thermal power plants\textsuperscript{13}. It is noteworthy that this principle is still a system-forming factor in the Armenian energy industry. Thus, The predictions showed that until 1980 the Armenian SSR energy sector would be based entirely on its own generating sources and would not receive foreign subsidies. For the first time in 20 years, the state’s energy

\textsuperscript{9} NAA, f. 1599, inv. 1, c. 460, pp. 9-10.
\textsuperscript{10} NAA, f. 1599, inv. 1, c. 467, p. 142.
\textsuperscript{11} NAA, f. 1599, inv. 1, c. 467, p. 19.
\textsuperscript{12} NAA, f. 1599, inv. 1, c. 467, p. 97.
\textsuperscript{13} NAA, f. 1599, inv. 1, c. 467, p. 107.
industry should not have to limit its economy. The prerequisites for this were more than enough. Up to the beginning of 1971, in addition to the existing stations, two units of 100 MW were commissioned at Hrazdan TPP and three units with a total capacity of 15 MW at Tatev HPP. In general, for the period from 1971 to 1980, it was planned to put into operation the Shamba and Spandaryan HPP of the Vorotan cascade, the Lori-Berd HPP of the Debit cascade, as well as the Hrazdan power plant (3 x 200 MW) and, accordingly, the first and second nuclear power plants. During the period from 1974 to 1980 the generation of electricity in the Armenian power system for country's needs amounted to 95 billion kW. h, and more than 26 billion were generated at the nuclear power plant (i.e. 27.8%). According to the forecasts, within some years of the mentioned period, some excess capacity (about 400 MW) would be available at country's power plants, which could be transmitted to the UPG of the Transcaucasia.

After making a decision on the construction of the Armenian NPP, it was found out that the station would be built on a high seismic area. Earlier, in 1966, in connection with the refusal to locate an NPP in the Vedi area, dictated by the high cost of the territory, four basic scenarios of construction have been considered:

- Arazdayan,
- Karmrashen,
- Akhuryan,
- Amasiya.

Each of the scenarios considered had both advantages and disadvantages. For instance, with the location of nuclear power plant in the Amasiya area, the station was the most remote from the largest consumer - the Yerevan junction. Therefore, unlike the other three options, the main consumers of nuclear power were to be the Leninakan (currently Gyumri), Kirovakan (currently Vanadzor) and Alaverdi. This scenario assumed that one of the largest facilities of the Armenian power system, the Hrazdan CPP, would have to issue the main part of its

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14 NAA, f. 1599, inv. 1, c. 467, pp. 143-144.
15 NAA, f. 1599, inv. 1, c. 460, p. 10.
capacity in the direction of Zangezur (currently Syunik) and Yerevan\textsuperscript{16}. The Akhuryan scenario also included similar disadvantages, which presupposes the construction of a nuclear power plant on the territory bordering Georgia. The Arazdayan variant (currently Yeraskh) also removed nuclear power plant from the main energy consumption centers, but this distance of 30 km did not significantly change the previously designed configuration\textsuperscript{17}. From the perspective of capital costs over the network, this option was considered to be the most economical, but considering the reliability of the network and the proximity to the main consumption centers, it was considered appropriate to build the plant in Karmrashen (village in Aragatsotn)\textsuperscript{18}.

After studying and analyzing the materials for the location of NPP, an area was chosen in the western part of the Ararat valley, 16 km from the border with Turkey, 10 km northeast of the district center - the city of Hoktemberyan (currently Armavir), 28 km west of the city of Yerevan. The complex of conducted discerning and research confirmed that the seismic conditions of this area are characterized by a level corresponding to 8 points on the MSK-64 scale\textsuperscript{19}. Since its launch, the Armenian nuclear power plant has become a backbone for the energy system of the Armenian SSR and is currently the main guarantor of its security.

**The beginning of energy crisis**

After the devastating earthquake in Spitak in 1988, the requirements for the closure of the Armenian NPP were strengthened. As to the decision of the Council of Ministers of the USSR of January 6, 1989, "On stopping power units of the Armenian SSR and measures for providing power supply to the republics of Transcaucasia ", "…considering the general seismic situation resulted from the earthquake in the territory of the Armenian SSR, the first unit of NPP should be stopped in February 25,\textsuperscript{16} NAA, f. 1599, inv. 1, c. 460, p. 18. 
\textsuperscript{17} NAA, f. 1599, inv. 1, c. 460, p. 14. 
\textsuperscript{18} NAA, f. 1599, inv. 1, c. 460, p. 23. 
1989, while the second unit - on March 18, 1989"\textsuperscript{20}. Following the decision, the Ministry of Energy and Electrification of the USSR, as well as the Council of Ministers of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia were instructed to develop measures to balance the production and consumption of electricity within a 10-day period. The key task was to increase the use of the installed capacity of the Transcaucasian power plants by 330,000 kW in 1989 and 230,000 kW in 1990. At the same time, the re-equipment of nuclear power plants in TPPs, as well as the commissioning of two power units of Rostov NPP until 1991 to cover the deficit were discussed. According to the decree, a number of other systemic measures have been envisaged, among which the measures for the development and approval of project documentation for the construction of a 330 kV power line in the southern regions of the Azerbaijani SSR and the Armenian SSR, as well as instructions for the completion of the repair of the N4 power unit with a capacity of 200 thousand kW on Hrazdan CPP with commissioning in 1989\textsuperscript{21}. It was also planned to implement the accelerated construction and commissioning of the Akstaf-Armenia power line and the "Armenia" substation\textsuperscript{22}.

As part of the development of a new model of the power system functioning under the conditions of the NPP shutdown, much attention was paid to the gas transportation and hydropower component. In particular, the Ministry of the Gas Industry of the USSR was commissioned to carry out pre-project work on expanding gas transmission systems that transport gas to the North Caucasus and the Transcaucasia, taking into account the provision of gas to power plants\textsuperscript{23}. On the other hand, great attention was paid to the development of a new schedule of water launches from the lake Sevan to cover the peaks of electric load and for irrigation.

As the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations of the USSR was commissioned to purchase two air-condensation units with the amount of 31 million rubles in Hungary with delivery to the Hrazdan CPP, it was planned to provide extra-scheduled exports of electricity to Hungary

\textsuperscript{20} NAA, f. 113, inv. 161, c. 21, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{21} HAA, f. 113, inv. 161, c. 21, p. 7-8.
\textsuperscript{22} HAA, f. 113, inv. 161, c. 21, p. 12.
\textsuperscript{23} NAA, f. 113, inv. 161, c. 21, p. 9.
during 1992-1995 to compensate the costs of the equipment. According to the resolution, it was entrusted to build and commission energy capacities and electric grid facilities in the republics of Transcaucasia (Table 3, thousand kW)\textsuperscript{24}.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hrazdan CPP</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tbilisi CPP</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaijan CPP</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Henikend HPP</td>
<td>37,5</td>
<td>37,5</td>
<td>37,5</td>
<td>-</td>
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</table>

Obviously, in view of the collapse of the USSR, these programs were not destined to be realized. This, in fact, was the beginning of a deep energy crisis in the newly independent Republic of Armenia in the early 1990s, as it will be discussed below.

The requirements of a number of political and public institutions to stop nuclear power plant were caused, first of all, by a devastating earthquake in Spitak. In 1983, the Armenian SSR initiated the construction of the third and fourth units of the nuclear power plant, but after the Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident in 1986, the project was stopped. At the same time, it should be highlighted that seismic resistance was originally a basic principle of the construction and further operation of the Armenian NPP. In accordance with the decision of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Council of Ministers of the USSR (21.01.1982, Yerevan), a research department on seismology and seismic construction of nuclear power plants of the “Atomenergoproekt” Institute was launched\textsuperscript{25}. The works aimed at increasing the seismic resistance of the Armenian NPP, in fact, become an example of carrying out relevant work on the other objects. In November 1990, a year after the NPP was shut down, the Director of the Institute F. Arakelyan in his letter to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Armenia V.M. Manukyan and Chairman of the Commission for the Promotion of the

\textsuperscript{24} NAA, f. 113, inv. 161, c. 21, p. 7.  
\textsuperscript{25} NAA, f. 1519, opn. 1, c. 22, p. 1.
Renaissance of Armenia, Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences A.G. Aganbekyan suggested that: 
"... on the basis of the large accumulated experience in testing and ensuring the seismic stability of nuclear power plant, it is necessary to conduct a complex of surveys and activities, primarily at chemical industry enterprises, major accidents with respect to their consequences will be commensurate with accidents at nuclear power plants such as the Chernobyl tragedy. Such work is urgently needed at the Hrazdan CPP, which does not correspond to the requirements of seismic resistance with the established level of possible earthquakes"\(^26\).

During the operation of the power units of the Armenian NPP before decommissioning, 44,231 billion kWh of electricity were generated\(^27\). The collapse of the Soviet Union, as well as political events in 1991-1994, led to the blockade of Armenia and, thus, to the energy crisis in the republic.

The lack of own hydrocarbon reserves, the dependence on the supplied energy resources, which reached 96% by 1991, the maximum blockade of railway and pipeline communications, the closure of nuclear power plant, the lack of electricity imports, the sharp fluctuations in food prices and geopolitical tensions in the region exacerbated the energy crisis in the country.

The generalization of analytical data on the state of the fuel and energy complex in Armenia shows that since 1989, there was a reduction in energy consumption. In 1991, country's resource provision was 60%, in 1992 - 40%, in 1993 this indicator reached 25%. Thus, compared to 1988, the electricity consumption index in the mentioned years indicated 90%, 74% and 51%. The heat supply system provided only 5% of the total demand and 8% of the demand in the municipal utilities sector in 1993. Providing comparatively positive indicators of the functioning of the electric power system became possible only due to the super planned consumption of its own hydro resources and, above all, the unprecedented super-intense operation of the hydroelectric power stations of Sevan-Hrazdan cascade.

\(^{26}\) NAA, f. 1519, op. 1, c. 22, p. 15.
The consumption indicators of the main types of fuel and energy resources in the Armenian SSR in 1988 were 3,620 kg of equivalent fuel per capita, which roughly corresponded to the level of Poland or France in the 1960s. In 1991, this indicator was sharply lowered and amounted to 2780, and in 1993 - about 1200 kg of fuel equivalent per person. According to the World Bank, in 1990 GNP per capita was $ 2,400, and its energy intensity was 1000 kg of oil / thousand of GNP. According to these indicators, Armenia has bypassed such countries as Czechoslovakia, Romania, Poland, Bulgaria and Georgia. However, in 1992, the specific GNP decreased 1.7 times, and the energy intensity index increased 1.4 times. As a result, Armenia was the last country in the list of the mentioned ones. This negative tendency continued after the freezing of the Karabakh conflict in 1994, when electricity consumption in everyday life, rural economy, industry, agriculture and transport, was carried out with significant losses and inefficiently. The main problem was, first of all, in the physical and moral deterioration of power equipment and the unsatisfactory level of implementation of energy saving measures.

Within the framework of the target complex program "Energy", adopted by the Government of the Republic of Armenia in 1995, an attempt was made to single out the stages of country's socio-economic development from 1993 to 2010 (see Table 4).

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28 NAA, f. 113, inv. 175, c. 80, p. 6.
29 Ibid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages</th>
<th>Social aims</th>
<th>Economic aims</th>
<th>Basic measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Survival of the population during the transition period</td>
<td>Ensurance of the social environment with electricity at minimum fuel costs</td>
<td>Implementation of emergency crisis management measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993 - 1997</td>
<td>Overcoming of the crisis and stabilization of the living standard</td>
<td>Overcoming of the electricity deficit for primary consumers</td>
<td>Establishment of market relations, stabilization of the economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998 - 2010</td>
<td>Natural development of living conditions</td>
<td>Acceleration of the pace of economic development, a significant increase in production</td>
<td>Scientific and technical progress, re-equipment, growth of profitability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The launch of the Armenian NPP under new geopolitical conditions

After the collapse of the USSR, the countries of the South Caucasus, previously located in a single geopolitical space, found themselves in a state of deep disintegration, which was also significantly facilitated by regional armed conflicts. This caused the disintegration of energy systems, as a result of which the countries of the region began to develop separate models for ensuring their energy security while trying to extract dividends from the growing Russian-American competition for domination in the region. This competition continues to influence the geopolitical and geo-economic orientation of the recognized states of the region - Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, predetermining the logic of their relationship.

Under the circumstances, the issue of the resumption of the exploitation of the NPP has acquired a special urgency. Facing the
difficult situation regarding the energy system of the Republic, on December 28, 1994 the Government of Armenia established a state commission to organize work on the launch of the 2nd unit of the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant. The commission also included representatives from Russia (JSC “Gidropress”, “Atomenergoproekt”, “Kurchatov Institute”, “Atomprom”, “Atompromresurs”, etc.)\(^{30}\). On April 28, 1995, the Government of the country began the necessary preparatory work for the launch of the 1st unit of the NPP\(^{31}\), which was subsequently suspended due to the technical inexpediency of launching the unit. The second unit was restarted, when the country was in a state of great energy crisis and electricity was supplied only for several hours a day. Without electricity, the country weakened by the recent war would not be able to restore the economy, create normal conditions for the livelihoods of its citizens and reduce the threatening rate of emigration.

In April 1995, the Government of the Republic of Armenia adopted Resolution on "the re-launching of the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant". The following documents were prepared and approved at the governmental level that determined the procedure for resuming operation of the plant after a long shutdown:

- "The concept of renewal of the power units operation of the Armenian NPP";
- "List of measures to improve the safety of the second unit of the Armenian NPP"\(^ {32} \).

The launch of the 2nd unit was made possible due to the assistance of such countries as Russia, France, Germany, with the assistance of the European Union (EU) and the IAEA. Since 1995, the share of the Armenian nuclear power plant in the development of country’s electricity has steadily increased. The need for plant operation is especially high in winter, when the country's electricity consumption rises sharply due to the provision of heat to residential, public, industrial and commercial buildings.

\(^{30}\) NAA, f. 113, inv. 171, c. 583, pp. 3-4.
\(^{31}\) NAA, f 113, inv. 175, c. 236, p. 1.
\(^{32}\) Yeghiazaryan L., 100 years of energy in Armenia, Yerevan, Publishing house "Media Model", 2003, p. 105.
The re-launching of the Armenian NPP lead to a number of statements and comments of a very different level, having political connotations with ecological coloring. After the re-launch of the 2nd power unit of the Armenian NPP in 1995, the Turkish authorities made statements about the station's non-compliance with environmental safety requirements. In particular, Turkey accentuated the close location of the nuclear power plant to the Turkish border. The Turkish media repeatedly published articles on the threat posed by the Armenian nuclear power plant for the health of the residents of Igdir, located 16 km from the nuclear power plant. The articles also addressed the increase in the number of cancer diseases, as well as that in the number of newborns with obvious anomalies. Such publications of speculative nature are undoubtedly not uncommon for the Turkish media and Turkish political leaders, as well as for the Azerbaijani authorities. The official Yerevan has repeatedly stated that the Armenian NPP complies with all international safety standards. As for the position of the main supranational regulatory body of the industry, the IAEA, in July 2005 the delegation visited Armenia. During his visit, the Director General Mohammad El Baradei acquainted himself with the main directions of the development of Armenia's energy industry highlighting not the danger of the Armenian NPP but the fact that replacing the existing nuclear unit with a new generation of nuclear power unit is the preferred option for the development of country's energy system.

The European Commission continues to insist on the conservation of the station given the fact that the NPP has developed its own resources. In 2000, following the meeting of the joint working group, the European Commission and the Republic of Armenia, a decision was made to provide financial assistance to the Armenian side within the

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35 Azerbaijani President meets with the IAEA General Director, http://lib.aliyev-heritage.org/ru/12727945.html.
framework of the TACIS program for the purpose of conservation of the Armenian nuclear power plant. The financial aid assumed:

1) erection of new HPPs and modernization of existing HPPs in RA during 2000-2003 - 34 mln euro;
2) restoration and construction of the gas transportation infrastructure of the RA with the aim of connecting with Iran within the framework of the INOGATE program (the Program of international cooperation in the energy sphere between the EU, the Black Sea and Caspian states and neighboring countries) in 2000-2004 - 16 mln euro;
3) implementation of the Intergovernmental Program of Action for Nuclear Safety in 2000-2004 - 50 mln euro (10 mln per year);
4) Euroatom's loan of 138 mln euro for the decommissioning of two nuclear power units.

This amount was obviously insufficient to resolve the complex problem of the Armenian NPP functioning, which implies not only the decommissioning of the blocks through the development of alternative capacities, but also the extension of the term of their work with a parallel search for funds for the construction of a new generation unit. At present, a feasibility study has been prepared for the construction of a new nuclear power plant. According to preliminary estimates, it will cost $ 5.2-7.2 billion.

In September 2003, the Ministry of Energy of Armenia and the Russian companies “RAO UES of Russia” and “Inter RAO UES” signed an agreement on the transfer of the Armenian nuclear power plant under the trust of “Inter RAO UES” for a period of five years. In accordance with the agreement, the Government of Armenia remained the owner of 100% of the shares, and “Inter RAO UES” committed to ensure the uninterrupted and safe operation of the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant and to import annually nuclear fuel for the station. Within the framework of this agreement, the Government of Armenia received 75%
of the profit from the activities of the Armenian NPP, and “Inter RAO” - 25%. Under the contract, the Russian company was to pay back the debt accumulated by the nuclear power plant in the amount of $40 million to nuclear fuel suppliers.

According to the agreement concluded in December 2008 between the RA Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources and the Russian company “Inter RAO UES”, the Russian side's management of financial flow at the Armenian NPP was extended for another five years. In 2013, “Inter RAO UES” refused to extend the agreement with the Government of Armenia on further trust management of the nuclear power plant, commenting that it fully fulfilled its obligations to the Armenian side.

The interest of Russia to participate in the development of the nuclear sector of Armenia is evidenced by the fact that even on December 24, 2010 the Armenian government approved the agreement and the charter of the joint Armenian-Russian company - CJSC “Metsamorenergoatom”, which assumed the obligation to build a new nuclear power unit. Thus, by this decision, the government agreed to establish a joint venture with the Russian side (Rosatom) on a parity basis. The authorized capital of the company was $60 million, while the Armenian share of the authorized capital was $30 million and was provided at the expense of the profits of the energy companies of Armenia. The decision to build a new power unit by Russia directly affected the containment of tariff growth for natural gas supplied to Armenia.

Thus, the problem of conservation directly rests on the decision to build a new unit, as well as to determine the timing of the termination of operation of the nuclear power plant. In early 2015, the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources of Armenia announced that the new power unit of the Armenian NPP would be launched in 2026, preceded by Russia's decision to grant Armenia a loan of $270 mln (and $30 mln as a grant) aimed at extending the life of the Armenian NPP.

40 The construction of nuclear power plants in Armenia will be both Russian and Armenian enterprises, http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/165168/.
Fuel supplies for the Armenian NPP

One of the basic problems regarding the operation of the nuclear power plants is the search for fuel suppliers. This is directly related to a number of geopolitical problems, since nuclear fuel trade is carried out not only within the framework of commercial logic, but also that of long-term political interests between states. In this respective, the establishment of stable relations between the supplier countries and the ones that import nuclear fuel is a prerequisite for the full operation of nuclear power plants. On the other hand, the creation of a supply chain, as well as the storage of nuclear fuel, is important in the context of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. According to the "Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons", given the "devastating consequences that a nuclear war would have for all mankind", one of the main non-proliferation actors is the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), whose goal is to create "guarantees for a peaceful nuclear activities". To provide such guarantees, the IAEA initiated the creation of the so-called "fuel banks" designed to create supply mechanisms accessible to all countries that fulfill the requirements of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, deliveries to which are stopped not for technical or commercial reasons, but for political ones. Currently, under the auspices of the IAEA, the International Uranium Enrichment Center (IUEC) operates in Angarsk (Russia), which functions as a "fuel bank". The main purpose of creating the IUEC is to ensure guaranteed supplies of uranium products to countries that participate in the Center as an alternative to creating their own enrichment facilities. Armenia is a full member of the IUEC on a par with Russia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine. These countries are building their policy in the field of nuclear energy in strict accordance with the principles prescribed in the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage (1997), as well as the Joint Convention on the Safety of Circulation with Spent Fuel and Radioactive Waste Management Safety (1997). According to the intergovernmental agreement on the establishment of the IUEC, the main conditions for membership in the Center are:

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41 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Approved by Resolution 2373 (XXII) of the UN General Assembly on June 12, 1968.
• Compliance with the country's obligations under the international regime for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons (Agreement, Preamble, Charter of JSC IUEC, Article 1.1).
• Country's intention to develop nuclear energy, the availability today or in the future of its own reactor needs, whose needs will be met by the products of the IUEC.
• Cooperation of the Member State of the IUEC with the IAEA (Agreement, Article 8).
• Use of enriched uranium produced by the IUEC and exported from the Russian Federation for the manufacture of fuel (powders, tablets, fuel assemblies) for the needs of nuclear energy (Agreement, Article 5).
• Access to uranium enrichment facilities mainly but not exclusively to IUEC member organizations that do not develop uranium enrichment facilities on their territory.\textsuperscript{42}

The participation in the IUEC is, first of all, a political issue. The entry begins with an interstate political process, organized by foreign departments of countries interested in integration with the IUEC.

In this context, we should dwell on a strategically important Armenian-Russian project in the field of nuclear energy, namely the establishment of the CJSC “Armenian-Russian Mining Company” (July 2008) for geological prospecting, mining and processing of uranium in Armenia. The creation of a joint Russian-Armenian company is of great importance both for Armenia and for Russia. The company immediately started field work, and in 2009 drilling operations started in the Sisian district of Syunik region. According to forecasts, uranium reserves in Armenia fluctuate from 10 to 60 thousand tons, with the development of which it is possible to significantly increase the level of Armenia's energy security, using available reserves both for operation of the Armenian NPP and exporting them in the framework of cooperation with the IUEC. Starting from 2011, the price of uranium in the world shows a drop, and in 2016, it reached its lowest price - $18 per pound of nitrous oxide. However, taking into account the constant growth of energy consumption.

around the world (approximately 2% per year), it is also possible to forecast an increase in demand for nuclear power.

**Armenian NPP and the problems of electricity export**

The development of nuclear energy and technology is directly related to geopolitical factors. According to Blasio and Nephew, nuclear energy can play a constructive role in covering energy needs of the 21st century in both developed and emerging markets. At the same time, for a fully-fledged and safe development of the industry, it is necessary to purposefully support state institutions that stimulate and coordinate the investment activity of the private sector.

The future of the Armenian NPP is largely determined by the export activity. In this sense, the search for electricity sales markets in the region is a strategic task for Armenia, which, in general, also corresponds to the philosophy of the European Energy Charter, the country is a member of.

As a guarantor of Armenia's energy security, the Armenian NPP is also considered as one of the leading factors for increasing the economic and, thus, geopolitical competitiveness of Armenia in the region. The lack of own hydrocarbon reserves, dependence on supplied energy resources, the blockade of railway and pipeline communications, limited electricity export opportunities and geopolitical tensions in the region dictate the need to find funds for the construction of a new unit of the Armenian NPP capable of bringing Armenia to a new level of energy independence. As already mentioned, under the Soviet regime, the Armenian energy system was designed as an energy surplus, covering part of the region's needs. As a result, today the country is able to ensure uninterrupted export of electricity to neighboring countries. If there is a

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shortage of electricity in the countries of the region, the Republic of Armenia obviously has all the chances to declare itself a key player in the regional electric power market.

Given the possible annual electricity production volumes, the forecasts for electricity necessary for Armenia’s domestic consumption, as well as the capacity of inter-system transmission lines with neighboring countries, the total volumes of electricity supplied from the Armenian energy system to the energy systems of Georgia, Turkey and Iran (which will become possible while ensuring the joint operation of the energy systems of these countries) may amount to approximately 6 billion kW/h per year\textsuperscript{46}.

However, a number of geopolitical factors, such as closed borders, the absence of diplomatic and, therefore, economic ties with two neighboring states, the unsettledness of the Karabakh conflict, etc., hamper the full-fledged positioning of Armenia in the given context. The protracted process of solving the above-mentioned problems negatively affects the full-fledged use of export potential, built up in the USSR.

Prospects for electricity exports

Turning to the prospects of export in the Georgian direction, it should be noted that in 2000-2007 about 15% of the consumed electricity was exported from Armenia to this country with current energy consumption of 8.5 billion kWh. Now this indicator decreases from year to year. The Georgian authorities are currently pursuing an active policy aimed at liberalizing the energy market, as well as international positioning of Georgia as a low-cost electricity exporting country, which became particularly relevant in with the launch of the Azerbaijan-Georgia-Turkey energy bridge capable of exporting electricity to Turkey up to 700 MW. Export of electricity from Armenia to Georgia is carried out only on a seasonal basis, as well as during interruptions in the Georgian energy system.

As for Turkey, for the period of 1995-2007, the demand for electricity had been increasing by 6.6% per year. In 2015-2016 years the increase amounted to 8.5%. It is expected that the electricity consumption in Turkey, which reached its peak level of 170 billion kWh in 2006, will increase approximately threefold to 2020, reaching 499 billion kWh. To ensure this level of consumption in Turkey, it is necessary to triple the installed capacity of power plants: from 38,500 to 96,000 MW in 2020.

Currently, the export of Armenian electricity to the Turkish market is directly linked to the opening of the Armenian-Turkish border. The protracted process of ratification of the Zurich protocols (and later its suspension) had a definite effect on a number of accords of a purely economic character that existed between Armenia and Turkey after September 2008, when Turkish President Abdullah Gul paid an official visit to Yerevan. Within the framework of the meeting, the issue of electricity export from Armenia to Turkey was discussed. Initially, it was assumed that Armenia would begin direct electricity supplies to Turkey in the spring of 2009. A corresponding agreement was concluded during the visit of the Turkish President to Armenia between the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources of Armenia, CJSC "High Voltage Electric Networks" and the Belgian company "UNIT" engaged in import and distribution high voltage electricity in Turkey. Currently, Turkey is actively developing its own capacities, and is also implementing a project to build a nuclear power plant "Akkuyu" with a capacity of 4800 MW.

Today, along with the construction of the Turkish Stream gas pipeline, the “Akkuyu” nuclear power plant is the locomotive of Russian-Turkish economic relations. In parallel, the construction of the “Akkuyu” NPP is carried out under very favorable conditions for Turkey. For example, there are no obligations of the Turkish side for the construction of power lines and substations. It is not entirely clear whether there will be demand for electricity generated at nuclear power plants, since the latter is located near Antalya resort, which does not have large industrial enterprises; the price of electricity is fixed for 25 years without taking into account the inflation of the dollar and the growth of world prices for electricity; in the

agreement there is no article on force majeure circumstances, and there is also no ban on the nationalization of the nuclear power plant. All these aspects, identified by the Institute of Energy Problems (RF), ultimately make the project not entirely appropriate for Russia\textsuperscript{49}. Nevertheless, “Akkuyu” repeated the fate of the Turkish Stream: after the shot down of the Russian SU-24 fighter, the future of the nuclear power plant was in question, but already in August 2016, Presidents Putin and Erdogan agreed to resume the project, and in May 2017 the official Kremlin announced the investment of $22 billion in the construction of nuclear power plant\textsuperscript{50}.

As for Iran, there is a lack of 2,500 MW in energy capacity and it is growing from year to year. The authorities of Iran are also consistent in solving problems related to energy supply to the population and the economy, as evidenced by the construction of the nuclear power plant in Bushehr with the participation of Russia\textsuperscript{51}. At the same time, the energy security of the Islamic Republic (especially its northern provinces) is partly attributed to the supply of 3.2 kWh of electricity from Armenia, instead of 1 cubic meter of natural gas supplied via the Iran-Armenia gas pipeline, according to the barter formula. The energy dialogue between Armenia and Iran can be particularly active in connection with the lifting of sanctions against the Islamic Republic, which, first of all, can be reflected in the implementation of the project of the Meghri hydro power plant.

The implementation of the North-South electricity corridor could significantly change the situation in the future. In April 2016, the energy ministers of Russia, Armenia and Iran signed a road map for the energy corridor. Within the framework of the program, the construction of overhead power lines between Armenia and Iran with the financing of Iran, as well as the construction of a high-voltage transmission line between Armenia and Georgia for KfW bank loans. The construction of 400-kilovolt power lines Iran-Armenia and Armenia-Georgia will allow


\textsuperscript{50} Putin called the amount of investment in the construction of the Turkish nuclear power plant Akkuyu, https://ria.ru/atomtec/20170503/1493600158.html.

expanding communication between the energy systems of the countries. Today, the power grids of Iran and Armenia, as well as Georgia and Russia operate in synchronous mode. The signing of the agreement will allow the energy networks of all four countries to work in synchronous mode with a capacity of overflows of up to 1200 MW\textsuperscript{52}.

Thus, we can conclude that the breakthrough of the energy blockade is the main challenge for the Armenian economy. In this regard, it is necessary not only to pursue an active policy aimed at building new infrastructures, but also to apply market mechanisms to ensure a low cost of electricity produced. In particular, the talk is about lowering the cost of electricity produced in Armenia, which will allow it to be more competitive in foreign markets, while currently generated electricity in Armenia is inferior in its pricing of electricity produced by Georgian hydroelectric power plants. It is obvious that with the continuation of the tendency to increase the cost of production, Armenian electricity will be less attractive for the Georgian market. At the same time, it is important to note that the formation of such a trend, on the one hand, is due to the limited sales market, on the other hand, it is directly related to multimillion-dollar loans that are periodically attracted to the Armenian energy system, affecting tariff formation. This issue should also be considered in the context of Armenia's integration into the common electric power market of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) with the possibility of delivering along the "North-South" corridor to Russia and further to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan - countries with a power deficit.

French geopolitician Jacques Attali proposes to consider economic development as the basis of civilizational development in general. Based on this thesis, he suggests replacing the notion of "geopolitics" with "geo-economics", which he considers to better reflect the essence of world politics. In fact, this is a concept that reduces the civilizational process not to geography, culture or religion, but directly to the economic reality. According to Attali, it is the economic power and the possibility of its spread that shapes the civilizational image of the state / region and determines its place in the world. In this sense, along

\textsuperscript{52} Armenia, Russia, Georgia and Iran signed the "road map" of the energy corridor "North-South", http://newsarmenia.am/news/armenia/armenya-rf-gruziya-i-iran-podpisali-dorozhnuyu-kartu-energokoridora-sever-yug/
with the development of financial institutions, the build-up of productive power and trade is viewed as the basis for the geo-economic advancement of the state. It is obvious that the continuous development of such a strategic production direction as nuclear power, as well as the establishment of stable export communications can significantly enhance the international status of Armenia and create serious guarantors of national security.

**Conclusion**

1. After the collapse of the USSR, the countries of the South Caucasus, previously located in a single geopolitical space, found themselves in a state of deep disintegration in particular with regard to energy system. Due to this, the countries of the region developed separate models for ensuring their energy security while trying to extract dividends from the growing Russian-American competition for the domination in the region. This competition has and to present continues to have an impact on the geopolitical and geo-economic orientation of the regional states - Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, predetermining the logic of their mutual relations. Under the circumstances, the policy of "nuclear protectionism" aimed at raising the level of Armenia's energy security is a necessity.

2. The geopolitical significance of the Armenian nuclear power plant creates additional security mechanisms to ensure the security of the country regarding the external threats. The lack of hydrocarbon reserves, dependence on supplied energy resources, blockade of railway and pipeline communications, limited opportunities of electricity export and the geopolitical tensions in the region dictate the necessity of finding funds for the construction of a new unit of the Armenian NPP.

3. As a guarantor of Armenia's energy security, the Armenian NPP should be considered as one of the leading factors for increasing the economic and political competitiveness of Armenia in the region. Under the Soviet regime, the Armenian power system was designed as an energy surplus, covering part of the region's needs. Due to this, today...
Armenia has capacities capable of ensuring the uninterrupted export of electricity to neighboring countries. This issue should also be considered in the context of Armenia's integration into the common electric power market of the EEU with the possibility of deliveries along the North-South corridor to Russia and to other EEU member countries. Armenia has the resources of becoming a key player in the regional electric power market, which is especially important in connection with the exclusion of the country from a number of transport and energy (mainly pipeline) projects at the regional level. Such positioning is impossible without the development of nuclear energy, traditionally considered as the basis of Armenia's energy policy.

4. As a member of the International Uranium Enrichment Center, Armenia is building its nuclear energy policy in strict accordance with the principles set out in the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage (1997), as well as the Joint Convention on the Safety of the Treatment of Spent Fuel and Radioactive Waste Management (1997). According to the forecasts, uranium stocks in Armenia fluctuate from 10 to 60 thousand tons, and with their development it is possible to significantly increase the level of energy security of Armenia using available reserves both for the operation of the Armenian NPP and exporting them in the framework of cooperation with the IUEC.

5. In the context of the problems regarding the functioning of the Armenian NPP, a number of threats to Armenia's energy security are emerging, among which the lack of the necessary funds for the construction of a new unit of the Armenian NPP; failures in extending the life of the current block; regional political confrontations, accompanied by subversive and terrorist actions against the objects of the fuel and energy system; market fluctuations and a sharp change (increase) in prices in the fuel and energy resources market, as well as obstacles arising from the transit of energy resources and electricity in transit countries due to political instability.