Introduction

On the morning of 13 November 1918, a mighty fleet of battleships, cruisers, destroyers, and dreadnoughts carrying the flags of the British Empire, France, Italy, and Greece sailed to the Ottoman capital, Istanbul. While they passed through the Dardanelles, where they had met an unexpected defeat three years prior, the Ottoman coastal artillery remained silent. The fleet sailed through the Marmara Sea and dropped anchor without encountering resistance upon its arrival at the gates of Istanbul. While the capital's Ottoman Armenians and Romioi (Greek Orthodox Christians)[1] rushed to the shore to celebrate the Allied fleet's arrival, it was a 'black day' for the Muslim population, which saw the parading Allied fleet as another humiliation for a Muslim empire that had ruled vast tracts in south-east Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, and Asia Minor for centuries. While Christian Armenians hugged and proclaimed '*Krisdos Haryaw I Merelots!*' ('Christ is risen!') in the streets of the Pera neighbourhood to celebrate the arrival of the Allied fleet – equating its arrival with their own survival, after witnessing the deportations and massacres during wartime – there was silence and grief among the Ottoman Muslims. When the French General Louis Franchet d'Espèrey marched ceremonially on the Grande Rue de Péra (now İstiklal Caddesi) in February 1919, as if he had conquered the city, famed Ottoman author Süleyman Nazif, who witnessed the ceremony, wrote in the Ottoman Turkish paper *Hadisat* (The Events) the day after that it was a 'black day' for the Ottoman Muslims and criticised the gloating of non-Muslim Ottomans.[2] For the first time in six centuries, there were

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[1] Throughout the book, I use Romioi (Rum) for the Greek Orthodox Christian communities of Anatolia and Istanbul, who were subjects of the Ottoman Empire.

[2] Edhem Eldem, 'Tarihte Gerçek Konusunda Küçük Bir Araştırma: İstanbul'un Beyaz Atlı Fatihi' [A Little Research on Reality in History: The Conqueror of Istanbul on a White Horse], *Toplumsal Tarih*, 261 (2015).

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foreign troops in the streets of the capital. This day marked the beginning of the end of the Ottoman Empire, a dissolution that would bring great suffering and chaos but also new opportunities for all Ottomans, both Muslim and non-Muslim.

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This book will focus on a non-Muslim community in the Ottoman Empire, the Armenians, to understand how it survived through the stormy post-war years, as an empire heaved its final breaths. From the beginning of the Armistice years, an atmosphere of insecurity shaped the political position of Ottoman Armenians. Policymakers – political party leaders, the press, elected members of the Armenian National Assembly, and prominent opinion leaders – together with the Armenian Patriarchate devised a collective political strategy to ensure the survival of their community. Initially, Ottoman Armenians developed a nationalist approach that sought unification with their compatriots in the Caucasus. However, following the defeat of the Greek army by Turkish Nationalist troops in Anatolia in 1922, the collective strategy among those Ottoman Armenians who stayed in Istanbul and Anatolia was revised significantly. Once it was clear that the Turkish Nationalists would claim victory, they sought reconciliation and peace with the Turkish majority. This reconciliation was only possible through the acceptance of Turkish superiority by the Turkish Armenians – to choose to remain within the lands of what would become the Republic of Turkey was to pledge loyalty to the newly established Nationalist government in Ankara, as a means of guaranteeing personal safety. A comprehensive analysis of newspapers of the period illustrates this evolution of public opinion among Ottoman Armenians. This transformation of the political position among Ottoman Armenians is at the core of this book.

I analyse the transformation of the Ottoman Armenian political position and the impacts of social and political developments of the period on the Ottoman Armenian community by examining primary sources from the Ottoman Turkish and Ottoman Armenian press. I argue that Ottoman Armenians struggled to reorganise their political and social lives after the wartime genocide, choosing to establish alliances with the Allied Powers to create an independent 'Western Armenia' to ultimately unite with the existing Armenian state in the Caucasus. This shared vision among Ottoman Armenians crystallised

a new political agenda, which I call the collective political position of
Ottoman Armenians.

I argue that the Armenian press as an instrument of the public sphere
played a crucial role in the subsequent transformation of Ottoman
Armenians' political position. In this atmosphere of insecurity, the
Ottoman Armenian community shifted its policy towards rehabilitat-
ing the Turkish–Armenian relationship, especially following the
defeats of the Armenian state in the Caucasus in 1920 and the Greek
army in Anatolia in 1922. In the process of reorienting their political
position, the Armenian newspapers played a vital role as the most
influential policy-making vehicles of society. Two theoretical concepts,
ethnic bargaining and the security dilemma, provide a rational frame-
work to better understand the process of political transformation.

In the recent literature on ethnic conflicts, especially 'ethnic bargain-
ing', scholars have argued that minority groups may be radicalised by
the signals of behavioural intent from the host state or from a third
state.[3] Accordingly, if the host state demonstrates an aggressive
approach towards an ethnic minority group, the radicalisation of that
group is more likely. Furthermore, if there is an intervention by a third
state on behalf of the ethnic minority's rights, the possibility of the
radicalisation of the group further increases.[4]

Erin K. Jenne, in her authoritative study, utilises the theory of ethnic
bargaining in understanding the reasons behind minority mobilisation.
As she describes, minorities update their beliefs and political positions
periodically over time, following signals they receive from host states or
kin states.[5] Hungarian minority groups in Slovakia and Romania, for
instance, became more vocal in calling for their rights when Hungary
showed patronage and sent signals of protection in the 1990s.[6] In
1992, when the Hungarian government called on Slovakia to agree to

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[3] For the ethnic bargaining method, see Erin K. Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining: The
     Paradox of Minority Empowerment* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2007),
     53; Erin K. Jenne, Stephen M. Saideman, and Will Lowe, 'Separatism as
     a Bargaining Posture: The Role of Leverage in Minority Radicalization', *Journal
     of Peace Research* 44(5) (2007); Erin K. Jenne, 'A Bargaining Theory of Minority
     Demands: Explaining the Dog That Did Not Bite in 1990s Yugoslavia',
     International Studies Quarterly 48(4) (2004); Dan Reiter, 'Exploring the
     Bargaining Model of War', *Perspectives on Politics* 1(1) (2003), 27–43;
     Rupen Cetinyan, 'Ethnic Bargaining in the Shadow of Third-Party Intervention',
     International Organization 56 (Summer 2002), 645–77.
[4] Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining*, 95.   [5] Ibid., 53.   [6] Ibid., 97–116.

the principles of minority self-government, the Hungarian commu-
nity in Slovakia increased its demands. In Romania as well, before
the Hungarian government intervened on behalf of the minority in
1992, Hungarian representatives had pursued more moderate goals.
However, after recognising the Hungarian state's support, the
Hungarian community in Romania also raised its expectations.[7]
The Hungarian leadership's secessionist demands in Romania came
to an end after Romania and Hungary signed a bilateral agreement.
Thus, when the 'external support' disappeared, Hungarians in
Romania accommodated the host state.[8]

I argue that the collective behaviour of the Armenian community
during the Armistice years can be better contextualised by utilising the
theory of ethnic bargaining. Third states – the Allied Powers, in this case –
intervened in the conflict on behalf of Armenians during the Armistice
years when the Ottoman state enacted its various oppressive policies, thus
meeting the 'external support' criteria. In applying the ethnic bargaining
theory to the case of Ottoman Armenians in 1918–23, however, one
should avoid anachronistic mistakes, especially when using the term
'minority'. In the case of Ottoman Armenians, it is important to note
that Armenians were tolerated as *dhimmi*s (non-Muslims) within the
Ottoman millet (religious community) system and the concepts of 'minor-
ity' and 'majority' did not exist until the 1920s. Even though the Ottoman
state granted certain rights to the Ottoman Armenians – such as religious
freedom, the right to have Armenian schools, as well as the right to
publish books and newspapers in Armenian – Ottoman Armenians still
remained a tolerated, subordinated, non-dominant group within the
Empire, not because they were accepted as minorities but because they
were non-Muslims.[9] Thus, naming the Ottoman Armenian community as
a minority group and the Ottoman Muslims as a majority group would be
an anachronistic mistake when discussing the communities in the
Ottoman Empire, especially before the twentieth century. However, this
book analyses the Ottoman Armenian community within a post-World
War I context, at a time when nation-states were being formed around the
world and the League of Nations, which for the first time introduced the
notion of minority rights, was established. The Armenians were seen by

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[7] Ibid., 121–2.   [8] Ibid., 123.
[9] Benjamin Thomas White, *The Emergence of Minorities in the Middle East: The
   Politics of Community in French Mandate Syria* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh
   University Press, 2011), 31–2.

the world community as a 'nation' which deserved to establish a nation-state, so it would not be a totally anachronistic mistake to use the notion of 'minority' in reference to the Ottoman Armenians during the Armistice period (1918–23). Keeping this in mind, throughout the book, when referencing Ottoman Armenians, I use the concepts 'non-dominant group' and 'minority' interchangeably, still using the latter only in quotes. When I use the term 'minority' for Ottoman Armenians, I am implying their post-genocide numerical inferiority to the Empire's Ottoman Muslim population in Anatolia.

Reactions similar to those of the Ottoman Armenians can be seen in studies of other ethnic conflicts in recent decades. For instance, ethnic Hungarians in the Vojvodina region of Yugoslavia accelerated their demands to unite the region with Hungary in the 1990s when the Serbian leader Slobodan Milošević increased the level of aggression towards them; in return, the Hungarian government declared that it would defend the rights of the Hungarian population in Vojvodina.[10] However, in 1999 when the Hungarian government declared its non-interventionist stance regarding the Hungarian minority issue in Yugoslavia, the Hungarians in Vojvodina refrained from radicalising against the central authority.[11] When considering this case in relation to the Ottoman Armenians, it can be argued that when there was external support from foreign states, the secessionist movement among the Ottoman Armenian community crested; conversely, when the external support dissipated following military defeats on the battlefield by the Turkish National Movement, members of the Armenian community recalibrated their political position and acquiesced to the Turkish National Movement, repressive as it was. As the theory puts forward, ethnic minority groups pursue separatist, pro-independence strategies when there is repression from the host state and external support from third-party states; yet, when the external support disappears, the minority groups, left in a 'state of vulnerability', accommodate the majority, even under oppression.[12] What is absent in this theory is that it does not sufficiently take into consideration the possibility of genocide and collective violence, which can significantly influence and shift the attitudes of non-dominant, 'minority' groups, as in the case of the Ottoman Armenians. The genocide affected the demographic composition of the

[10] Jenne, 'A Bargaining Theory of Minority Demands', 740–1.   [11] Ibid., 743.
[12] Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining*.

community and reduced the numbers of the political elite and intellectuals, resulting in the loss of any power to leverage. Yet, the political shifts are still visible within the community from 1918 to 1923, when the political leaders of the Allied Powers signalled strong support for the Armenian cause.

In addition to ethnic bargaining, I would add that the atmosphere of insecurity played a pivotal role in the alteration of the Armenian political stance, as its rapid transformation can be conceptualised within the framework of what has been referred to as the security dilemma. Rogers Brubaker argues that a national minority is not merely based on ethnic demography but also a dynamic political position, which is constituted by numerous viewpoints that emerge within the group. In the case of Ottoman Armenians during the Armistice years, I argue that the majority of the community was unified for common political goals, as will be demonstrated throughout this book.[13]

Barry Posen describes how the presence of a power vacuum during the collapse of an imperial power may create fear among different minority ethnic groups. In cases of disintegration of the state and lack of security, minority ethnic groups might perceive the neighbouring groups as a threat.[14] Stephen M. Saidemen similarly argues that even if it is not a collapsing state, minority ethnic groups might suffer security threats because of the state's inability to ensure their protection.[15] If there is such a security dilemma within the state, minority ethnic groups either seek secession to create a new state over which they have complete control or they seek to join a state where their ethnic group is more secure.

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[13] For Brubaker's framework, see Rogers Brubaker, 'National Minorities, Nationalizing States, and External National Homelands in the New Europe', *Daedalus* 124(2) (1995), 107–32.

[14] Barry R. Posen, 'The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict', *Survival* 35(1) (1993), 27–47; David Carment, Patrick James, and Zeynep Taydas, 'The Internationalization of Ethnic Conflict: State, Society, and Synthesis', *International Studies Review* 11(1) (2009), 63–86; D. A. Lake and D. Rothchild, 'Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict', *International Security* 21(2) (1996), 43–4.

[15] Stephen M. Saideman, 'Is Pandora's Box Half-Empty or Half-Full?', in *Ethnic Conflict: Fear, Diffusion, Escalation*, D. Rothchild and D. A. Lake, eds. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 135. As cited in Yasemin Akbaba, Patrick James, and Zeynep Taydas, 'The "Chicken or the Egg"? External Support and Rebellion in Ethnopolitics', in *Intra-State Conflict, Governments and Security*, Stephen M. Saideman and Marie-Joëlle Zahar, eds. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008).

Furthermore, during this process, ethnic groups seek external assistance to bring international attention to their situation and demands.[16] Even though there is a burgeoning literature on the conceptualisation of the security dilemma by scholars of political science and sociology, each particular case possesses unique characteristics.[17] What can be drawn from the security dilemma theory in the case of Ottoman Armenians during the Armistice years is that there was mutual distrust and fear in the Ottoman Muslim and Armenian communities of the Ottoman Empire, and this mutual fear, a key component of the security dilemma, then generated a climate of insecurity. To consider the conditions of Ottoman Armenians within the framework of the security dilemma, I argue that there was a power vacuum – most notably following the Ottoman Empire's defeat in World War I to the Allied Powers – and the state was not in a position to provide security for Ottoman Armenians. During the war, the ruling Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) government orchestrated the Armenian genocide, which resulted in the annihilation of the majority of Armenians. The Turkish Muslim population feared that Ottoman Armenians would divide their country by establishing alliances with the Allied Powers in seeking retribution. Ottoman Armenians, on the other hand, feared that they could be yet again the subject of Turkish Muslim aggression. Therefore, the remaining Ottoman Armenians could not place faith in the newly established Turkish government to provide security and protection for them in Anatolia. Given this atmosphere of insecurity, the majority of Ottoman Armenians, validating the Ottoman Muslims' fears, entered into friendship with the Allied Powers to establish their own state during the first four years of the Armistice period (1918–22). However, following the defeat of the Greek, French, and Armenian forces against the Turkish Nationalist forces in western, southern, and eastern Anatolia respectively, Ottoman Armenians – now unable to pursue separatist aims in the newly established Republic of Turkey – reoriented their political position and pursued the path of reconciliation with the

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[16] Akbaba, James, and Taydas, 'The "Chicken or the Egg"?', 163–4.

[17] The following are selections from the literature on the concept of the security dilemma: Posen, 'The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict'; Alan Collins, 'The Ethnic Security Dilemma: Evidence from Malaysia', *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 20(3) (1998), 261–78; Shiping Tang, 'The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict: Toward a Dynamic and Integrative Theory of Ethnic Conflict', *Review of International Studies* 37(2) (2011), 511–36.

Ottoman Muslims. The security concerns at the time forced Ottoman Armenians to declare their loyalty to the Turkish National Movement in order to protect the physical and cultural existence of the community. Thus, I contend that Ottoman Armenians changed their political position as the Armistice period drew to a close in order to protect their existence in the atmosphere of insecurity.

The purpose of the analysis throughout this book, however, is not to demonstrate the strengths, weaknesses, or applicability of these theories to the case of the Ottoman Armenians during the Armistice period. Instead, this book is a historical analysis of the Ottoman Armenian community amid the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. These two theories inspired my understanding as I approach the historical material to better contextualise the subject matter at hand; without falling into the trap of anachronism, I believe they are useful in conceiving the political reactions of a non-Muslim community while the Empire collapsed.

Throughout the book, while analysing the political position of the Ottoman Armenian community, I focus on the statements of the community's mainstream policymakers, such as political party leaders, the press, elected members of the Armenian National Assembly, prominent opinion leaders, and the Armenian Patriarchate. While I acknowledge that all Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire did not embrace the same political approach and that it is not possible to gauge the opinions of all community members based on archival sources, I argue that one is able to comprehend mainstream/widely accepted political stances within the community through an analysis of Armenian papers. Therefore, rather than claiming that all Armenians maintained the same political stance at a given time, I utilise 'the majority of Armenians' to reflect the mainstream tendencies.

Sources of Knowledge

The primary sources utilised in preparing this work are the Armenian and Ottoman Turkish press published during the years of the Armistice. The research relies on a collection of twenty-two Armenian and Ottoman Turkish papers (listed in Tables I.1 and I.2), which are unquestionably invaluable sources for mapping the inner dynamics of the Armenian and Turkish communities in a period of transition.

At the onset of World War I in 1914, more than thirty Armenian newspapers, journals, and periodicals were being published in Istanbul.

Table I.1 *Ottoman Armenian press*

Name	Place of publication	Year of publication	Political position
Zhamanag	Istanbul	1908–	Neutral/non-partisan
Jagadamard	Istanbul	1909–24	Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF)
Verchin Lur	Istanbul	1914–30	Neutral/pro-Ramgavar
Giligia	Adana	1919–21	Pro-ARF
Arewelyan Mamul	Izmir	1871–1909, 1919–22	Pro-Ramgavar
Tashink	Izmir	1909–19	Pro-Ramgavar
Koyamard	Izmir	1920	Pro-ARF
Horizon	Izmir	1919–22	Neutral/pro-ARF
Piwzantion	Istanbul	1896–18	Neutral
Arawod	Istanbul	1909–24	Ramgavar Liberal Party
Hay Tzayn	Aleppo and Adana	1918–20	Pro-Ramgavar
Hay Tsaw	Adana	1919–21	Pro-Ramgavar
Yerewan	Istanbul	1918–19	Neutral/Conservative
Nor Gyank	Istanbul	1918–19	Neutral
Zhoghovurt/ Zhoghovurti Tsaynĕ	Istanbul	1918–23	Neutral
Yergir	Istanbul	1919–22	Social Democrat Hnchagyan Party (Hnchag Party)

After the Empire's entry into the war, the CUP government embarked upon a campaign of censorship, prohibiting much of the Armenian press and closing twenty-five papers and journals. Only *Piwzantion* (Byzantium), *Zhamanag* (The Times), and *Verchin Lur* (The Latest News) remained, for these Armenian papers were not affiliated with any Armenian political organisations, making them essentially 'neutral' in the eyes of the state.[18] Besides newspapers in Istanbul,

[18] A. A. Kharatyan, Արեւմտահայ Մամուլն Իր Պատմության Աւարտին *(1900–1922)* (Arevmdahay Mamuln Ir Patmutyan Avardin (1900–1922)) [The Western Armenian Press at the End of Its History] (Yerevan: Patmutyan Institut, 2015), 12–13.

Table I.2 *Ottoman Turkish press*

Name	Place of publication	Year of publication	Political position
İleri	Istanbul	1919–24	Pro-Turkish National Movement
Vakit	Istanbul	1917–49	Pro-Turkish National Movement
Istanbul	Istanbul	1919–20	Anti-Turkish National Movement/ pro-Loyalist
Alemdar	Istanbul	1909–22	Anti-Turkish National Movement/ pro-Loyalist
Yeni Gün	Istanbul and Ankara	1918–24	pro-Turkish National Movement
Peyam/Peyam-ı Sabah	Istanbul	1913–22	Anti-Turkish National Movement/pro-Loyalist

authorities shuttered more than eighteen Armenian publications from various cities in Anatolia including Van, Harput (Kharpert), Sivas, Tokat, Erzurum, and Trabzon.[19] The majority of Ottoman Turkish papers shared the same fate, with only a small number of media outlets allowed to remain as organs of propaganda.[20] From 1915 to the signing of the Armistice of Mudros in October 1918, the Armenian and Ottoman Turkish press were completely silent vis-à-vis political developments. With the signing of the Armistice, however, the political and cultural life of Ottoman Armenians started to re-emerge in Istanbul and Izmir. In 1918, eight journals (some newly established, others previously established papers resuming operation) were published in Istanbul. The following year, more than twenty literary journals, newspapers, and satirical magazines were published in Istanbul and Izmir.[21] News items, reports, editorials, and political discussions in these revitalised Armenian as well as Turkish papers, published by a spectrum of political and cultural institutions, provide deep insight into the socio-political developments of the period and call for a comprehensive

[19] Ibid., 14.
[20] Erol A. F. Baykal, *The Ottoman Press (1908–1923)* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 122.
[21] Kharatyan, Արեւմտահայ Մամուլն Իր Պատմության Աւարտին [The Western Armenian Press at the End of Its History], 359.