

İSTANBUL BİLGİ UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
CULTURAL STUDIES MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM

THE PRACTICES OF RECONSTRUCTION OF COLLECTIVE MEMORY AND
PRACTICES OF COLLECTIVE REMEMBERING THROUGH HRANT DINK
AMONG ARMENIANS IN TURKEY

Pelin ERGENEKON

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Asst. Prof. Sezai Ozan ZEYBEK

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Türkiye'deki Ermenilerinin Hrant Dink Üzerinden Toplumsal Hafızayı Yeniden
İnşa Etme ve Hatırlama Pratikleri

Pelin ERGENEKON

113611003

Tez Danışmanı: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Sezai Ozan ZEYBEK

Jüri Üyesi: Prof. Dr. Meyda YEĞENOĞLU MUTMAN

Jüri Üyesi: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Güven Gürkan ÖZTAN

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Abstract

This thesis explores the reconstruction of collective memory and collective remembering practices among Armenians in Turkey on the basis of Hrant Dink's writings and discourses as well as his assassination. In this context, it problematizes the tension between Turkish nation-state's historiography, which is based on the Armenian absence, its nationalist-laden politics, both remembering and forgetting, and Hrant Dink's efforts to transform this so-called Armenian absence into presence before the state. In this direction, on one hand, I analyze in a discursive fashion Hrant Dink's columns and speeches, the primordial goal of which is to make the peoples of these lands remember the past with its bare facts, and on the other hand, the affect of his efforts as well as his assassination on today's Armenians in Turkey. Aiming at comprehending Hrant Dink's affect on today's Armenians in Turkey, I conducted several in-depth interviews with Armenians that I divided them into three age groups (elders, middle-aged and young that are respectively 2nd, 3rd and 4th generation, as referred in this dissertation) according to the socio-political incidents they have been through in their life. I focus how today's Armenians from different ages bring the past into present; the role of Hrant Dink in their consideration and recollection of the past; and what they do infer from his assassination.

My analysis suggests that there is a considerable divide within these three Armenian generations in Turkey, between 1) 2nd generation whose members keep their silence; 2) 3rd generation whose members mostly oscillate between a relative inertia and claiming the truth of the past; and 3) 4th generation whose members visibly politicized aftermath of the killing of Hrant Dink. I propose that these three types of stance towards remembering the past and reconstructing the Armenian collective memory, in turn, are the different reflections of the Armenian subjectivity.

Özet

Bu tez Hrant Dink'in yazı ve söylemlerinin yanı sıra öldürülmesi üzerinden Türkiye'deki Ermenilerin kolektif belleklerini yeniden inşa etmeleri ve kolektif hatırlama pratiklerini incelemektedir. Bu bağlamda, çalışmamın sorunsalını, Ermenilerin namevcudiyeti üzerine temellenmiş Türk ulus devletinin tarihyazımı, milliyetçilik-yüklü hatırlama ve unut(tur)ma politikaları ile Hrant Dink'in devlet karşısında söz konusu bu sözde namevcudiyeti mevcudiyete dönüştürmedeki çabaları arasındaki gerilim oluşturmaktadır. Bu doğrultuda, bir yandan, Hrant Dink'in bu toprakların halklarına geçmişi tüm açıklığıyla hatırlatmayı temel amaç edinen köşe yazıları ve kullandığı dilin, diğer yandan ise onun çabalarının ve öldürülmesinin Türkiye'deki günümüz Ermenileri üzerindeki duygulanımsal (affect) boyutlarının analizini yapmaktayım. Hrant Dink'in Türkiye'deki günümüz Ermenileri üzerindeki söz konusu duygulanımsal etkililerini anlamayı amaçlayarak, yaşamları içerisinde deneyimledikleri sosyopolitik olaylara göre üç fark yaş grubuna (metinde ele alındığı biçimiyle 2'nci, 3'üncü ve 4'üncü kuşak olan, sırasıyla yaşlılar, orta-yaşlılar ve gençler) ayırdığım Ermenilerle tezim kapsamında çeşitli derinlemesine görüşmeler yaptım. Sözü edilen farklı kuşaklara ait Ermenilerin geçmişi günümüze nasıl taşıdıkları, geçmişi değerlendirme ve (yeniden) hatırlamalarında Hrant Dink'in rolüne ve Hrant Dink'in öldürülmesinden ne anlam çıkardıklarına odaklanıyorum.

Analizimde Hrant Dink'in öldürülmesi sonrasında Türkiye'deki Ermeniler bağlamındaki bu üç kuşak arasında 1) 2'nci kuşak üyelerinin sessizliklerini korudukları; 2) 3'üncü kuşak üyelerinin çoğunlukla görece bir eylemsizlik ile geçmişin hakikatinin hakkını arama arasında salındıkları; ve 3) 4'üncü kuşağın ise gözle görülür bir şekilde politikleşmenin yaşandığı şeklinde bir ayrıma dikkat çekiyorum. Geçmiş hatırlama ve bunun akabinde de Ermeni kolektif belleğini yeniden inşa etmeye yönelik bu üç tip tutumun Ermeni öznelliğinin (subjectivity) farklı yansımaları olduğunu ileri sürüyorum.

INTRODUCTION

I was a high school student at the age of seventeen when I heard him for the first time. I did not know much about him before- only few things that I have learned in passing from my Armenian friends. They were not different from me; neither knew they many things. We were young boys and girls who were not aware of political issues of the time. However, that incident, the killing of Hrant Dink, has cracked something deep inside me.

Having been kneaded by the official history taught in schools until then, I realized the gaps in my mind. Indeed, I was already feeling some incongruities, but could not make them clear. Thinking of these years, I remember a memory of mine that stirred up my inconsistent emotions about the narration of the past: It was a couple of weeks after the killing of Hrant Dink, one of my Armenian friends and I met up. One thing led to another, we found ourselves talking about his killing. I still feel ashamed of myself for dropping a clanger –I had blurted out a question, “What do you think about 1915?” It was a childlike question because I was expecting to hear from my friend the things exactly the same with those I was taught in school. Most probably, he did not expect me to ask such a question and was shocked, as he did not know what to say. He became silent and said nothing as I could say nothing too –I understood that I should not have asked it, but it was too late. His silent was perhaps the first clue for me to figure out the conflicting narratives of the past. I chose not to tell me what he had heard from his parents and grandparents about 1915, because I was not one of them; he probably thought that I could not understand the story he would tell me. He was right with his silence; we did not know each other as much as he could confide to me his family story- I would understand the reason of his silence many years later. “If you don’t know very well the person you talk to, if you don’t know whether you should trust him or not, you never want to tell him the truth of your past” he told me once before he started to tell his grandparents’ story during 1915. As I did not forget the blunder I made that day, he did not forget either. We knew each other well

over the years and he confide in me all of a sudden one day. “Do you remember that you asked me once what I think about 1915?” he asked me, and he continued, “It was all but a *chronicle of a death foretold*¹ just as murder of Hrant Dink is.” – I have to hand it to him that he is a good literature reader.

During our conversation, I realized that the death of Hrant Dink has changed him too. This was what he told me indeed; his way of remembering the past, articulating the past and present events, and the way he expresses himself were changed afterwards. As we grew up, we became politicized; we had our own truths and modes of knowing; we were no longer dependent on so-called truths that we had been taught – I was kneaded within the official history denying the Armenian past all through my 12-year compulsory education years, and as to him, within silence; he was taught by his parents not to talk publicly about the past. However, both of us brought out of our shells: I figured out in time that memory is closely related to power relations between different interest groups, be it states, nations in large scale, and ethnic/cultural/religious collectivities in small scale. And, as to him and many other Armenians in Turkey, the death of Hrant Dink is a turning point in the sense they took their own part in this power relations regarding memory politics.

Indeed, this abovementioned memory of mine designates the main framework of this dissertation, throughout which I will be exploring the ways of understanding the reconstruction of collective memory of Armenians in Turkey with and through Hrant Dink’s writings and discourses. Taking his death as a turning point within the context of the official Turkish History Thesis and counter-narratives of the past, I will be elaborating retrospectively the ‘affect’ of Hrant Dink in the eyes of Armenians in Turkey. In this sense, I seek to problematize the meaning of the death of Hrant Dink in their eyes as well as its relationality with remembering the past, the ways of how individuals construct the Armenian counter-collective

¹ A novella of Gabriel García Márquez, who was Colombian novelist, short-story writer and journalist.

memory, and on what do they put emphasis while selectively remembering the past throughout this reconstruction.

Within the context of these problematical issues, this ethnographic study is based on participant observation in commemoration ceremonies, both commemorations of Hrant Dink (on 19th of January) and of the Armenian Genocide (on 24th of April), as well as in several protests in the aim of claiming the truth of the past. Moreover, I conducted fifteen in-depth interviews with Armenians in Turkey that I classified them in three generations. Relying on Karl Mannheim's 'theory of generation', I decided to divide my interviewees into groups not on the basis of their age, but of the socio-political incidents they have experienced in their life. Accordingly, three generational groups emerged: taking the survivors of 1915 as the 1st generation, I referred to my interviewees as following: (1) 2nd generation, whose members are children of survivors; (2) 3rd generation, whose members are grandchildren of survivors, and experienced the acts of violence of the Republican era; and lastly (3) 4th generation, whose members experienced the assassination of Hrant Dink for the first time as an act of violence against Armenians in Turkey. Categorizing my interviewees according to their life experiences was indeed important so as to compare their semantic world regarding the past, that is to say that how they gave meaning to past events and how it influence their construction of collective memory in the present. In this manner, I sought to analyse how these three generations remember the past; the extents of their recollections; the way how they reconstruct their own collective memory, and, of course, the role of Hrant Dink in this reconstruction process in their eyes. Herein, I feel the necessity to underline in parenthesis that I do not consider this reconstruction of the counter-collective memory as a physical act, but a mnemonic practice. To put it differently, what is important for me is not directly whether they participate in commemorations, or any other political actions aiming at an acknowledgement before the state, but the responsibility they feel for the truth of the past. Their subjectivity was of importance—their will as well as any kind of resistance, overt

and covert, with the aim of remembering the past with its bare facts by getting rid of the frameworks imposed by the state was non-negligibly precious for me.

As to the content of this dissertation, the first chapter draws theoretical frameworks of collective memory, forgetting and remembering issues. It elaborates the conceptualization of collective memory, its relationship with history and historiography, collective remembering -including the role of cultural tools and urban space in the reconstruction of collective memory and in the work of collective remembering-, the link between collective memory and generations in the context of cultural trauma and its influences on remembering/forgetting the past. As memory politics are but the one side of the coin, forgetting and silence are also the main issues of this chapter. Focusing primarily on repressive forgetting and silence, I problematize the power relations between nation-state and different ethnic, cultural and religious communities bearing counter-collective memories. Even though the ways how official nationalistic discourses of nation-states and their institutions impose forgetting and silence upon counter-collective memory carriers, and normalize this process through generations will be taken as the main subject here, this does not mean however that it is impossible to break silence and recollect the past as it was. In this direction, resistances and efforts of counter-memories demanding right to recollect the past and to keep the memory in question alive in the public sphere, and aspiring their legitimization will be involved as well in our discussion.

In the second chapter, I look retrospectively at the death of Hrant Dink, the underlying reason of which should be traced in his writings and discourses that lay claim to the truth of the past as well as make all the peoples of this land face the past all together. In this direction, I seek elaborating on the close relationality between his discourses and their posthumous affect on Armenian in Turkey, who relatively find themselves being involved in the construction of their counter-collective memory as the very counter-discourse of Turkish state's hegemonic collective memory. Therefore, in order to comprehend the reaction of Armenians to the death of Hrant Dink in the context of their reorganization, as it were, around

the counter-discourse they inherited posthumously from Hrant Dink himself, it would be worthy to elaborate his writings and discourses between the lines of which one grasps his claims, fight and ideals. Following his footprints, throughout this chapter, I will be tracing his struggle –the very struggle that has become in no small measure the struggle of Armenians in Turkey in general- to reveal the truth of the past, to turn the absence of Armenians into presence before the state; his main purpose of making all the peoples of this land remember the forgotten memory by whispering, so to say, the true-life stories of the Armenian people in his lines, speeches.

Finally, in the third chapter, I analysed Hrant Dink’s writings and discourses that gives us the very clues of his fight for justice, which is rooted in the tension between recognition of the Armenian past and changing the present, I will be analysing throughout this last chapter the affect of Hrant Dink, the affect-laden mnemonic realm coming into existence particularly aftermath of his death, on today’s Armenians living in Turkey. Thus, this last chapter accordingly will be in search of how and to what extent Hrant Dink’s discursive fight that is counter to the Turkish state’s denialist narrative of the past overlaps and captures Armenians’ dispersedly floating signifiers of past memories.

CHAPTER I

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS OF MEMORY POLITICS: COLLECTIVE MEMORY AND REMEMBERING VS. FORGETTING AND SILENCE

There is scarcely a single study on collective memory and collective remembering that does not begin by invoking the writings of Maurice Halbwachs, who is acknowledged today as one of the patrons of memory issue. Introducing the term “collective memory” in 1925 in his canonical book called “On Collective Memory”, he theorizes memory as a structured activity being not something individual as (social) psychologists elaborate the term, but being fundamentally social. Noting that Halbwachs’ insistence on the social –as we see it in his theory of collective memory- draws upon Emile Durkheim’s sociological understanding and conceptualization of society and the social: his theory of collective memory finds its core in Durkheim’s much celebrated concept of “collective consciousness”, which refers to, so to say, a taken-for-granted social baggage including beliefs, sentiments, mentalities, symbols and so forth –so then, the whole set of “collective or social representations”- shared by the majority of a given society whose members incorporates them voluntarily, and thus which can be understood as an attempt to understand how a society or collectivity thinks and acts through the reproduction of social order.

With this background of Halbwachs, one should understand his concept of collective memory that gives weight to the “social” rather than taking into consideration the agency of the individual. In “On Collective Memory” (1925/1992), he writes “...in reality the past does not recur as such... everything seems to indicate that the past is not preserved but is reconstructed on the basis of the present...It is not sufficient, in effect, to show that individuals always use social frameworks when they remember... One may say that the individual remembers by placing himself in the perspective of the group, but one may also

affirm that the memory of the group realizes and manifests itself in individual memories.”² Likewise, in “The Collective Memory” (1950/1980) he writes then, “...When we remember we always recall the viewpoint of a given social group thorough whose eyes we see the event.”³ These lines indicating that Halbwachs emphasizes the fact that all individual memories are socially framed show that “the collective memory is not simply the sum of the individual memories, nor is it independent from them. Memory does not exist outside of individuals, but it is never completely individual in its character.”⁴

Thus, in Halbwachs’ account, the act of remembering which goes hand in hand with collective memory draws resources not only from the group’s perspective, but also it is based on the recollections of other members of the collectivity – including ancestors and fellow members- and the key events that have already inscribed and thus objectified in the oral and/or written history of the community. As Edward Casey arguments in “Remembering: A Phenomenological Study” (1987), “The mind of memory is already in the world: it is in reminders and reminiscences, in acts of recognition and in the lived body, in places and in the company of others.”⁵ What Casey argues here is that what we consider either personal or even private is indeed rooted in our very attachment with other people and things. This “things”, be they places, objects, geographies, written narratives as history books, and so forth, show the very materiality of the memory in the sense that it is quite objectified in material things- the accuracy of the memory is less important here than its objectified character.

² Maurice Halbwachs (1992). *On Collective Memory*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p.39-40

³ Maurice Halbwachs (1980). *The Collective Memory*, New York: Harper and Row, p.34

⁴ Chiara Bottici (2010). “European Identity and The Politics of Remembrance,” in *Performing the Past: Memory, History, and Identity in Modern Europe*, Karin Tilmans, Frank van Vree and Jay Winter (eds.), Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, p.340

⁵ Edward Casey (1987). *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study*, Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, p.259

II. THE TRIVET OF COLLECTIVE MEMORY, HISTORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

Perhaps many of us consider the written history as the most objectified form of the collective memory in so far as individuals are in relation with history books since early ages. However, I want to note that history should not be limited only to history books, but must be perceived here as something both material and non-material- while its materiality or concreteness can be found in written texts, its abstractness should be traced through historiography that manifests rather the ideology underlying the act of writing the history of the nation- being an act generally performed by states. Undoubtedly, history and historiography play irreducible role in constructing the collective memory of a given social group whose members' mindscapes and act of remembering are shaped largely by the given frameworks of history. This is the reason why I find useful to start my discussion with elaborating firstly the history and historiography -the issues worth to discuss on account of their influence on collective memory and collective remembering.

Inasmuch as Halbwachs conceptualizes the term of collective memory for the first time and elaborates it by comparing with other notions in order to clarify his conceptualization, a helpful starting point to discuss the tension between history and collective memory can be found in his writings. For him, collective memory differs from history on certain points such that the former focuses on the stability and continuity of a group and often resists to the idea that it has changed over time. He writes, "There is no universal collective memory because every collective memory requires the support of a group delimited in space and time... A group retains from the past only what still lives or is capable of living in the consciousness of the groups keeping the memory alive... When it considers its own past, the group feels strongly that it has remained the same and becomes

conscious of its identity through time.”⁶ As to the history, he claims that it is a “record of changes” and “it can be represented as the universal memory of human species..., (it) is unitary and it can be said that there is only one history.”⁷ Supporting the same dictum, Pierre Nora indicates, “There are as many memories as there are groups... History, on the other hand, belongs to everyone and to no one.”⁸ In effect, what Halbwachs and Nora tried to depict is recapitulated clearly in the statements of Peter Novick, American historian, who writes about the objectivity question of the history and the Holocaust, arguing that history is willing to deal with complexity and multiple perspectives whereas collective memory is tended to simplify, to see events from a “single committed perspective” and to be “impatient with ambiguities of any kind.”⁹

Of course, it is important to underlie that collective memory is a reconstructed memory, even a quasi-fictive memory, as I may say so. In other words, inasmuch as the term collective memory represents a constructive narrative of a given nation, it is not surprising that the nation glorifies its own past with a constructive narration, so to say with its collective memory, by not mentioning, even denying its own wrongdoings and by representing itself rather as victim who had had any choose rather than fighting back at the nation or group in question. This is the reason why collective memory should not be taught as an ideal, pure memory, but should be conceived rather as a myth with its fictive character. Yet, this fictiveness, especially when it comes to nation-states’ collective memory, reveals the fact of how it is reconstructed according to the needs and concerns of the time, and confirms the presence of counter-collective memories claiming another way of narrating the past. It is not to say that collective memory of nation-states is false while counter-collective memories are pure. Nonetheless the presence and claims of the latters affirm the partiality of nation-states’ historiography, which is

⁶ Maurice Halbwachs (1980). *Op.cit.*, p.80-5

⁷ *ibid.*, p.83-6

⁸ Pierre Nora (1989). “Between memory and history: Les lieux de mémoire”, *Representations*, Spring 1989, Vol.26, p.9

⁹ Peter Novick (1999). *The Holocaust in American Life*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, p.3-4

redounded implicitly or explicitly on the reconstruction of collective memory. Even if the reconstruction of collective memories, be it counter or not, is under the control of interest groups of any kind, counter-collective memories are more worth to be relied on to the extent that they are indicative of a problematical issue: nation-states' historiography and its reflection on (re)construction of their collective memory.

Hence, I find beneficial to seclude collective memory and history of nation-states from collective memory of different ethnic, religious and cultural communities living in a nation state. In reference to collective memory of the latter groups, whose members belong to different ethnicity, religion and culture from the one of the nation-state where they live in, I will use henceforth the term "counter-collective memory" in order not to confuse the differences between them. In addition, with reference to what Novick claims, I suggest therefore reversing the equation: Nation-states' collective memory and historiography tend to simplify and to see the past from a single committed perspective whereas counter-collective memory of different communities across nation-states challenges the former with its willingness to give place to multiple voices and perspectives.

III. SOCIALLY ORGANIZED FORGETTING IMPOSED BY NATION-STATES

The collective memory, as it is conceived here, designates a specific narrative of past constituted by and on behalf of a specific collectivity within which its members find meaningful forms of identification that may empower. Furthermore, it produce continually with the medium of several institutions and practices "imagined communities"¹⁰, as Benedict Anderson uses the term, that give its members a sense of history, national belonging and territory. In addition to this, this sense of history, belonging and territory of the imagined community is equal

¹⁰ Benedict Anderson (1981). *Imagined Communities*, London: Verso.

to have a historically, socially, geographically and practically constructed collective memory and in turn a membership of a social group, that is a collective identity, inflecting the form that memory takes for group members.

Indeed, one should fathom memory politics always in relation to imposed forgetting politics, as they are nothing but the two sides of the coin. In comparison with counter-collective memories, the contextual and discursive disequilibrium of nation-state's collective memory thus stems from the intention in glorifying its past by not mentioning, even by denying the past wrongdoings against other nations and/or groups in question. Inasmuch as the term collective memory, at national level, comprehends the formation of a national collective identity, what is not remembered is then as much important as what is remembered and how the past is remembered across nation-states for their self-esteem. As Ernest Gellner indicates in "Nation and Nationalism" (1993), the nation, which is the main mnemonic community, relies on the vision of a suitable past for its very continuity and believable future. In order to create a serviceable history and destiny of the community, the nation requires a usable past, which is used in turn to form collective representation. The formation of such a usable past is but one of the examples of nationalist movements' tasks propagating an ideology which affirms identification with the nation-state by invoking shared memories, in other words memorable past, or the memories that must be remembered as it is imposed by the nation-state's ideology. At this point, the politics of forgetting and obliteration come into play in tandem with the ones of remembering. Since the collective national memory is not an inert and passive thing, writes Edward Said, but a field of activity in which past events are selected, reconstructed, maintained, modified and endowed with political meaning, it is always selective by manipulating certain bits of national past, suppressing others, elevating still others in an entirely functional way."¹¹ As it is the case in the politics of remembering,

¹¹ Edward Said (2000). "Invention, Memory and Place", *Critical Inquiry*, Vol.26, No.2, Winter 2000, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, p.179, 185

forgetting is closely related to the nature of political power influencing eventually what, how and when we remember.

Owing to the fact that remembering certain truths of the past could threaten the national cohesion and self-image, forgetting is therefore a necessary component in the construction of collective memory. The act of forgetting, Ernst Renan writes indeed, “plays a significant role in the creation of a nation, and therefore advances in the field of history are often a threat to the nation. Historical investigation, in fact, often brings to light those cases of violence, which occur at the origin of all political formations, even if their consequences were most beneficent.”¹² Likewise, in his canonical book called “Imagined Communities” (1983), Benedict Anderson underlies the same point in a different way: emphasizing the chief role of symbolic meaning of the flag, anthem, national days, monuments, memorials concretizing an ideological subtexts in character, he argues that these artifactually-sacralised symbols inculcate to its members both selective forgetting and remembering by which they constitute a collective identity and in turn pave the way for becoming an “imagined community.” These two assumptions show clearly that in order to ensure the national unity and solidarity, there is a mandatory need to make people forget the past wrongdoings and remember only heroes or the figures that national ideology has heroized –in fact, these historical figures are generally considered as heroes in the eyes of dominant culture, whereas they are but villains for the ones bearing counter memories-, and glory days of the past. Precisely, as Paul Connerton underlines, “societies where democracy is regained after a recent undemocratic past, or where democracy is newly born, must establish institutions and make decisions that foster forgetting as much as remembering.”¹³ In this sense, one can assert that collective memory of the nation-state is a *hegemonic memory*, as Antonio Gramsci uses the term of hegemony emphasizing not only the role of élite’s power through ideology and culture, but also how prevailing classes appropriate, accept and make them accept

¹² Ernst Renan (1996). “What is a Nation?”, in *Nation and Narration*, Homi K. Bhaba (eds.), London: Routledge, p.41-55

¹³ Paul Connerton (2008). Seven types of forgetting, *Memory Studies*, 1(59), 2008, p.62

as natural, legitimate and meaningful by others with the medium of social organizations and instruments. In this sense, the term collective memory refers not to a *living* memory, but rather to, as it were, a ‘solidified cultural memory’, as Jan Assmann uses the term, which indicates an institutionalized and sustained memory through various kinds of cultural instruments and narrative tools that are available for use by people to construct their relations with the past, and that belong mostly to dominant culture, i.e. nation-state’s ideology. And, the control over these mediational sociocultural and socio-political resources is “a means of ensuring that what can be collectively remembered is shaped to fit official, state-sponsored versions of the past.”¹⁴

Consequently, this hegemonic cultural memory of nation-states must be discussed always by taking into consideration their obliteration politics such as “repressive erasure” and “prescriptive forgetting.” According to Connerton, repressive erasure appearing in its most brutal form in the history of totalitarian regimes can be employed to deny the fact of a historical rupture as well as to bring about a historical break. To indicate how totalitarian regimes uses memory in power struggle, Connerton notes, “The attempt to break definitively with an older social order encounters a kind of historical deposit and threatens to founder upon it. The more total the aspiration of the new regime, the more imperiously will it seek to introduce an era of forced forgetting... A particularly extreme case of such interaction occurs when a state apparatus is used in a systematic way to deprive its citizens of their memory. All totalitarianisms, behave in this way; the mental enslavement of the subjects of a totalitarian regime begins when their memories are taken away.”¹⁵ Moreover, in the context of mass violence, memory bears special significance as perpetrating regimes always seeks to control, destroy and prohibit a range of memorial practices related to the violence. For Tzvetan Todorov, who elaborated the relationship between mass violence and memory,

¹⁴ David Middleton & Steven Brown (2005). *The Social Psychology of Experience: Studies in Remembering and Forgetting*, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications, p.31

¹⁵ Paul Connerton (1989). *How Societies Remember*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.12-5

there are at least two strategies that totalitarian dictatorships have used to manage and control memory: the erasure of traces of the crimes (which is used as synonym of Connerton's term repressive erasure) and the intimidation of the population.¹⁶ Nonetheless, repressive erasure can be encrypted also covertly, without apparent violence, but with the very symbolic violence, as Pierre Bourdieu uses the term. Accordingly, one can think of specifically spatial disposition of cityscapes encumbered with strongly charged nationalist and monist symbols such as monuments, toponyms, martyrs' cemeteries, eikons, and so on which are the very symbolic capitals, crucial sources of power, representing entirely nation-states' classificatory collective frameworks that extol only one type of belonging –I will discuss more elaborately this spatial dimensions of memory politics in the following paragraphs. And, as to the latter, the prescriptive forgetting, considered as an “ideological formulation of peace terms containing an explicit expression of the wish that past wrongdoings should not be just forgiven but forgotten¹⁷”, it is but nation-states' non-acknowledgment and ignoring politics whose reflections are seen in their fictive, mythicized official historiographies that involve affectively charged narratives and mobilizing symbols. In this sense, national collective memory and official history/historiography are thus socio-politically hand-made constructions seeping into one another.

This ‘make-believe’¹⁸ and constructed realm spreading out every social level of the nation's capillaries shows the very psychic mechanism of nation-states that have exclusionist collective memory and historiography ignoring different voices, even the presence of other ethnic, cultural and religious communities living in the same national territory. Legal system, national days, official and formal

¹⁶ Uğur Ümit Güngör (2014). “Lost in commemoration: The Armenian genocide in memory and identity”, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 48:2, p.148.

¹⁷ Paul Connerton (2008). *Op.cit.*, p.61-2

¹⁸ I use the term ‘make-believe’ in reference to Yael Navaro-Yashin's book called “The Make-Believe Space”, where she focuses on the Cyprus conflict as written in the environment and psychic worlds of individuals living in Northern Cyprus, which was established as a government entity separate from the Republic in the south (generally associated with Greek-Cypriots) after the war of 1974 yet internationally unrecognized. [Yael Navaro-Yashin (2012). *Make-Believe Space: Affective Geography in a Postwar Polity*, Durham: Duke University Press.]

commemorations, inputs of mass media, arrangement of the national territories, and education system are the very reflections of this national and ideological historiography affecting individuals' way of remembering the past through their symbolic violence practices.

Perhaps, schools are the most important mnemonic institutions across nation-states due to the fact that they serve for the nationalist ideals and are considered as chief instruments to raise favorable individuals that firstly incorporate the national identity and hegemonic dictums of their state and then inculcate it to younger generations. When it is the case, the role of schools, educational curricula, and textbooks particularly that of history classes, which are so to say the motor of social engineering that seek to render possible the transmission of idealized, usable past and to promote ideas of national identity, is irreducibly relevant to memory politics. If one looks at the sector of public historical education, argues Aleida Assmann, "we can observe self-enforcing relationship between history, memory, identity, and power. There is a close alliance between the nation-state and the history textbooks. Education is an important factor in the building of the nation-state because it was by learning their history that the heterogeneous members of a population were transformed into distinct and homogeneous collective, conceiving of themselves as 'a people' with collective 'autobiography.' In all cultures, history textbooks are the vehicles of national memory which have been appropriately termed 'weapons of mass-instruction.'"¹⁹ Indeed, foregoing point of views reflect the presentist approach to social remembering and to forgetting in turn, which is a state-centred approach scrutinizing how public notions of history are manipulated by the dominant sectors of the society through public commemorations, education system, mass media, official censorship, and official records and chronologies. From this approach, nation-states' politics of memory is but proof of the fact that the past is moulded to suit present prevailing interests by muting the past. At this point,

¹⁹ Aleida Assmann (2008). Transformations Between History and Memory, *Social Research*, vol.75, No.1, Collective Memory and Collective Identity (Spring 2008), p.64

nation-state's silence aimed at forgetting comes into play. With its overt silence, that is the absence of speech and narratives about specific past, nation-states set the limits on what is speakable or unspeakable about the past.²⁰ In this sense, nation-states' overlaps with non-acknowledgement and, to a certain degree, denial politics against counter-collective memories and their mnemonic practices, which are the politics promoted also through *invented traditions* in everyday life. The notion of "invention of traditions", by which Eric Hobsbawm refers to the nineteenth-century project of nation-building, refers to new traditions and rituals through which nation-states design and produce new political realities, define nations and, even different ethnic, cultural and religious communities in that nation with its own terms, and sustain its own national community or communities with the production of official hegemonic memory.²¹

I.III. COLLECTIVE REMEMBERING

The groups connected with different articulations of collective memory vary undoubtedly in size and complexity, ranging from nations and ethnic, cultural and/or religious groups to local communities and families and this is the way how counter-collective memories of different community-subsets come into existence under nation-state-superset. Moreover, the control of collective memory by nation-states and their constituent social and cultural institutions has increasingly been challenged by changes in the ethnic constitution of nations.²² As Jacques Le Goff indicates that "memory is a stake in the power game"²³, the tension between nation-state's historiography that shapes its own collective memory, and counter-collective memories resisting the former illustrates hence how much can be at

²⁰ Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi and Chana Teeger (2010). "Unpacking the Unspoken: Silence in Collective Memory and Forgetting", *Social Forces*, 88(3), p.1104,1107

²¹ Barbara A. Misztal (2003). *Theories of Social Remembering*, Philadelphia: Open University Press., p. 56

²² Chris Weedon & Glenn Jordan (2011). Collective Memory: Theory and Politics, *Social Semiotics*, Vol.22, No.2, April 2012, p.144

²³ Jacques Le Goff (1992). *History and Memory*, New York: Columbia University Press, p.144

stake in conflicts over the right to remember the past, the right way to remember the past, and the ways in which memory can be used as a political strategy in the sense of condemning ethnic others or treating them as if they were internal enemies. In recent decades, we witness that collective memory has been challenged across nation-states and that counter-collective memories are augmented by an array of interest groups, which are not generally included in the hegemonic constructions of the nation-state, and who are fighting to have their own memory, recognized, documented in history textbooks and commemorated in the public space.

Even though history and its socially shared representations are profoundly rooted in nation-state's and its members' unconscious inasmuch as they provide them with constructive narrative, that is so to say the core of the construction of national identity, norms and values, nonetheless "history provides the outlines of an open-ended drama²⁴". It is open-ended in the sense that the charter components of social representations are negotiated: they can be challenged by constituent groups -including different ethnic, religious and cultural communities in a nation-state and may be renegotiated.²⁵ Hence, intercultural and interethnic contacts across nation-states have potential of enabling nation-state charters to be challenged and re-negotiated in time. This is how single-committed national collective memories change as a result of certain negotiations between different groups and become more inclusive in the wake of counter-collective memories' resistance for being recognized by the nation-state they belong to. For instance, in "The Holocaust in American Life" (1999), Novick outlines that the collective memory of the Holocaust in the United States has changed during the latter half of the twentieth century. He writes "The concerns of the presents have, in one period, made Holocaust memory seem inappropriate, useless, or even harmful; in

²⁴ János László (2003). "History, Identity and Narratives", *Theories and Controversies in Societal Psychology*, J. László and W. Wagner (eds.), Budapest: New Mandate; cited from James H. Liu and Denis J. Hilton (2005), "How the past weighs on the present: Social representations of history and their role in identity politics", *British Journal of Psychology* (2005), 44, p. 540.

²⁵ *ibid.*

other period, appropriate and desirable. As we examine the changing fortunes of Holocaust memory, we will be struck by how they relate to changing circumstances and, particularly among American Jews, changing decisions about collective self-understanding and self-representation.”²⁶ Likewise, Aleida Assmann indicates that “to concede memories, individual and collective, a new status and right in the mediated democratic society, is to acknowledge the multiple and diverse impact of the past, and in particular of a traumatic past, on its citizens.”²⁷ We should not forget that if we refer today to the term “memory boom” accompanying with “remembering boom”, this mirrors post-generations’ desire to challenge the nation-state to concede their past as an inseparable part of the present, to reconsider, to reassess it as the essential part of ethnic, religious or cultural communities’ and their members’ identity, affinity and loyalties. This is the affect of the counter-collective memory, which is not recognized generally by nation-state and which sparks generally post-generations of the community in question, whose members start to face inherited traumatic residues of their ascendants in their unconscious, to remember and make others remember their counter memory, their past, as the inseparable part of the present.

Indeed, the emergence and, then, claims of counter-collective memories with increasing number testify that we witness a memory boom and remembering boom across the world. If one can name the 20th century as the years of great wars, massacres and crimes against humanity, the 21th century is the years of remembering the past, facing and coming to terms with traumas of the last and sometimes previous centuries, then. However, the thing that one must bear in mind is that collectivities’ act of remembering the past and reconstruction of their collective memory is closely related to present needs and concerns, which are generally recognition (recognition of their agonized past, ethnic identity, native language, religion, and so on) in the eyes of nation-state, its institutions and practices. The act of remembering, in other words, is performed according to the

²⁶ Peter Novick (1999). *Op.cit.*, p.5

²⁷ Aleida Assmann (2008). *Op.cit.*, p.4

extent of community members' claims about their past. Therefore, recollecting the past is in a sense an act of selecting what is going to be remembered in accordance with claims, i.e. needs and concerns of the present.

Drawing the theoretical outlines of collective remembering, I think that to start from Halbwachs' arguments would be more appropriate since he sewed the seeds of collective memory and, thus, collective remembering in today's understanding of the terms. In his late writings, Halbwachs notes that the group is neither the source of memories by itself, nor it is an entity with the capacity to remember. Instead, extending collective memory's realm to generations –without limiting the term only to a group in a given time-, he identifies a new conception, “collective framework”, and explains it as following: “No memory is possible outside frameworks used by people living in society to determine and retrieve their recollections.²⁸ ...Frameworks are what persists over time, lending continuity to a group, so its reality is not exhausted in an enumerable set of individuals.²⁹” Furthermore, while reading his last book called “The Collective Memory” (1950/1980), one sees that after having theorized the concept of social frameworks, which already underlines the importance of the social, he ceased to underestimate to a certain degree the role of the individual and its agency in the act of remembering: he argues, “While collective memory endures and draws strength from its base in coherent body of people, its individuals as group members who remember.”³⁰ Thus, collective frameworks, in his accounts, govern how remembering is accomplished within a given collectivity. Moreover, it does this by means of a process Halbwachs calls “localization” that involves the forging of a network of relationships of meaning, such that, when a given member attempts to recollect some fact, he locates his own recollections within the network that stands prior to any given act of remembering. The network then acquires a kind of impersonal status –it cannot be said to originate from any given member.

²⁸ Maurice Halbwachs (1992). *Op.cit.*, p.43

²⁹ Maurice Halbwachs (1980). *Op.cit.*, p.118

³⁰ Maurice Halbwachs (1980). *Op.cit.* p.48

It passes as a common-sense mentality, the shared, taken-for-granted background knowledge that makes member what he or she is.³¹

This formulation consisting collective frameworks that obliges members of a collectivity locate themselves in them in order to do the act of remembering is in effect quite consistent with Bartlett's argument that most of the theoreticians concerned with collective memory deal with "memory *in* the group, and not memory *of* the group."³² To put it differently, individuals recollect the past as far as they locate themselves *in* the group's mind map produced and reproduced continually by ideological and material things of the social order that collectivity belongs to. Similar to Bartlett's assumption, Aleida Assmann indicates likewise, "Human beings do not live in the first person singular only, but also in various formats of the first person plural. They become part of different groups whose 'we' they adopt together with the respective social frames. A social frame is an implicit or explicit structure of shared concerns, values, experiences, and narratives... Each 'we' is constructed through shared practices and discourses that mark certain boundaries and define the principles of inclusion and exclusion."³³ Thus, collective frameworks or social frames, which mark boundaries of the collective identity under the umbrella of "we" and through which individuals do the work of remembering, cannot be limited simply into the social realm, as Halbwachs did, but should be examined by taking into account the individual agency and individuals' awareness to the extent that to have a collective identity requires to be conscious about the way of remembering the past embracing present needs and concerns of the collectivity.

However, Bartlett's account of collective remembering, which does not underestimate the agency of individuals, is much more convenient for contemporary understanding of memory issue. He uses the term "organized

³¹ David Middleton & Stewen Brown (2005). Op.cit., p.39-40

³² Frederick C. Bartlett (1932). *Remembering: A study in experimental and social psychology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.294

³³ Aleida Assmann (2008). Op.cit., p.51-2

settings”, as synonym of the term collective frameworks, in which individuals locate themselves and through which they recollect the past. According to Barlett, individuals’ conscious attitude is in a dynamic relation with a range of concerns or interests that characterize their ongoing relations with the social world they live in. An organized setting is then a complex of cognition and emotion that is located within, and dependent on the cultural and material particularities of the local environment. Herein, he links the individuals’ consciousness with organized settings in a way that to be conscious is to have a reflexive awareness of these organized settings in which one’s thoughts and actions are situated. In essence, what he theorize is the fundamental integration of individual mentality and culture, affect and cultural symbols, through which individuals remember. It is within this model that Barlett develops the concept of remembering, which is a constructive process of living development- in other words, a kind of ongoing dialogue between our thinking and the cultural symbols that feature in a given organized setting.³⁴

Thus, I establish the theoretical framework of the terms collective memory and collective remembering in a way that neither they are dependent to the social, nor to individual, but they should be thought at the very intersection of these two realms. Therefore, what is remembered in fact is profoundly shaped by “what has been shared with others” which means that it is always a “memory of an intersubjective past, of past time lived in relation to other people.”³⁵ In other words, the performance of memory is both a mnemonic device and a way in which individual memories are relived, revived, and refashioned. Through performance, we move from the individual to the group to the individual.³⁶

³⁴ David Middleton & Stewen Brown (2005). Op.cit., p.17

³⁵ Barbara A. Misztal (2003). Op.cit., p.6

³⁶ Jay Winter (2010). “The Performance of The Pats: Memory, history, identity”, in *Performing the Past: Memory, History, and Identity in Modern Europe*, Karin Tilmans, Frank van Vree and Jay Winter (eds.), Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, p.11

I.III.I. Performance of Remembering and Performative Forgetting

Then, how can we envisage these abstractions, organized settings or collective/social frameworks, which are the core of collective memory and thus provide basis for remembrance? Or, what are the sources of their concrete embodiment?

The performance of memory, writes Jay Winter, is a set of acts, some embodied in speech, others in movement and gesture, others in art, others still in bodily form. The performative act rehearses and re-changes the emotion, which gave the initial memory or story imbedded in it its sticking power, its resistance to erasure or oblivion. Hence affect is always inscribed in performative acts in general and in the performance of memory in particular.³⁷ The performance of memory should be thought here not only as the bodily acts such like commemorations consisting of a set of gestures and stances, but also as speech, writing, art performances and landscaping performances acted in general by state mechanisms, all of which result in the main performance of act of remembering. As far as the question of what is remembered is undoubtedly associated to that of how we remember, the response of “how” must be searched in these memory performances disseminating affect both with their intellectual and material presence.

Connerton theorizes how societies remember particularly through bodily acts, that is to say commemorations, and calls this kind of memory as ‘habit-memory’: “It has the capacity to reproduce a certain performance... We frequently do not recall how or when or where we have acquired the knowledge in question; often it is only by the fact of performances that we are able to recognize and demonstrate to others that we do in fact remembering... They will know how well the past can be kept in mind by a habitual memory sedimented in the body.”³⁸ Or, according to Fentress and Wickham, co-writers of “Social Memory” (2008), commemorations

³⁷ *ibid.*, p.12

³⁸ Paul Connerton (1989). *Op.cit.*, p.22-3,102

provide social groups a possibility of connecting their present lives and concerns with the past. In this way that the group members order and structure their ideas in their memories, and transmit these memories that are the constituent of who they are.³⁹ Moreover, as a manner of connecting the past and the present, commemoration creates both diachronic and synchronic succession in the collectivity in the sense that, respectively, it links affectively ancestors with descendants –diachronic succession among generations- and allows group members to assemble, to communicate and to feel the sense of belonging – synchronic characteristic. Commemoration hence constitutes a “memoryscape”, as Jennifer Cole uses the term, which is like a shared space where social and individual memory and the collective identity in relation to a collective past is worked out. Accordingly, to participate in a commemoration, which is indeed one of the bases of collective frameworks (Halbwachs) or organized settings (Barlett), involves an emotional investment –a mixing of affect with attitude-, through which the act of remembering occurs in a fuzzy space between thinking and feeling”, as a “feeling memory.”⁴⁰ This emotional investment works in two senses: on one hand, the commemorators find themselves in an affective channel, so to say in a vertical tunnel between past and present, and they are situated in a horizontal tunnel through which they confirm their collective identity, on the other. Commemorations, writes Peter Burke, “tell a story, present a ‘great narrative’, or make it grand by performing it. They reconstruct history or ‘re-collect’ or ‘re-member’ it in the sense of practicing bricolage, assembling fragments of the past into new patterns.”⁴¹ Undoubtedly, as it is in the case of history and historiography, “the shaping of a past worthy of public commemoration in the present is contested and involves a struggle for

³⁹ David Middleton & Stewen Brown (2005). Op.cit., p.33-4

⁴⁰ ibid. p.25-6 [see also; Jennifer Cole (2001). The Work of Memory in Madagascar, *American Ethnologist*, 25(4), 610-633]

⁴¹ Peter Burke (2010). “Co-memorations: Performing the past”, in *Performing the Past: Memory, History, and Identity in Modern Europe*, Karin Tilmans, Frank van Vree and Jay Winter (eds.), Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, p.106

supremacy.”⁴² And, with regard to this struggle for supremacy, attempts to render worthy the unrecognized past of counter-collective memories to be recognized and commemorated in the public space is a struggle for identity recognition of different ethnic, religious and cultural communities across nation-states as well.

When commemorations are taken into account, the site of conflict and tension between nation-states and their different ethnic, cultural and religious communities, whose counter collective memories are incompatible with that of the nation-state they live in, manifests itself at this very juncture. National collective memories bringing forward their own heroized figures, glory days, or unjust sufferings through their handmaid official historiography would legitimize intrinsically commemorations of these events or historical characters by ignoring, not recognizing, delegitimizing and even disallowing commemorations supporting counter collective memories. Herein, we see once again how collective memory of nation-states is fully a political memory in the sense that they render possible only one way of remembering by making forget more often than not the other possibilities of recollecting the past. Perhaps, the most common case is war memorials, which are also related to use of space and to commemorations symbolizing victory of a nation-state whereas loss, even pain for collectivities bearing counter-collective memory. As Charles Stone and William Hirst points out clearly, “If one builds a memorial, then, under many circumstances, the dead may be remembered, even with the passage of time, whereas if one fails to build the memorial, then this public silence may allow the dead to be forgotten over time.”⁴³ Such war memorials and commemorations thus give us not only the clues of which groups are acknowledged and which are unrecognized, but also which historical events are worth to mourn and which are not in the eyes of a given nation-state and its official history narratives.

⁴² John Bodnar (1992). *Remarking America: Public Memory, Commemorations, and Patriots, in the Twentieth Century*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, p.13 [cited from Peter Burke, *ibid.*, p.108]

⁴³ Charles B. Stone and William Hirst (2014). “(Induced) Forgetting to form a collective memory”, *Memory Studies*, Vol. 7(3), p.316

Even though mourning does not simply depend on commemorative performances, these mnemonic practices however strengthen the possibility of mourning by setting the scene for it, and, in turn, make alive the memory of the dead for whom an individual and/or a collectivity mourn. As is abovementioned, commemoration is a two-dimensioned bodily performance: On one hand, commemorator-individual feel the memory diachronically in the sense that s/he feels the memory of his/her ancestors in the flesh, and shares, on the other hand, synchronically this feeling and memory, thus affect one and another. Therefore, collective memory must be thought as an intersubjective memory to the degree that it grows and is reproduced as long as it is commonly shared, felt and performed. Hence, nation-state's intention in prohibiting counter-communities' mourning ceremonies, as mnemonic practices vivifying the memory, is nothing but their exercise of memory politics aiming to make them forget the shameful past and make those collectivity members forget that past.

See, nation-states' various kinds of prohibitions of mnemonic performances concerning counter collective memories reveal the fact that they do not liberate their desire in the sense of not breaking their overt silences and coming to terms with their past wrongdoings since they accuse themselves in their unconsciousness because of the loss of the pre-conflict stage. And yet, they pinch into denial politics –which are but exclusionist politics against their “others”- concerning both, their bloody past and, to a certain degree, the presence of counter collective memories and their bearers, who are nation's very lost-but-not-lost objects of the national body. Haunting the nation-state's psyche with their presence, as they are not lost in reality, these counter memory groups that connote for nation-state their shameful past are excluded from the national body or their memory is denied unconsciously in order to deal with this ghostly grief and to sustain its phantasmatic reality ensured through official history, state-sponsored cultural tools, invented traditions, landscape, and so on.

Hence, as long as the act of forgetting, individual and collective, is the opposite of remembering, the more collectivities are not authorized to perform where appropriate their memory, the more their collective memory, which comprises traditions and commemorations, sinks into oblivion in time from generation to generation.

I.III.II. Material Culture and Memory

In addition to commemorative performances, “cultural vehicles” or “resources”, as Michael Schudson uses the term, should be taken into consideration as precisely the material form of social/collective frameworks or organized settings in which individuals localize themselves in order to recollect the past. As another sort of memory performance, cultural tools, consisting of all kind of written and visual cultural materials from history textbooks to memoirs, from films to paintings and to architecture, are the very sheer materiality of collective memory. It is by the medium of these cultural resources that the past comes to individuals and informs their personal and collective sense of who they are; their collective identity. Written sources such as history textbooks, memoires, artefacts such as monuments, buildings bearing socio-historic meaning, and places must be considered as the very objects that “can serve as the meditational means – here the term mediation is understood as the intervention of cultural tools or artefacts in subject-object relationship- by which we may establish a particular relationship to some aspect of our past. Objects, then, provide occasions for extracting and reconstructing the past and, at the same time, act as structures or ‘envelops’ into which we can insert and develop recollections. Thus, our memories seem to us to rise from the objects themselves.”⁴⁴ Likewise, Teresa Brennan points out the affective transmission between objects and subjects by claiming that objects cannot be categorized separately from subjects and that they also have the very affect on subjects, since they have their own energies in their own right: “Both

⁴⁴ David Middleton & Stewen Brown (2005). Op.cit., p.142

feeling, as a process of sensing affects, and the transmission of affects, are material processes. We cannot distinguish between them, any more than we can distinguish between subject and object, by any criteria to do with materiality as opposed to ideality.”⁴⁵

Thus, inasmuch as collective memory is not a given memory, but is reconstructed, reframed or reshaped by collectivities according to the needs and concerns of present, this reconstruction is made consequently by social interaction either between individuals or between individuals and external cultural signs. The importance of these cultural tools, which generates “cultural memory”, is from their characteristic of challenging time relatively –unless they are destroyed, obliterated intentionally-, whereas “communicative memory” referring to a transmission of past experiences of an individual to other individuals through direct communication is doomed to be erased and forgotten in time, approximately in eighty to one hundred years that is equal to three or four generations.⁴⁶ Then, cultural memory, which is theorized by Jan Assmann, according to whom the term contains not only cultural formations such as texts, rites, monuments, but also institutional communication like recitation, practices and observance, should be considered so to say as residues of communicative memory carriers’ past.

Considering firstly the role of textual cultural tools in remembering issue, according to James Wertsch, individuals do remember through these “meditational means”: “humans think, speak, and otherwise act by using the cultural tools such as textual resources, maps, etc. that are made available by their particular sociocultural settings”⁴⁷. Or, as David Bakhurst argues, “We remember by constructing narratives which require the recall of past events for their

⁴⁵ Teresa Brennan (2004). *The Transmission of Affect*, New York: Cornell University Press, p. 94

⁴⁶ Jan Assmann (1988). Collective Memory and Cultural Identity, *New German Critique*, No.65, Spring-Summer 1995, p.127

⁴⁷ James V. Wertsch (2002). *Collective Voices of Remembering*, New York: Cambridge University Press, p.18

intelligible completion. In other words, our narratives sets up puzzles that are seemingly completed by the act of remembering, which, as consequence, does the work of establishing identities.”⁴⁸ In this respect, textual cultural tools, i.e. histories books, memoirs, (auto)biographies, and so forth are the materials through which individuals recollect the past of the collectivity they belong to and in turn construct their collective identity. Besides, accuracy of the content of these objects is not at stake because what is at stake here is that the issue of remembering chiefly concerns how the past is constructed in the present and used in order to serve the needs and concerns of the present. Yet, we have already seen how memory issue is a tour de force between different groups in a nation-state, and how (re)construction of a collective memory through written texts is a part it. As to the individual agency, it will come into play with its own consciousness when the individual explores the diversity of textual means, in other words while s/he recognizes the presence of competing voices against state-sponsored version of the past. Whenever one encounters with whatever competing voice, that is to say textual cultural tool consisting of counter-collective memory, he will base his collectivity’s past and his own identity on the side he feels close to and do the act of remembering. In short, accuracy becomes more of an issue when we think of individual’s conscious or unconscious affective affinity to the way of *how* he prefers remembering the past. However, the more individuals converge on the accuracy of counter-collective memories and resist against the official history or historiography, the more it will be given way to a negotiation process and reconstruction of a more inclusive collective memory. This is the reason why history and collective memory (re)construction, which is directly related to the former, is understood as an open-ended drama.

Secondly, as it is indicated above, cultural tools which should be understood as material reflections of collective frameworks (Halbwachs) or organized settings (Barlett), through which we do the act of remembering, is also comprised of

⁴⁸ David Bakhurst (1990). Social memory in Soviet thought, in *Collective Remembering*, David Middleton and Derek Edwards (eds.), London: Sage, p.211

territorial sites such as monuments, artefacts, museums, buildings, and so forth bearing socio-historical meaning in itself. They all constitute a shared socio-historical geographic network in which individuals locate themselves, their collective memory, recollections and collective identity. As Ann Rigney points out, “The art of memory operates through different places that help to maintain the order of information, and the same process acts at the level of collective memory and identity. The community shares a common physical space and common identity references that sustain a coherent collective narrative, and this narrative is based on different physical or/and cultural places that acts as sites of memory, as a placeholder for the exchange and transfer of memories among contemporaries and across generations.”⁴⁹

By the term sites of memory, Rigney refers to what Pierre Nora’s celebrated conceptualization of *lieux de mémoire*, “where memory crystallizes and secrets itself”⁵⁰. In effect, lieux de mémoires or sites of memory consisting of museums, archives, cemeteries, festivals, anniversaries, treaties, monuments, sanctuaries, fraternal orders, and so forth, are the very sites of history, but not memory, since there are no longer milieux de mémoires, real environments of memory. It is the case because of the fact that, for Nora, there is no more real memory -social and unviolated memory-, but there is integrated, dictatorial memory –unself-conscious, commanding, all-powerful, spontaneously actualizing memory without a past that ceaselessly reinvents traditions, linking the history of its ancestors to the undifferentiated time of heroes, origins, and myth.⁵¹ This is how he explain the “acceleration of history” of modern times -not forgetting that this is a fictive and artificial history- that conditions the presence of lieux de mémoire, sites of memory, to give the collectivity the feeling of continuity, eternity and to create

⁴⁹ Ann Rigney (2010). “The dynamics of remembrance: Texts between monumentality and morphing”, in *A Companion to Cultural Memory Studies*, Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (eds.), New York: Walter De Gruyter, p.345

⁵⁰ Pierre Nora (1989). *Op.cit.*, p.7

⁵¹ *ibid.*, p.8

the signs of distinction and of membership with their “symbolic capital⁵²”, as Pierre Bourdieu uses the term. Yet, for Halbwachs too, space is a natural setting that is always socially marked and symbolically charged. The importance of the topography is that it is not simply ecological, but rather symbolic, not simply space as the place of things, but rather space as the place of very coherent system of collective frames. Hence, each nation-state asserts its authority by localizing its fictitious collective memory, i.e. its constructive narrative, on its places of memory of the urban space. Undoubtedly, these sites of memory, with their strong symbolism, have potential to involve rivalry between the nation-state and different ethnic, religious and cultural communities whose lieux de mémoire of their counter-collective memory are generally destroyed by the state in order to create so-called phantasmatic homogenous national territory. This destruction process is nothing but a tour de force as it is in case of historiography.

I.III.III. Arrangement of Space And Forgetting

In his book called “The Legendary Topography of the Gospel in the Holy Land” (1941), Halbwachs mentions how the uses of landscapes and sites are connected with collective memory. Pointing out the link particularly between holy sites and memory practices, i.e. commemorations and rituals, he also reveals how spaces are symbolically charged and socio-politically marked. Similarly, in “The Collective Memory” (1925/1992), he argues further that collective memory is “a reconstruction of the past using data taken from the present”, by which he

⁵² Poststructuralist sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu defines the term as follows: “Everything points to the concentration of a symbolic capital of recognized authority which, though it has been ignored by all the existing theories of the genesis of the state, appears as the condition or, at minimum, the correlate of all the other forms of concentration insofar as they endure at all. Symbolic capital is any property (any form of capital whether physical, economic, cultural or social) when it is perceived by social agents endowed with categories of perception which cause them to know it and to recognize it, to give it value... It follows that the state, which possesses the means of imposition and inculcation of the durable principles of vision and division that conform to its own structure, is the site par excellence of the concentration and exercise of symbolic power.” [Pierre Bourdieu (1998). *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, p.47]

underlines the importance of the relationality between recollecting the past and shaping the present in every sense. In this direction, one must not forget that what we remember must be taken place in the very topography just as Halbwachs writes: “It would be very difficult to describe the event if one did not imagine the place.”⁵³ Hence, the major importance of this relationality stems from the assertion that memory that lacks localization runs the risk of not being attested as true -that is particularly counter collective memories’ legitimization problem before nation-states-, and so of being lost –that is the oblivion problem of these memories.

As to the case in nation-states, one can assert that attributing a meaning as a whole to nature, particularly to a given space in its favour, is used but as an indicator of the power and sovereignty. Furthermore, as shown above that there is no longer a living memory but handmaid, fictive and even phantasmatic cultural memory, space, is perhaps the most materialized form of nation-state’s cultural memory, thus collective memory. Suggesting the loss of the traditional, authentic memory, Pierre Nora indicates in a similar way that the modern memory is but archival, relying on the “materiality of the traces and the visibility of the image.”⁵⁴ In this sense, sites of memory, i.e. monuments, artefacts, museums, architecture and so forth in urban scale, must be considered as nation-states’ most visual means of perception management in the sense of making individuals think of, by manipulating them, that the official collective memory overlaps with the territory they dwell. To put it differently, individuals coinciding with various significant others, which suit with the knowledge they are born into, at every step on the national territory, would be convinced of, to some degree, the truth of what they have incorporated thus far. Moreover, under the influence of political regimes, lieux de memoire are generally charged and invested with ideological and political meanings, and become very resources created on behalf of reinterpreting the past, providing usable and reasonable collective frameworks for the members,

⁵³ Maurice Halbwachs (1980). *Op.cit.*, p.230

⁵⁴ Pierre Nora (1989). *Op.cit.*, p.13

who would recollect the past accordingly, just as Den Boer writes “Most lieux de mémoire were created, invented, or reworked to serve the nation-state.”⁵⁵ Thus, individuals localizing their knowledge on the past in the very cityscape charged with nationalist symbols will eventually remember the past precisely as the state aspires.

In addition, reorganizing the cityscape through reinterpretations or destructions of certain memory sites, specifically the ones that connote counter social frameworks, nation-states, on the other hand, delegitimize in a sense both the presence of different ethnic, cultural and religious communities encoded as internal enemies in the official history narratives, and counter memories. Further, in order to delegitimize relatively the truth of these counter collective memories, nation-states destruct or obliterate the cityscape as a result of a traumatic past event that targeted the destruction of an ethnic, cultural, or religious community and erase all traces of the event in the place where it had occurred to make it seem as if the event had never happened. It is undoubtedly but the desire to forget and make forget the memory of the event in question that motivates such obliteration - either a group is ashamed of what it has been through or else the murderers want to prevent any localization of the memories of their crimes.⁵⁶ This obliteration treatment has been used particularly by totalitarian regimes in cases of where they try to rewrite the past and to create usable proofs necessary to sustain their repressive dominance. In this manner, nation-states invent or construct quite politically charged cityscapes, which can be understood, on one hand, as sites of *memory* before themselves and their members incorporated the national ideology, whereas on the other hand as sites aimed at *amnesia* for counter collective memory bearers. Besides, generally after obliterating the sociocultural habitats of different ethnic, cultural and religious communities or dispossessing them in the

⁵⁵ Pim Den Boer (2010). “Loci memoriae- Lieux de mémoire”, in *A Companion to Cultural Memory Studies*, Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (eds.), New York and Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, p.21

⁵⁶ G r me Truc (2012). Memory of Places and Places of Memory: For Halbwachsian Socio-Ethnography of Collective Memory, *International Social Science Journal*, 2012, No.203-204, p.153

national territory, nation-states rearrange the space with their symbolically and politically charged methods such as putting any building of an enemy-encoded-community to use for totally different purpose, or changing public places' (streets, schools, parks, etc.) names specifically with the names of historical figures serving the interest of the political regime in power. According to Derek Alderman, cultural and historical geographer, these methods containing in themselves the political subtext that might be communicated on and through the space, are the very "tools of control, means of inscribing and reifying certain cultural and political ideologies."⁵⁷ By this way, nation-states seal their sovereignty both materially and symbolically on each side of the national topography.

Undoubtedly, these obliteration and rearrangement treatments, which are the very reflections of nations-states' psychic mechanism and melancholic retention appearing itself through exclusion or denial politics against lost-but-not-lost communities just as it is shown above, correspond also to the ideology of constructing homogenous national identities by the medium of collective frameworks fixed on the national territory, within which members will be enclosed into only one way of recollecting the past. This spatial destruction is strictly related with the destruction of identity references specific to bearers of counter collective memory, so to say different ethnic, cultural and religious community members, as Robert Bevan writes that "the destruction of the cultural artefacts of an enemy people or nation is a means of dominating, terrorizing, dividing or eradicating it altogether."⁵⁸ Hence, in the case of identity politics, the topography and its use is one of the most concrete instruments of nation-states betaken on the purpose of assimilating their undesirable members undertaking counter collective memories. By both erasing relatively the counter-collective

⁵⁷ Derek H. Alderman (2008). "Place, Naming and the Interpretation of Cultural Landscapes", in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*, Brian Graham and Peter Howard (eds.), Hampshire and Burlington: Ashgate, p.204

⁵⁸ Robert Bevan (2006). *The destruction of memory: Architecture at war*, London: Reaktion Books Ltd., p.8

frameworks or organized settings that are stuck on the topography and, in turn, dooming counter-collective memories to sink into oblivion gradually, nation-states not only legitimize their politically charged memories, values and beliefs, but also affect both present-day generations' and most importantly future generations' memories related to space perception.

However, the affect of both materiality and ideality of nation-states' phantasmatic structure should be examined in two dimensions: On one hand, to the extent that these material and ideological productions provide individuals certain collective frameworks, they aim at impeding individuals to tend towards counter forms of remembering. On the other hand, in contrast to the former, I suggest that if one can speak of memory and remembering era, it means a relative awareness of individuals about the past in the sense that organized settings of the cityscape offer for individuals –especially for the ones who belongs to different ethnic, religious and cultural community- only one way of remembering that is the way imposed by the nation-states' symbolic capitals⁵⁹ spread around the topography. In other words, as it is indicated above with reference to Barlett, that to be conscious of organized settings is to have a reflexive awareness of them in which one's thoughts and actions are situated. And, if today we speak of memory boom, individuals affected by the boom then have the very potential to have an awareness that nation-state's usage of topography offers them only one way of remembering, the way imposed by the nation-state, and in turn to go into action for resisting their own ways of remembering. This relative awareness would bring along eventually the efforts of historically silenced groups to be recognized and acknowledged before their states, and to change the status quo. In short, the affect

⁵⁹ Poststructuralist sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu defines the term “symbolic capital” as follows: “Everything points to the concentration of a symbolic capital of recognized authority which, though it has been ignored by all the existing theories of the genesis of the scare, appears as the condition or, at minimum, the correlate of the all the other forms of concentration insofar as they endure at all. Symbolic capital is any property (any form of capital whether physical, economic, cultural or social) when it is perceived by social agents endowed with categories of perception which cause them to know it and to recognize it, to give it value... It follows that the state, which possesses the means of imposition and inculcation of the durable principles of vision and division that conform to its own structure, is the site par excellence of the concentration and exercise of symbolic power.” [Pierre Bourdieu (1998). *Op.cit.*, p.47]

of practices, institutions, objects and places organized by nation-states' ideology can conduce toward a dialectical process which enable somewhat individuals bearing counter-collective memories to stake a claim on their own pasts, identity and thus to challenge, to negotiate on nation-state's taken-for-granted postulates. This challenge, claiming and negotiation process is concerned undoubtedly with generations and their present concerns –justice.

L.IV. EXTENTS OF CONTINUITY AND CHANGE: GENERATIONS AND COLLECTIVE MEMORY

Inasmuch as our concern here is to problematize the ways of how nation-state's collective memory can be more inclusive with certain interventions of different ethnic, cultural and religious community members' claims and attempts of negotiation with the nation-state, the response must be sought in generations' attempt to taking over the responsibility of the present which flows into the past.

I use the term generation here with reference to Karl Mannheim for whom the term is a social creation rather than a biological necessity. He suggests, "Where novel events are rare and change is slow, as in traditional peasant societies, distinct generations may not appear."⁶⁰ It is to say that only where events occur in such a manner as to demarcate a cohort in terms of its "historical-social" consciousness, should we speak of a true generation.⁶¹ In addition, according to Aleida Assmann, "social memory –she uses the term as the synonym of collective memory- refers to the past as experiences and communicated (or repressed) within given society. It is continuously changing as it disappears with the death of individuals. The memory of a society is by no means homogenous but is instead divided into generational memories. As groups of people who are more or less the same age that have witnessed the same incisive historical events, generations

⁶⁰ Karl Mannheim (1952). "The Problem of Generations", in *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*, Karl Mannheim (eds.), London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, p.309

⁶¹ Howard Schuman & Jacqueline Scott (1989). Generations and Collective Memories, *American Sociological Review*, June 1989, 54(3), p.359

share a common frame of beliefs, values, habits, and attitudes... In the communication between different generations mutual understanding is impeded by an invisible borderline that has to do with the temporality of experience... The invisible frame of shared experiences, hopes, values, and obsessions becomes more tangible when it shifts... Social memory does not change gradually but undergoes a perceptible shift after periods of around 30 years when a new generation enters into offices and takes over public responsibility. Together with its public presence, the new generation will authorize its own vision of history.”⁶² Relying on what Mannheim and Assmann point out, I suggest that in a nation-state, where new events and claims come up almost every day and where one can hence speak of a true generation having to a certain extent a socio-historical consciousness, attempts to reconstruct a novel collective memory, which will exclude no longer counter-collective memories’ presence in the very midst of the national body, and attempts to make the nation-state’s members remember and recognize their own collective memory, thus identity with its all differences and singularities, is directly related to post-generations’ efforts. And, to the extent that the reconstruction of collective memory bears upon the generation issue, it is important to examine the semantic world of these different generations, whose members have witnessed different events that affected them differently. Different experiences lived by each generation, interaction between different generations, so to say the communicative memory constructed through the interaction between the prime eyewitness and the one who did not experience the event, bearing witness to new events in the present, and the affect of all of them vary undoubtedly the way of remembering the past and thus the way of giving meaning to the present across different generations. Therefore, what is important in the analysis of generations within the frame of collective memory and remembering is the persistence or breaking points of social frameworks that individuals from

⁶² Aleida Assmann (2010). “Re-framing Memory: Between Individual and Collective Forms of Constructing the Past”, in *Performing the Past: Memory, History and Identity in Modern Europe*, Karin Tilmans, Frank van Vree and Jay Winter (eds.), Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, p.41-2

different generations take as reference points for recollecting the past and then making sense of the present.

In Schwartz's analysis, "frameworks of meaning" are subject to processes of succession and change throughout generations. Each generation inherits a given framework, but, at the same time, typically recognizes potential shortcomings within it and the need for revision. What Schwartz calls the "lineaments of commemorative persistence and change"⁶³ are central to how he approaches practices of collective remembering. Considering that every citizen across nation-states inherits a rich set of cultural materials in which the prior choices about which aspects of the collective memory are worth to preserve are already embedded. Accordingly, the contemporary forms of collective remembering are then compelled to confront these cultural symbols and challenge in the sense of deciding whether or not they have any forms of meaning for individuals. Additionally, the ones who are exposed to this overwhelming tension between preservation and loss of collective memory and its cultural tools are mostly the members of different ethnic, religious and cultural communities in the nation-state. These changing frameworks of meanings, which result in inevitably differences between the ways of giving meaning to the present and of remembering, vary therefore among generations.

Lastly, I want to mention the term cultural trauma, which is quite related to collective identity, and its influence on generations' reconstruction of collective memory and recollection of the past. Cultural trauma, writes Ron Eyerman, refers to a "dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric, affecting a group of people that has achieved some degree of cohesion. In this sense, the trauma need not necessarily be felt by everyone in a community or experienced directly by any or all."⁶⁴ Or, as Neil Smelser defines, cultural trauma defines "a

⁶³ Barry Schwartz (2000). *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p.25

⁶⁴ Ron Eyerman (2003). *Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.2

memory accepted and publicly given credence by relevant membership group and evoking an event or situation which is (a) laden with negative affect, (b) represented as indelible, and (c) regarded as threatening a society's existence or violating one or more of its fundamental cultural presuppositions"⁶⁵ and its collective identity. The point that should be underlined is that cultural trauma is issued from an event(s), but not necessarily from its direct experience. This means that its affect is thus mediated through cultural tools such any kind of textual sources concerning the traumatic past experiences, oral history, mass-media, official or unofficial commemorations, cultural artefacts, living or abandoned places, living or dead bodies, bones, and so on. The temporality and spatiality of past cultural trauma flows either this or that way into the present bodies, generations. Whether or not individuals directly experienced the traumatic event, post-generations descending the primary generation, whose members had experienced physic and/or psychic trauma, identify with and come to identify themselves through the memory and representations of this traumatic event. In other words, the traces of cultural trauma is engraved somehow in the unconscious of post-generations and become a constituent of their collective identity.

To state that cultural trauma goes deep inside the unconscious of collectivity and its collective identity is not to conceive that meaning and affect of the trauma do not change among generations. Contrarily, we have already seen that whenever the generation issue is at stake the semantic shifts of interpreting the past and in turn the present come into play as well among these different generations due to their socialization –interactions with other peoples and objects- and past experiences. Thus, Eyerman indicates that cultural trauma articulates a membership group as it identifies an event or an experience, a primal scene that solidifies individual/collective identity. This event, now identified with the formation of the group, must be recollected by later generations who have had no experience of the original event, yet continue to be identified by it and to identify

⁶⁵ *ibid.*

themselves through it. Because of its distance from the event and because its social circumstances have altered with time, each succeeding generation reinterprets and represents the collective memory around that event according to its needs and means. As to the generational semantic shifts, it can be said to structure temporally the formation of collective memory, providing a link between collective (group) memory and public (collective) memory. Even though groups are public, a particular group's memory may not necessarily be public, that is officially, acknowledged or commemorated. If a collective memory is rooted in a potentially traumatic event, which by definition is both painful and open to varying sorts evaluation, it may take a generation to move from group memory to public memory; sometimes it may take even longer, sometimes may never happen at all.⁶⁶ After all, this counter-collective memories' oscillation between to remain as group memory -which is doomed to sink into oblivion with the group members- and to become a public memory refers directly to the tension between collective forgetting and collective remembering in time. Here, the memory boom and counter-collective memory claims of different ethnic, cultural and religious groups across nation-states are overtly a resistance against collective amnesia forced by national ideologies for constructing alleged homogenous national body and topography, which is indeed nothing but phantasmatic in itself.

I.IV.I. Intergenerational Silence

Thus far, the issues of forgetting and accompanying silence are mentioned as cases that are resulted from nation-states' hegemonic memories and repressive practices against their members stigmatized as unfavourable. However, forgetting and silence can be also an attitude that individuals and/or collectivities exhibit (quasi-) voluntarily. Yet, works in the field of memory studies, in particular Holocaust studies, points out that the mass violence of the first decades of 20th century was repressed and eliminated unconsciously, but to a certain degree

⁶⁶ *ibid.*, p.15

consciously and voluntarily from public memory through silence, amnesia and repression. Although it is said that silence can be a conscious state that victims and their descendants opt –even so, it is rather unconscious reaction to the trauma in their psyche, nevertheless it must be taught as a consequence of nation-states’ ideological position taken towards an event, generally traumatic event occurred in the past, that resulted in silence of certain people(s). Before mentioning nation-states’ influence on these groups choosing relatively to be silent, I want to discuss firstly the term of silence concerning unconscious state of certain communities across nation-states.

Since cultural trauma refers to “a memory accepted and publicly given credence by relevant membership group and evoking an event or situation which is laden with negative affect, represented as indelible, and regarded as threatening a society’s existence or violating one or more of its fundamental cultural presuppositions”⁶⁷, it affects not only the collective identity of generations underwent a trauma, but naturally that of subsequent community members in question. It is the case due to the fact that the affect and transmission of any cultural trauma is something beyond the oral transmission. In other words, it is far more than something individuals can put into words. Furthermore, when it comes to power relation between nation-state and counter-communities (the manipulation and domination politics of the former against latters), one cannot reduce the cultural trauma into a specific date that have a beginning and end. To put it differently, even if traumatic events are generally associated with socio-historical facts, i.e. wars, massacres, slaughters, pogroms, and so forth, which are the overt acts against specific groups and/or communities, the ideology underlying the will of extermination or, at best, intimidation continue nonetheless covertly through various kinds of nationalist politics -we have already seen these nationalist politics carried out through official historiographies, overt silences

⁶⁷ *ibid.*, p.2

aimed at forgetting, legal system that exclude to certain degree the others of the nation, invented traditions, organization of cityscapes.

When the link between (intergenerational) cultural trauma and silence is considered, according to Eva Hoffman, who is best known in Jewish studies, “the generation after the atrocity is the hinge generation -the point at which the past is transmuted into history or myth.”⁶⁸ Her metaphor of ‘hinge’ refers in fact not to the generation exposed to traumatic event, but rather to subsequent generation(s) since the metaphor underlies the fact that post-conflict societies are identified by connection to and continuities with their conflictual pasts that seep into the present through unconscious of these generations. Silence must be considered thus as an unconscious response to a conflictual experience threatening in every sense sociocultural and/or economical existence of a group or community. Indeed, Marc Nichanian, who is best known for his works on the Armenian Genocide, formulates similarly the silence based upon *aghed*, as he prefers to refer it: “The object of the genocidal will is to eliminate the witness... This is the reason why the genocidal will manifests itself as a catastrophe in the eyes of victims. The death of the witness is equal to the disarticulation of the language that finalizes the act of extermination...What the survivors have lost is their very capacity to talk about the loss.”⁶⁹ His lines display a symbolic paralysis due to the very impossibility of verbalizing and thus envisioning the essence and the intensity of the trauma that has eventually the affect of limitation, of blockade in the unconscious of the victims. With the damage in the articulation of the language and, even with the death of the witness itself, the ability to retell and to transmit the traumatic past disappears by giving its place to silence, which indeed indicates per se another way of transmission of the trauma and its memory.

⁶⁸ Eva Hoffman (2004). *After Such Knowledge: Memory, History and the Legacy of the Holocaust*, New York: Public Affairs, p.198

⁶⁹ Mach Nichanian (2011). *Edebiyat ve Felaket*, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, p.88

However, silence may also be a primary way of transmitting trauma and its affect across generations, particularly, in cases where children did not directly experience these events. “Conspiracy of silence”⁷⁰, in Yael Danieli’s terms, which is the very marker of the trauma, transmits this traumatic memory among generations. Being the core of mnemonic socialization, families are key points inasmuch as they have the influence on what should be remembered, forgotten, or what should not be talked. This mnemonic socialization, as Eviatar Zerubavel writes, is a “subtle process that usually happens rather tacitly; listening to a family member recount a shared experience, for example, implicitly teaches one what is considered memorable and what one can actually forget.”⁷¹ Moreover, this conspiracy of silence can be considered as an unconscious mechanism of traumatic memory bearers. For example, in their examinations of unspoken or unspeakable pasts, Eviatar Zerubavel and Stanley Cohen individually write about how Freudian ideas of repression –whereby individuals subconsciously bury traumatic and painful memories below consciousness- might be said to operate at the inter-personal level. And, in moving to the social sphere, they adopt the notion of denial, which contain to a certain degree consciousness, over that of repression, and identify moments of denial by analysing the social configuration of silence. As in intra-personal processes of repression, the types of inter-personal processes of denial that they identify may help to avoid pain, bad memories, trauma, embarrassment, shame and stigma. All of these denials, however, are understood as closely associated with forgetting and silence.⁷² Their assertions correspond with what Nichanian writes about the psyche of survivors: “If the subject want to survive, he has to deny this deepest experience of him -the experience aimed at killing the witness. And, this can be formulated as such: Survival is denial.”⁷³ Herein, an important clarification is required: One must not think of that the

⁷⁰ Yael Danieli (1998). “Introduction: History and Conceptual Foundations”, in *International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma*, Yael Danieli (eds.), New York: Plenum Press, p.4

⁷¹ Eviatar Zerubavel (1997). *Social Mindscape: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology*, MA: Harvard University Press, p.87

⁷² Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi and Chana Teeger (2010). *Op.cit.*, p.1107-8

⁷³ Marc Nichanian (2011). *Op.cit.*, p.31

denial of victims and that of perpetrators are tantamount to each other. The denial of survivors must be understood rather as unconscious rejection of the unbearable experience, of the situation they exposed to in order to continue their existence despite everything, whereas that of the nationalist ideology and its adherents is but the very disavowal and non-acknowledgment of the event they executed so as to sustain their phantasmatic national identity that is based on the absence or, yet, the exclusion of its “others.” This is in fact the very dialectic equation of the construction of reasonable national identity that towers over the its abjectified groups or communities due to their unfavourable identity belongings. In this sense, one can assert that nation-states’ dictated identity is the very “anti-subject”, in terms of Michel Wieviorka, which refers to the destruction, negation, dehumanization of the Other, its naturalization and animalization.⁷⁴

To return to the silence of victimized collectivities, their silence, furthermore, can be considered a conduct to protect both the traumatized individuals in and of themselves, and their descendants from post-trauma reactions by repressing those memories and constructing in this manner a new collective identity. This situation, indeed, refers to what Connerton calls as forgetting that is constitutive in the formation of a *new identity*. For him, this type of forgetting “becomes part of the process by which newly shared memories are constructed because a new set of memories are frequently accompanied by a set of tacitly shared silences. Many small acts of forgetting that these silences enable over time are not random but patterned: there is, for instance, the forgetting of details of grandparents’ lives that are not transmitted to grandchildren whose knowledge about grandparents might in no way conduce to, but rather detract from, the effective implementation of their present intentions.”⁷⁵

Lastly, I suggest that silence of these individuals or, more generally, generations is triggered to a certain degree by nation-states’ ideological memory and thus

⁷⁴ Michel Wieviorka (2012). “Du concept de sujet à celui de subjectivation/dé-subjectivation”, *FMSH-WP-2012-16*, July 2012, p.5

⁷⁵ Paul Connerton (2008). *Op.cit.*, p.63

identity politics. With the overt silence of nation-states, that is with their politics not acceding to face up to their past and in turn recognize the sorrow of their members exposed to trauma, nation-states discourage traumatized generations to break their silence and repair their shattered language -of course, if it is possible. Furthermore, nation-states classify practically their members as reasonable and undesirable ones along with their abjectifying politics that block eventually desire and agency of the latter. To put it differently, in post-conflict societies, where there was a war that damaged social relations between different identities identifying themselves with different sociocultural and/or religious belongings, the affect of this damage continues generally for many years unless the dominant culture and its ideological memory adopt pacifying politics that might cease the polarization and stigmatization on the societal level. Thus, self-censorship among abjectified groups or communities would be unavoidable in a society where there are categorizations such as “we” and “others.” And, remedy of transforming the silence originating from nation-state’s unspeakable shame and from marginalized groups’ unspeakable horror lies behind coming to terms with the past, remembering and transmitting the past as it had occurred in order to recover together from its psychic burden for each groups.

I.IV.II. Resistances in the Aim of Remembering and Breaking the Silence

Those who read the paragraphs above might think of that the issues at stake, forgetting and silence, are treated unidimensionally, and even, quite pessimistically in the sense of not mentioning the potentiality of counter-collective memories. However, I prefer mentioning firstly the presentist approach to collective remembering and forgetting, which problematizes nation-states’ invention of traditions that tends to freeze memories and, thus, that do not permit pluralistic debates in the public spheres, and secondly *the popular memory approach* which elaborates, unlike the former, the ways of confronting nation-states’ dominant ideology and practices. Herein, it is important to note that neither

the former nor the latter approach is sufficient to comprehend the complexity of the tension between collective remembering, forgetting and silence concerning nation-states and their “undesirable” communities, which means that one must analyse this trilogy by taking into consideration both the intention of nation-states in forgetting and the potentiality of grassroots movements and/or efforts in shattering the status quo.

According to The Popular Memory Group’s studies -which have emerged as a consequence of the growing criticism of the presentist memory approach and, whose members are critical of the invented tradition argument for which the collective memory is constructed exclusively from the top down-, nation-states’ dominant political order and their collective memory are not a monolithically and singularly installed, but rather dynamic, unstable and conflictual “site of contestation between the dominant social formations in the ruling power bloc and those marginalized social formations seeking concessions from the dominant, and whom the dominant constantly strives to incorporate.”⁷⁶ Since the point is that the collective memory and its reconstruction in time is conflictual, what comes into question is that it involves strongly a dialectical interaction between hegemonic and popular discourses, and between public memory and private memory to the extent that the interaction between these memories and the tension between the ideological domination and resistances’ of marginalized groups structure and even, to some degree, ameliorate the content of the dominant nationalist collective memories. In this sense, one must conceive the term popular memory as a site of struggle between different voices seeking to construct versions of the past, as a “dimension of political practice⁷⁷”, as the group defines the term, aimed at challenging the political collective memory of nation-states and their institutions ensuring their repressiveness and domination in the public sphere.

⁷⁶ Roberta Pearson (1999). “Custer Loses Again: The Contestation over Commodified Public Memory”, in *Cultural Memory and The Construction of Identity*, D. Ben-Amos and D. Weissberg (eds.), Detroit: Wayne State University Press, p.180

⁷⁷ Popular Memory Group (1982). “Popular memory: theory, politics and method”, in *Making Histories: Studies in History Making and Politics*, R. Johnson, G. McLennan, B. Schwartz and D. Sutton (eds.), London: Hutchinson, p. 205

Additionally, in a similar vein with The Popular Memory Group, Michel Foucault mentions also popular memory and counter-memory in his works. According to him, memory is always considered as discursive practice that provides it with 'discursive materiality' and enables peoples to problematize the dominant memory 'in different discursive formations.' Consequently, popular memory must be understood as a political force of marginalized peoples and/or communities by the state they belong to, who bear the very potentiality of resistance as Foucault's often quoted words "Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather, consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power."⁷⁸

Yet, we witness, particularly with the memory boom of our era, a process of denationalization of memory across nation-states in the sense that counter-collective memories belonging to different ethnic, cultural and religious communities come to light gradually, and in turn make a claim on recognition of their identity, rights, silenced memories and on the space they live in. Besides, this process politicization of memory is not limited or related only with the political and/or juridical sphere, but is emanated as well in the artistic, literal realms, and, above all, in everyday life. As I have already underlined the importance of generations, precisely subsequent generations after the traumatic event, in the democratization process of unidimensional, exclusionist collective memories, we can see that all around the world these generations produce various art works -books, films, painting and/or photograph exhibitions blending private memories and public memories, and so on-, which are not largely political but have a political affect in themselves since they promote people(s) to ponder upon the past, to remember the past differently from what they have been imposed year-to-date, and consequently to reconstruct the collective memory in more egalitarian fashion. In this sense, all sorts of art works are quite efficient and influential to

⁷⁸ Michel Foucault (1978). Politics and The Study of Discourse, *Ideology and Consciousness*, Vol.3, p.15

affect people, as it is considerably easy to circulate them for their producers, and to consume them specifically with new technologies such as the Internet or TV. As to the democratizing efforts in everyday life, we witness also that people take to the streets more and more to claim their all kinds of rights before their states. Undoubtedly, non-governmental organizations and opinion leaders engaged to right seeking of these marginalized groups are rather efficacious in the sense of promoting, affecting and encouraging marginalized groups in all over the world. These kinds of efforts and resistances haunt therefore both the dominant ideology and make-believe topography of nation-states.

In conclusion, this democratization process is also the process of subjectification of each group including both counter memory carriers and adherents of nation-state's ideology. The ones, who succeed relatively shattering the nationalist psyche and the deep-seated silence in order to construct a better world, would become actors that invent social or cultural movements, contribute to transformation or destruction of monolithic institutions, and move to violence. As to the others, who squash into the nationalist unconscious, that is nation-state's language and discourses, would slide into anti-subject that construct its identity upon the denial of the Other, or into *non-subject*, for whom violence is merely the expression of submission to a lawful authority. The processes of subjectification and desubjectification, as Wieviorka indicates, are the processes by which the conscious of actors are built and transformed, and from which they make decisions.⁷⁹ Hence, the reconstruction of pluralistic collective memories and breaking silences across nation-states depend on rather the subjectification of subjects that are capable of thinking themselves as social actors having agency, and of find modalities of springing into action in and of themselves since the memory must be envisaged not only from the social system and collective frameworks, through which collective memory is constructed and affirmed eventually, but also from singular individuals, who carry it, and their agencies. Thus, the next chapter takes its subject a singular man, the resistance in his

⁷⁹ Michel Wieviorka (2012). Op.cit., p.6

writings and discourses, his efforts in recollecting the past warts and all with each member of the society, the reality of the soils where his ancestors born, and in breaking the silence altogether. His name is Hrant Dink.

CHAPTER II

REMEMBERING WITH AND THROUGH HRANT DINK

As the continuation of the former chapters, through which I have discussed the theories of collective memory construction in its relationality with the nation-building process of states, and their historiography as well as the tension between state-sponsored collective memories and counter-collective memories; the relationship between remembering and commemorations; collective trauma and its transmission among generations; the issue of forgetting and silence, their relationship with the space emblazoned with socially organized settings of the state, this third chapter is dedicated to Hrant Dink and his writings and discourses which gives us the very clues of the core of his fight. Thus, this third and the following fourth chapter, the latter that pursues the affect of the death of Hrant Dink on Armenians in Turkey, should be read reciprocally so that we can fathom how his death affects today's Armenians and triggered and/or accelerated reconstruction of Armenian collective memory challenging the Turkish state's narrative of the past, and transformed into a realm of reclaiming justice for the past, present and future. Looking retrospectively at the assassination of Hrant Dink, the underlying reason of which should be traced in his writings and discourses that lay claim to the truth of the past as well as make all the peoples of this land face the past all together, I seek elaborating on the close relationality between his discourses and their posthumous affect on Armenian in Turkey, who relatively find themselves being involved in the construction of their counter-collective memory as the very counter-discourse of Turkish state's hegemonic collective memory. Therefore, in order to comprehend the reaction of Armenians to the death of Hrant Dink in the context of their reorganization, as it were, around the counter-discourse they inherited posthumously from Hrant Dink himself, it would be worthy to elaborate his writings and discourses between the lines of which one grasps his claims, fight and ideals. Following his footprints, throughout this chapter, I will be tracing his struggle –the very struggle that has become in no

small measure the struggle of Armenians in Turkey in general- to reveal the truth of the past, to turn the absence of Armenians into presence before the state; his main purpose of making all the peoples of this land remember the forgotten memory by whispering, so to say, the true-life stories of the Armenian people in his lines, speeches.

II.I AGOS

II.I.II. Till The Foundation Of His Newspaper Agos: A Glance At His Political Identity Formation

The combination of two Armenian words *hur* and *yerant*, fire and brightness, Hrant means bright fire, the heat of which is sensed by almost all the peoples of these lands. Reading his biography for the first time, I realized that he did not have a very easy childhood and teenager years, which played, perhaps, an important role in the formation of his leftist political thoughts that he fought for in his life. Born in Malatya in 1957 in a modest Anatolian family, he came to Istanbul when he was five years old with his parents and two brothers because of economic reasons. With the separation of his parents, he and his brothers would be sent to an Armenian boarding school, Gedikpasa Armenian Protestant Church Nursery School, then to Surp Haç Tibrevank High School, where his leftist political identity had been primarily shaped and where he was going to be involved in the then revolutionist youth movement claiming interclass equality, freedom and democracy for all peoples. Continuing actively his political fight during his university years, he had to discontinue his political ideals because of the necessity of earning a living for his family. However, it was only a short hiatus till 1990s, when he was going to start to write book reviews concerning Armenian history in ‘Marmara’, an Armenian daily newspaper, under the pseudonym of *Çutak*, which means violin in Armenian language. This was how he took a concrete step into the press world, which will have been continuing with

the foundation of *Agos* in 1996, as well as writing columns for the daily Turkish daily newspapers ‘Yeni Yüzyıl’ and ‘Birgün’.

While reading his columns, one realizes that he was addressing not to masses, but directly to individuals with his affectively so strong yet so simple wording. Having a critical approach to extremists of both parties, Turks and Armenians, he devoted himself to create a new language that stumps the reader and make them unable to repeat the hackneyed arguments about the past as it has been relied by the popularity in Turkey. In this sense, he challenged the otherness discourses of both Turkish and Armenian nationalists legitimizing to certain degree their extremism toward each other. He did all these by having faith in belonging to Anatolia, or rather belonging to these lands as a member of the very autochthonous peoples of Anatolia, the Armenian peoples. Accordingly, the following lines of this chapter will be indicators, as it were, of his efforts to (re)construct a new collective memory, which would exteriorizes any identities belonging to these lands, but acknowledge while remembering their coexistence for centuries, and to pave the way for a dialogue in order to render the past effable, which would indeed remedy the traumatic attachments of peoples of this land.

II.II.II. The foundation of *Agos*

It was the year 1996, when Hrant Dink and a group of people from the Armenian Patriarchate founded the first and only bilingual Turkish-Armenian newspaper, *Agos*, to grasp the nettle and face the tough problems coming from the past between Turkish State and Armenians. Indeed, considering the sociopolitical atmosphere of those years, perhaps its foundation was quite well timed when it comes to the necessity for creating such a discursive platform that would provide Armenians in Turkey with an appropriate basis to express themselves, to make people recognize their presence in this land, to break the longstanding silence and

to tell people their own story. Yes, the conditions that Armenians in Turkey were living in, the *Zietgeist*, if I may say so, necessitated the birth of Agos. As the name implies, Agos means a furrow in the soil opened by the plow, a furrow where the water flows from, the seed sprouts and the fertility squirts out, it paved the way for the counter-narrative of the Armenians in Turkey flows into the Turkish nationalism-laden discursive realm; created a window opening between Armenians and Turks, which allows thus not only to look out, but also look in from the outside. Therefore, as a sociocultural tool, Agos, initiated by Hrant Dink, was founded on the very purpose that Armenians claim their identity rights, esteem, and an official recognition with their sociocultural and/or religious differences before the Turkish nation-state. Moreover, perhaps most importantly, it has been of service to transform Armenians' absent presence imposed by the Turkish state, especially with its official history and other sociocultural mediums shaping the memory of its citizens, into sheer present presence inasmuch as it appeared as a stentorian voice, even in Turkish language for the first time, challenging nation-state's denialist politics toward Armenians in Turkey.

Yet, with respect to the high proportion of illiterate Armenians in their native tongue, its bilingual character is quite important as well inasmuch as it addresses not only Armenian literates, but also community members who do not know their mother language. In this sense, one can suggest that, as the first Turkish-Armenian newspaper, it is the very sociocultural means that aimed to reinforce the sense of community among its members, who would sense their 'imagined' community, as Benedict Anderson uses the term, is not constituted and sustained in its imaginariness, but concreteness to the extent that it became year by year a central medium of public conversation, through which the Armenian collective identity could be (re)constructed and (re)articulated alongside the formation of relative self-consciousness among Armenians in Turkey. Besides, its bilingual publication makes Agos different from the other Armenian media tools, as its target group is not only Armenians in Turkey, but also all citizens of the land. Therefore, it had and still has the function of re-presenting Armenian ethnicity,

both for the community itself, to the Turkish nation-state and those who think within nationalistic patterns, which makes the newspaper a vehicle of intellectual protest because it gives voice to otherwise voiceless Armenians. Furthermore, besides its intellectual resistance to the state's monophonic historiography and public discourses that inculcates a false memory into its citizens, it also undermines state's phantasmatic topography with its materiality. Hence, as the name of *Agos* implies, it is a plough, so to say, which has opened a hole in the soil to give the seed in as a source of fertility – while its coulter cracks the state's phantasm, it opens little holes in the nation-state's territory to sow seeds of a new egalitarian and fair collective memory, which would fertilize identities, memories and all the other things belonging to this soil. In the light of the above metaphor, the seeds were the very real stories, states of mind, written by Hrant Dink, through which he tried to touch, affect and split the psyche of those that the echo of his discourses reached to. Having become a memory collector in time; he was telling and sharing these memories with peoples of this land in order to recover all together.

With the “pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will⁸⁰”, the famous aphorism of Antonio Gramsci, Hrant Dink sought to fathom thoroughly the relationship between Turks and Armenians, particularly between the Turkish nation-state and its ghostly Armenians. As a leftist who never languished in ‘left melancholy’, in Wendy Brown’s terms, he was living in ‘the time of the Now⁸¹’ and coming to terms with the particular character of the present through the analysis, critics and suggestions. This was how Hrant Dink’s optimistic political will brought him into action in the hope of remembering the past with all of its wrongdoings and agonies, constructing a new collective memory that would be common to all peoples of this land.

⁸⁰ Antonio Gramsci (1971). *Selections from Prison Notebooks*, New York: International Publishers, p.175

⁸¹ Wendy Brown (1999). “Resisting Left Melancholia”, *Boundary 2*, Volume 26, Number 3, Fall 1999, Durham: Duke University Press, p.22

Accordingly, the output of his political will, *Agos* opened a hope-based discursive platform between the two close-but-far peoples, Armenians and Turks, who relatively became able to look from each other's window. And, most importantly, he did this with his affective tone, which reverberated neither historical nor juridical terminologies, but his very true-life experiences and true stories about being Armenian in this land. These anecdotes had the aim of making Armenian community members of Turkey remember their past, memories of their ancestors and Armenian identity, as well as making the Turkish state and society remember the presence of Armenians, their belongingness to the land and the togetherness of these two identities. History was not a means, but an end for him –a political will to remember the past all together, to democratize the Now by remembering the past. Then, Hrant Dink's understanding of and reference to history and/or true-life stories delegitimizing state-sponsored historiography should be regarded as a *political activity* inasmuch as politics exists, argues Jacques Rancière, "because those who have no right to be counted as speaking beings make themselves of some account..." and "political activity makes visible what had no business being seen, and makes heard a discourse where once there was only place for noise; it makes understood as discourse what was once only heard as noise."⁸² Hence, *Agos*, in macro-scale, and Hrant Dink's writings and discourses, in micro-scale, are veritable political activity as they resist the *police*, i.e. "order of the visible and the sayable that sees that a particular activity is visible and another is not, that this speech is understood as discourse and another as noise."⁸³ Considering the Turkish official history and many government policies ignoring Armenians' belongingness to the land, marginalizing and even criminalizing them as internal enemies or as '*demos*⁸⁴' of the society, Hrant Dink and his newspaper *Agos* provided thus people(s) with the very counter-organized settings (Barlett) or

⁸² Jacques Rancière (1999). *Disagreement*, Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, p.29

⁸³ *ibid.*

⁸⁴ In contrast with its conventional meaning, that is to say public, Jacques Rancière deconstructs the word 'demos' by which he refers to people that are outside of the count, have no speech to be heard, and whose struggle for freedom would be the real politics. (See Jacques Rancière (1999). *Disagreement*, Chapter I: Beginning of the Politics, Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, pp. 11-20)

counter-collective frameworks (Halbwachs) that engender a kind of heterogeneity in the sense of recollecting and talking the past. That this heterogeneity is the one providing sheer equality between any speaking people(s) that would thus experience the veritable prerequisite of democracy, that is to say dissensus –“a dispute over what is given and about the frame within which we see something as given.”⁸⁵

Thus, the issues that will be discussed in following subtopics are to reveal the struggle for freedom of remembering, commemorating the past, as well as for being recognized before the state – this struggle that has started predominantly with Hrant Dink and continues aftermath of his assassination is the demonstration of the transformation of the speechless *demos* into relatively voiced community, whose members continue the culture of critical thinking created by Hrant Dink himself, who turned for the first time to face both Armenian and Turkish society, and whose politics is embedded in the cracks opened in the heart of the social realm organized only by the Turkish nation-state’s *police* order.

II.II. TURKISH HISTORIOGRAPHY AND OFFICIAL HISTORY

As mentioned in previous chapters, we have seen how official history and historiography play irreducible role in constructing the collective memory of a given society and/or community, whose members’ mindscapes and act of recollecting the past are fashioned to a large extent by the intentionally given collective frameworks or organized settings. Keeping this in our mind, the constitutive narrative of nation-states, which generally oblige their citizens to remember the past with given templates while denying and trying to delegitimize Others’ narratives with continuous nationalistic discourses and even hatred speeches, come into being thus upon Others’ ghostly presence. In other says, the ghostliness of Others is the very constituent element of nation-states and their

⁸⁵ Jacques Rancière (2010). *Dissensus*, London: Continuum International Publishing Group, p.69

national identity, which indicates indeed their binary character – Others’ relative collective amnesia is the prerequisite for nation-states’ construction of collective memory and identity. This existential binarism of official historiographies and state-sponsored histories hence can be conceptualized as historicism, in Benjaminian sense, that squeezes itself into the make-believe boundaries of universal history. As Benjamin theorized historicism in opposition to historical materialism, the former “gives the eternal image of the past...culminates in universal history... (that) has no theoretical armature and (whose) method is additive as it musters a mass of data to fill the homogenous, empty time”, whereas the latter “supplies a unique experience... and historical materialist recognizes the sign of a Messianic cessation of happening, or, put it differently, a revolutionary chance in the fight for the oppressed past.”⁸⁶ As it is seen, what Benjamin calls historicism’s empty time takes the victor’s story as the only story of the era while impeding the narrations of pain and suffering of the Others– that tales of cultural treasures, which are the very parochial artifacts of victorious rulers, or, put it differently collective frameworks upon which collectivities rely to recollect the past, conceal the violence and barbarism being the constituent element of the triumphant.

As for the Turkish official history and historiography concerning its excluded-yet-retained objects, descendants of Ottoman Armenians living in this country, the tension between the Turkish state and Armenians can be read in this framework of struggle between historicism and historical materialism. The Turkish Republic established after the collapse of the empire had had to ‘invent’ a new history through which it will have asserted the presence of an ‘imagined’ homogenous society and collective identity, i.e. Turkish national identity. Opting collective amnesia, republican elites, among whom there was a considerable amount of the CUP members, have excluded the history of different ethnic-religious communities from the then newly fictionalized Turkish history. The foundation of republic that has been grounded itself on the extermination and deterritorialization

⁸⁶ Walter Benjamin (1968). *Illuminations*, New York: Schocken Books, p.262-3

of those could not be assimilated into Turkishness, will have re-wrote history as if its bloody and violent past had never occurred –those who took part in the ethnic cleansing project would have been publicly heroized; their names would have been given to, their busts would have been located in public spheres.

Nevertheless, the historicism of the nation-state should not be thought in a reductive fashion: having not that much power to impede the subjectivity of those oppressed or devoured by and lost in the historicist historiography, historicism thus should nevertheless considered as something relatively leads to potentiality of nascence of counter narratives through ‘remembrance’, *Eingedenken*. As Benjamin indicated, “...the consideration that history is not simply a science but also and not least a form of remembrance (*Eingedenken*). What science has ‘determined’, remembrance can modify. Such mindfulness can make incomplete (happiness) into something complete, and the complete (suffering) into something incomplete.”⁸⁷ Accordingly, what Benjamin called *Eingedenken* should be considered as ‘insightful remembrance’⁸⁸, through which past flows in present in a form of subjective memory questioning and challenging the content of nation-state’s official history. Additionally, this counter-subjective memory unclinking subjectivity of the oppressed would be thus the redemption of those marginalized by historicist narratives. Being not simply a dead memory, but a living memory incarnated in the body of the post-generations, the ‘insightful remembrance’ has the very much potentiality to resurrect the traumatic past in the present for the redemption or acknowledgement of the counter memories before the humanity.

Likewise, Hrant Dink’s writings appropriately epitomize abovementioned subjectivity shouldering the burden of the traumatic memory of 1915 and, in turn, the agency of splitting the historicism of the Turkish state. The dissensus in which

⁸⁷ Walter Benjamin (1999). *Arcade Projects*, “On the Theory of Knowledge, Theory of Progress, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, p.471 [N8, 1]

⁸⁸ Rody Rank (2000). “Beyond Reconciliation: Memory and Alterity in Post-Genocide Rwanda”, in *Between Hope and Despair: Pedagogy and the Remembrance of Historical Trauma*, Roger I. Simon, Sharon Rosenberg and Claudia Eppert (eds.), Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, p. 203

he found himself aimed to the redemption of all peoples of this land altogether – modifying the past that has been determined and even tabooed by the history itself would ineluctably rescue, according to him, people(s) of this land from melancholic attachments frustrating them to come to terms with the past. Because he believed that past is never gone, but always there to haunt the present. Moreover, that only dialogue between past and present, the dead and the living, the victor and the victim would disentangle people(s) of this land from the knots of totalitarian narrative of the past that each of us were/are exposed to since our early ages due to the official curriculum. Indeed, one of his columns reveals quintessentially how Turkish state's has a self-contradictory perception of the ethnic other seen as 'citizen-but-yet-foreigner':

“Course: National Security

Course Book: The High School National Security Course Book

Publisher: Ministry of National Education, State Books, 6th Edition, National Education Press, Istanbul 2003

Taught by military educationists, Minorities are mentioned in the 'Acts of Separatism' section of the 'Plots Against the Republic of Turkey' unit of this course book, and are described with these contradictory sentences: 'From whichever religion or race (Greek, Armenian, etc.) everyone is considered Turkish citizen and treated as equally before law. This has been secured by our Constitutions of 1924, 1962 and 1982. In Turkey, a great majority that constitutes more than 95% of the population has shared the same fate for thousands of years, and is kneaded within the same culture and goal...'

Let's ask then: Sir, is the number of citizens in this country 95% rather than 100%? By saying 'a great majority that constitutes more than 95% of the population has shared the same fate for thousands of years, and is kneaded within the same culture and goal', 5% of the population that you set apart from 100% contains which elements? Since the topic of the

subject is minorities, are these %5 of people Armenians? If these 5% of people do not share the same fate, and are not kneaded within the same culture and goal, why in the above sentence it is said that 'From whichever religion or race (Greek, Armenian, etc.) everyone is considered Turkish citizen and treated as equally before law'? Sir, but is it true to chop and change in a paragraph, to write 'Turkish citizen' and then leave them out at the same time? Or, does this 95% correspond to first-class citizens and that 5% to second-class citizens? I'm sorry Sir, but are my questions included in the scope of separatism?''⁸⁹

These ironic yet actual questions that mirrors the harsh reality of being *citizen non grata* in Turkey are the very proof of the Turkish nationalist discourses leaking into the legal and educational system in order to inculcate into everyone, young and old alike, the phantasm that Turkish state belongs to Turks, and to reinforce this “make-believe state”⁹⁰ perception in national identities.

II.II.I. Turkish Nationalism and Turkish National Identity

We have already seen the interrelatedness of the socio-political term ‘nation’, which is rather an imaginary conceptualization, and collective memory, particularly that of nation-states, in previous chapters. As a matter of fact, any nation is grounded on its other(s), through which the former generates and legitimizes itself. However, the other, which should be thought as the constitutive of the former inasmuch as a nation existentially needs it, is just as imaginary as the nation itself. It is so because of the fact that the other that is depicted by the nation in question does not reflect the reality, but a stereotyped identity being caught in binary discourses of nationalism: this is the very duality between victim

⁸⁹ Hrant Dink (2003). “Hocam’a Sorular”, *Agos*, 31 October 2003

⁹⁰ Alfred Gell (1998). *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, p.252; cited from Yael Navaro-Yashin (2012). *Op.cit.*, p.16

and (internal) enemy, or patriot and traitor, which are but stigmatizing descriptions fixating both identities in universal yet ahistorical patterns of historicism. Harboring any greyness, but black and white, nationalism is relatively doomed to be caught in its melancholia that is a psychic state through which the melancholic sustains him/herself through the ghostly emptiness of the lost Other. This constituent tension between Turks and its internal enemies reverberates also in Hrant Dink's writings:

“(...) The State always imposes the followings on us: ‘You are different, but you are wrong from the outset.’ The mentality that finds particularly beneficial to impede democratic productions in Turkey has never comprehended the substantiality of differences and considered it a ‘burden’. The minorities in Turkey are neither minorities defined by the Treaty of Lausanne nor citizens defined by the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey.”⁹¹

As he emphasizes in the above lines, Turkish nationalism and Turkishness discourses emerging with the CUP ideology and continuing also in the Republican period, Turkish national identity being based upon ethnicized identities of its Others, who have been already discarded throughout *jus sanguinis* instead of including them through the perception of *Türkiyelilik* (being from Turkey-emphasis on *jus soli*), has been sustaining its existence through exclusion-yet-retention. As Taner Akçam suggests, “the foundation of Republic of Turkey is based on presence-absence equation⁹²”, Turkish national identity relies on a historicism that ignores the very existence of Armenian reality. Besides, it is thus disclosed in the definition of a citizen in the Constitution under Article 66: “*Everyone bound to the Turkish state through the bond of citizenship is a Turk...*” Whereas a geographical emphasis is made with the expression ‘the State of

⁹¹ Hrant Dink (2009). *Bu Köşedeki Adam*, edited by Karin Karakaşlı, Istanbul: Hrant Dink Foundation Publications, p.149

⁹² GAMURÇ. “Taner Akçam ile Hrant Üzerine”, publication date 21 January 2013, www.dailymotion.com/video/xwwxlh_gamurc-taner-akcam-ile-hrant-dink-uzerine_news

Turkey' in Articles 1, 2 and 3 of the Constitution, Article 66 directly emphasizes ethnicity.⁹³ This article on citizenship, which has not changed in none of the latter Constitutions, is the unquestionable proof of the fact that the Republic of Turkey tries to sweep under the carpet the multitude of the presence of other ethnicities - whose members prefer to define themselves not with the universal/national identity categories such as "Turk", but with their belongingness to the land, as *Tu□rkiyeli* that includes the meaning that citizens can be recognized also with their any other ethnic identities before the law- and assimilate, devour them in the Turkishness.

*"(...) I am a member of Turkish Armenian community, which has a four-thousand-year-history, whose members are reduced to 50-60 thousand. As I go a bit beyond the limit, I attempt, through my writings, to strike out for flowing into the sea of Türkiyelilik and then into the ocean of universality by leaving the pond of my community. Yet, I know that, according to most of you, I fail in my attempt and flounder around my pound. Once again for most of you, I extremely smell like 'minority', exceedingly 'Armenian' in my writings. (...) But, be understanding. If you cannot, let me tell you in a sentence: Perhaps, you are right to react, nevertheless you should also admit that you, the majority, pushed us off to this pond."*⁹⁴

This psychic mechanism of Turkish nation state that is the exclusion of and/or the swallowing the Other by devouring it can be considered as the very basis of the construction of the Subject –that is Turkishness in this case. As Judith Butler puts forward, "the exclusionary matrix by which subjects are formed requires the simultaneous production of a domain of abject beings, those who are not yet 'subjects', but who form the constitutive outside to the domain of the subject⁹⁵," whose livability is grounded upon the very unlivability or uninhabitability of the

⁹³ Edward Mead Earle (1969). "The New Constitution of Turkey, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 40, Issue 1, p.98

⁹⁴ Hrant Dink (2009). *Op.cit.*, p.149

⁹⁵ Judith Butler (1993). *Bodies that Matter*, Introduction, New York: Routledge, p.3

excluded Other. In this sense, Butler continues, “the subject is constituted through the force of exclusion and abjection, one which produces a constitutive outside to the subject, an abjected outside, which is, after all, ‘inside’ the subject as its own founding repudiation.”⁹⁶ In this framework, one should fathom the reason why the pure memory in all its parts has been repressed by the Turkish nation state’s historiography; why the nation state has inculcated a solid way of remembering the past through its miscellaneous instruments that serve to its politics of forgetting. Therefore, this repressed memory of the traumatic past for both parties, Turks as well as Armenians, is intrinsic to the construction of the Turkishness subjectivity, whose thresholds are demarcated by the Armenian ghost manifesting itself in Turkish nation state’s paranoia.

One can consider this paranoia as the very symptom of the Armenian ghost or, in other words, the ghostly presence of Armenians in the nation-state’s topography. Turkish state’s denialist rhetoric concerning the presence of Armenians and their belongingness to the land reveals itself through nation-state’s repressed taboo, which is Armenian ghost shattering the phantasmal real(ity) that is constructed upon its historiography and exclusionist collective memory. As suggested by Slavoj Žižek, there is no reality without the specter and the circle of reality can be closed only by means of an uncanny spectral supplement. Reality, he continues, is never directly itself, it presents itself only via its incomplete-failed symbolization, and spectral apparitions emerge in this very gap that forever separates reality from the real (the part of reality that remains non-symbolized), and on account of which reality has the character of a (symbolic) fiction: the specter gives body to that which escapes (the symbolically structured) reality. Hence, what the specter conceals is not reality, but its ‘primordially repressed’, the irrepressible X on whose ‘repression’ reality itself is founded.⁹⁷ In this sense, I suggest that Hrant Dink’s aim, underlying his discourse and writings, was to make these two realms, the reality and the real, overlapped each other, which would be possible only

⁹⁶ *ibid.*

⁹⁷ Slavoj Žižek (1995). “The Spectre of Ideology”, in *Mapping Ideology*, Slavoj Žižek (eds.), London: Verso, p.21

through verbalizing, in turn rendering the so-called absence of Armenians representable, symbolized. Hence, as a man speaking the unspoken, Hrant Dink was trying to verbalize the very belongingness of his ancestor to the land.

II.III. BELONGINGNESS TO THE LAND

Land is, no doubt, one of the most important founder elements of the identity with its divaricated roots, so to say, binding peoples' identity, memory and history – which should be considered as intact that is to say those that have not been politically and/or ideologically manipulated by state, state apparatus, interest group(s)- and so on- that are transmitted by their ancestors. Nevertheless, the question of “what makes a piece of land the *homeland*” is, perhaps, problematic and difficult to answer. Is this piece of land where one's ancestors had born in? How many years of settlement in a piece of land in question would be enough to qualify it as homeland? Might there be more than one homeland? These questions can vary in an ever-lengthening way. Yet, epigraphs about the origin of the peoples in question, which epitomize the earliest examples of recorded history, as well as myths, religious narratives and folk epics, regardless of their accuracy, can be considered as collective memory, written and oral, depicting the homeland.

In this direction, examining the origin of Armenians, one comes across with the Anatolian territories. According to Herodotus, being seen as the ancestors of Armenians, Armens, who were neighbors of ancient Greeks and Thracians, had migrated to Anatolia before 5th century B.C. Furthermore, according to another commentary, the settlement of Armenians in Eastern Anatolia dates back to a thousand year prior to Christianity.⁹⁸ Moreover, for Richard Hovanissian, since 3000 B.C. the “Armenian plateau” has been described as homeland in “Armenian national legend.” As it is depicted, the westernmost point of the plateau reaches

⁹⁸ Günay Göksu Özdoğan, Füsun Üstel, Karin Karakaşlı, Ferhat Kentel (2009). *Türkiye’de Ermeniler Cemaat-Birey-Yurttaş*, İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, p.37

today's Sivas territory; its northernmost and southernmost points are bordered respectively by Eastern Black Sea Mountains and Southeastern Taurus Mountains; its northeastern border extends from Turkey's border with Georgia to Armenian State; and lastly the southeastern point abuts on Lake Urmia and Persian Plateau.⁹⁹ In deed, there are two main theories about the settlement history of Armenian presence that is associated with the Indo-European peoples' immigration to Anatolia: according to the first theory, Indo-European peoples' migration dates back to the years of 2000 B.C., after when Indo-European tribes cohabited with Caucasian and Anatolian autochthon tribes in the area between east of the Euphrates, Black Sea basin and Northern Mesopotamia; and as to the second, Armenians had reached Anatolia with the last Indo-European migration wave of 7th century B.C. and migrated to Northern Anatolia with the collapse of the Kingdom of Phrygia.

Even if what is at stake here is not to examine thoroughly the origin of Armenian people, yet the abovementioned historical theories and/or sociocultural tools implying the very collective memory of people in question display that they perceive Anatolia as their homeland where they have been (e)radicated with regards to the actual situation of the territory.

“A nation that was chasing independence a century ago, at the cost of becoming the victim of this desire, did not lose its existence on the lands it had lived for 4 millennia, but also a large portion of its population. Today, almost a century later, when it acquired an independent state at a moment it least expected, it is now faced with the fact that the greater part of its population is outside the independent state. (...) Today, now, there is an Armenian State in the Southern Caucasia that has acquired its independence with defined borders. Therefore this is the homeland of all the Armenians living on the face of the earth. All Armenians living outside these borders are from Diaspora. However, this definition, when considered from the viewpoint of the Armenians of Turkey, does not exactly reflect the truth. After all, the Armenians of Turkey continue their existence on the ancient lands they have lived on for 4 thousand years, and

⁹⁹ Richard G. Hovannisian (1967). *Armenia on the Road to Independence*, Berkeley: University of California Press, p.1-3.

it would be wrong and deficient to define them as the Diaspora. (...) The homeland of all the Armenians dispersed across the world is Anatolia.”¹⁰⁰

Indeed, Jacques Derrida’s terms of “hospitality” and “home” are convenient in the sense of elaborating what is at stake here. The questions of where the *home(land)* is and/or whether a *home(land)* can be home of more than one peoples are strictly related to the mnemonic war which is to a large extent controlled by states. In other words, wars in history did not only define borders, but also memory, collective and socio-political, that has been taught and transmitted to successive generations by prevailing states and their apparatus. Therefore, *home(land)* is, perhaps, doomed to be speculative, even fictional to the degree that *it* is bound to be possessed both geographically and mnemonically by the prevailing party, i.e. the host of the house offering hospitality in his *home(land)*. Hospitality, Derrida writes, is certainly, necessarily, a right, a duty, an obligation, the greeting of the foreign other as a friend but on the condition that the host, the one who lodges or gives asylum remains the patron, the master of the household, on the condition that he maintains his own authority in his own home...¹⁰¹ To get to the issue, i.e. the tension between Turkish nation-state, whose foundations was laid upon CUP ideology, and Armenians in Turkey, whose ancestors has been born in Ottoman territories where is depicted as their *homeland*, Turkish state shows hospitality to Armenians in its phantasmal territory, which both sides claim it, on the condition that they yield to be guest in the *home(land)* as they have been encoded since the years starting from the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and continuing during the republican era as internal enemies having their eyes on the *home(land)* of Turks- which is the mentality that results in considering those that are not appropriate to be assimilated in Turkishness as *persona non grata*, even a internal security threat.

“The perception of Minorities as a security threat by majorities has led to the syndrome of failing to look to the future in confidence in Minorities. This type of confidence crisis can lead to the decision to leave the country,

¹⁰⁰ Hrant Dink (2014). Op.cit., p.18

¹⁰¹ Jacques Derrida (2000). “Hospitality”, *Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, Vol.5, No.3, December, p.4

or for those who remain, an unhealthy state of mind, that forces one to leave within that may take place at any time. The story of the elderly Uncle Ferman is an exemplary document of this insecure life. Uncle Ferman, who plants plenty of tomatoes and peppers, corns and sunflowers, but not a single tree in the garden of his summerhouse on the sea in Marmara Ereğlisi, explained his reason for this as follows: 'I won't, my friend. At every stage of my life, I planted trees everywhere I went, but others ended up eating their fruits. I never had the chance to. And that's why; I am not planting a single tree here. I just grow enough vegetables to keep me going, and that's all.' This mood of the citizen who feels insecure against the State that threatens its citizens within a security concept suffices to explain the severity of the situation."¹⁰²

Hrant Dink dramatically verbalizes the situation of relevantly all Armenian people in Turkey through Uncle Ferman's anecdote displaying the sense of never feeling himself at home, of being, or rather being rendered guest, in the place that he regards as *home(land)*, thus the sense of being overpowered by the feeling of insecurity in his very *home(land)*. Perhaps, the most besetting one is the latter that is to yield to and take action to resist the situation in which they have been put by the Turkish nation-state. Resistance, nevertheless, might not be always considered as a concrete and overt act, but also something like a spark of memory flashed in people's mind. This spark fires the reconstruction of counter-collective memory, the memory of peoples being rendered guests in their *home(land)*, those that have been forced to forget the memory of their ancestors, that deconstructs and reverses the discourse of the master of the *home*, where not only its own rules and regulations, but also monopolized and exclusionary collective memory. At this juncture, Hrant Dink's writings are the very resistance, as a political activity in Rancière's words, aiming at transforming what has been sunk into oblivion into living memory. In other words, his political activity comprised of his unvarnished and artless words aspires to catalyze the remembrance impeded by the state of forgetfulness. To verbalize, to pen real life stories he collected throughout his life was the way of resistance to the extent that they cracks Turkish state's phantasmatically constructed territory where Ottoman Armenians had been deterritorialized.

¹⁰² Hrant Dink (2014). Op.cit., p. 30-1.

II.III.I. Deterritorialization

Connoting not only deportation of peoples from their *home*(land), but also tearing them away from roots binding them to the *home*, such as history, memory and all kinds of material culture that allude to a specific identity, the term “deterritorialization” is strictly related to the Turkish nationalist identity politics excluding peoples according to their ethnic identity, causing them not to make themselves at *home*, questioning their belonging to that place, remembering them perpetually that the so-called rightful owners of the home are not them, and so forth. In this perspective, one can read the nation-state building process in the Anatolian territory is but the history of deterritorialization of certain groups, whose members have been regarded as those cannot be dissolved in Turkishness. Therefore, deterritorialization is realized not only within a landscape of territorial borders, but also within mindscape of all people of the *home*(land) in question as it ruptures the continuity of those deterritorialized peoples with their own history, memory, culture and its means such as language, school, religion, and so on. Nevertheless, nation-state’s deterritorialization practices and forgetting politics, concomitant of the former, such as rewriting a new national history to be transmitted by nation-state’s institutions, bodily public performances to perform in order to form docile bodies, and (re)arrangement of the public space which would be convenient to make people remember only in a way on which the state’s socio-cultural collective frameworks, as Halbwachs uses terms, or organized settings, as Barlett uses the term, is based. Nevertheless, one might say that nation-state’s all these efforts to make people forget and remember the past as it fictionalizes historiography and all other interrelated social, cultural, political and geographical contexts legitimizing the former crack one way or another just as affect-laden Anatolian expression of “the water founds its crack”.

“An elderly gentleman called me from a district of Sivas. He said ‘Son, we searched around, and we found you. There is an elderly lady here; she is one of your people as far as I can tell. She has been reunited with God’s grace. If you can, find her relatives and have them come and take her,

otherwise we will perform 'namaz' and bury her here.' 'Very well, uncle, I will found out and let you know.' I said. He gave me her full name; it was a lady called Beatrice, she was 70 years old. She was there on holiday from France. I made calls, and found her relatives in 10 minutes... After all, we know each other because we are so few. I visited their shop, and asked: "Do you know a lady by this name?" The middle-aged lady in the shop turned around and said, 'That's my mother.' She told me that she [her mother] lives in France, the she came to Turkey 3 or 4 times a year, but that she didn't always stop by in Istanbul, and that she went directly to her village she had been forced to abandon. I explained the situation to her daughter. So she got up and departed. The next day she called me up. She had found and certified her mother's identity, but then she suddenly started crying. I told her not to cry, and asked her whether she would be able to the remains of her mother here. 'Brother', she said, 'I want to bring her over, but there is an elderly gentleman here, he is telling me something else' and still crying, handed the phone over to the gentleman. I reproached the gentleman, 'Why are you making the girl crying?' I asked him. 'Son', he said, 'I said nothing... Daughter! She is your mother, she belongs to you, but if you ask me, let her stay here, let her be buried here... The water has found its crack, that's all I said.' That is when I broke down. I broke down because of this saying produced by Anatolian people. I was true, the water has found its crack..."¹⁰³

The abovementioned citation from Hrant Dink's speech, given in the international conference on the Armenian issue held in Istanbul, should be comprehended as a proof of how the social reality established phantasmatically by the nation-state itself can be shattered for good or ill even by a dead body bearing the reality itself. That lady, Beatrice, who had been forced to abandon her own *home(land)* many years ago, or rather her dead body being buried at her *home(land)* sufficed, perhaps more than words could do, to reverse the phantasm of the nation-state. Having come as a visitor from France, Beatrice, her dead body, as a ghost representing the lingering reminders of those that had been deterritorialized, reterritorialized her *home*, where she has always already belonged to and yearned for.

¹⁰³ Hrant Dink (2005). "Su Çatlağını Bulanda", *Birgün*, 15 October 2005

II.IV. SPATIAL DIMENSIONS OF FORGETTING POLITICS

Considering that nation-states build walls, of which each stone is one of the organized settings, as Barlett uses the term, or collective frameworks, as Halbwachs uses the term, rearrangement of the geography is undoubtedly the foundation stone of this wall. The national territory and its reorganization by the nation-state, in this sense, is one of the most significant tools of inculcation in the sense of making people(s) of the home/land remember and/or forget the past in a specific way. Encountering at every step a ‘significant symbol’, with which we are in interaction in our daily life, and through which we position ‘significant others’¹⁰⁴, of the society, or in other words the *home* we live in, individuals consequently find themselves in a created universe of discourse. I take here, that is the context of forgetting politics of a nation-state, the ‘significant symbol’ as toponyms hinting at specific collective frameworks or organized settings through which people remember a tailored past.

To approach the interrelation between nation-building, forgetting and toponyms, street names are of significance in the sense that they express overtly Turkish state’s underlying intention to introduce its citizens new ways of meaning-making and remembering. Accordingly, it is not surprising the toponyms especially in Kurtuluş¹⁰⁵, a neighborhood where Armenians in Turkey dwell in mostly, have explicitly ethnocentrically-exclusionist connotations, such as “Kurtuluş Street”,

¹⁰⁴ I used these two terms of “significant symbol” and “significant other” in reference to George Herbert Mead. As the founder of the symbolic interactionist school of sociology and social psychology, Mead theorizes the formation of the ‘self’ on the bases of significant symbols (i.e. language, gestures, rituals or any kind of object in a given sociality) according to which an individual gives meaning to as well as positions himself in the social reality he belongs to. As to the latter, the significant others, for Mead, are those who have a significant role in the giving sense of s/he is and shaping acts of an individual as well as a community or social group. Finally, the terms of ‘consciousness’ and ‘self-consciousness’ derive from this interaction process between individuals and symbols. On his theory in detail see: George Herbert Mead (1972). *Mind, Self and Society*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

¹⁰⁵ Formerly known as Tatavla, “horse stable” in Greek language. The neighborhood name was changed, in 1929, into Kurtuluş, which means Salvation/Liberation connoting Turkish War of Independence (1919-1923) and thus the establishment of Turkish nation-state and homogenization of the nation.

“Ergenekon Street¹⁰⁶”, “Bozkurt Street¹⁰⁷”, “Savaş Street”, “Talat Paşa¹⁰⁸ Primary School” and lastly, “Halaskargazi Street¹⁰⁹” on which Hrant Dink was assassinated in 2007 in front of premises of his newspaper, Agos. These names, as quintessence of ‘symbolic capital¹¹⁰’, as Pierre Bourdieu uses the term, are the very proof of Turkish nation-state’s symbolic violence, assimilation and Turkification politics executed toward its ethno-culturally and religiously others. The materiality of this symbolic capital and symbolic violence reified into toponyms, monuments, memorials of the urban space, has without a doubt a two-folded interpenetrating impact on people(s) of this landscape: while “the naming of places provides distinction and status to landscapes and the people associated with them”, it leads to a “discursive erasure of the other¹¹¹” in the homogenized and nationalized space.

Yet, Teresa Brennan points out this affective transmission between subjects and objects by claiming that objects cannot be categorized separately from and have

¹⁰⁶ Ergenekon legend is one of the constructive myths about the origin of Turks. According to Turkish mythology, Ergenekon is the name of a legendary valley, where Turks took refuge and were trapped for four centuries until a blacksmith created a passage by melting rock allowing the gray wolf Asena to lead them out. During the early republican period of Turkey, especially in 1930s –the years when Turkish History Thesis was written, the legend was promoted along with Turkish ethnocentrism.

¹⁰⁷ Means “Grey Wolf Street” in English. According to Turkish mythology, Turks are descended from the grey wolf and it has become in 1930s, when ethnic nationalism held its sway in Turkey, both a national and Turkish nationalists’ symbol.

¹⁰⁸ Being one of the leaders of Young Turks, Talat Paşa (Pasha) ordered on 24 April 1915 the arrest and deportation of Armenian intellectuals in Istanbul, and requested on 30 May 1915 the Temporary Deportation Law, which were the major events initiated the Armenian Genocide.

¹⁰⁹ The name connotes Turkish War of Independence (1919-1923) with its meaning of “redeemer veteran”, as a general expression, signifying peoples who retrieved the nation, Turks, from not only external enemies but also from internal ones, who, the latter, were specifically non-Muslim communities of the Ottoman Empire.

¹¹⁰ Poststructuralist sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu defines the term as follows: “Everything points to the concentration of a symbolic capital of recognized authority which, though it has been ignored by all the existing theories of the genesis of the state, appears as the condition or, at minimum, the correlate of all the other forms of concentration insofar as they endure at all. Symbolic capital is any property (any form of capital whether physical, economic, cultural or social) when it is perceived by social agents endowed with categories of perception which cause them to know it and to recognize it, to give it value... It follows that the state, which possesses the means of imposition and inculcation of the durable principles of vision and division that conform to its own structure, is the site par excellence of the concentration and exercise of symbolic power.” [Pierre Bourdieu (1998). *Op.cit.*, p.47]

¹¹¹ Derek H. Alderman (2008). *Op.cit.*, p.196.

the very affect on subjects, since they have their own energies in their own right.¹¹² However, the affect of both materiality and ideality, in other words the material existence and the existence in idea, of Turkish nation-state's phantasmal structure should be examined in two dimensions. On one hand, to the extent that these material and ideological productions delivers people of the land in question certain social frameworks, they aim at impeding individuals to tend towards counter forms of remembering. On the other hand, I suggest that, unlike the former, it results in a relative awareness of the past, a reflexive consciousness arouse from the hegemonic usage of the space, which ruptures the given collective frameworks to recollect the past. Therefore, in such a situation, I claim that Turkish nation-state's use of topography, as a stimulant topography, creates the very dialectical space for today's Armenians in Turkey to remember their past, to reinvent their own counter-collective memory and, finally, to challenge state's symbolic violence by seeking to renegotiate on the reconstruction of a more inclusive collective memory. Yet, changing the name of "Halaskargazi Street" into "Hrant Dink Street" on each 19 January, the remembrance day of Hrant Dink is the overt manifestation of the struggle to redefine what is worth to remember publicly. Although it is a one-day-long symbolic practice, this renaming practice, as a form of resistance of individuals, not only Armenians but also those challenging the nation-state's problematic collective frameworks or organized settings to make them remember in its restricted borders, is a way of opposition to Turkish state's hegemony as well as an attempt of commemoration and identity manifestation. By renaming "Hrant Dink Street", insurgents aim at introducing in the public sphere Hrant Dink who bears a symbolic meaning, especially for Armenians in Turkey, as well as his fight and dreams as the reflection of the desire for the reconstruction of a counter-hegemonic collective memory.

¹¹² See Teresa Brennan (2004). *Op.cit.*, pp.74-96.

II.V. DESIRE FOR RECONCILIATION AND RECOVERING ALL TOGETHER

As mentioned above, Hrant Dink's aim was to contribute to Turkish state's democratization, through which *demos*, as Rancière uses the term¹¹³, of this land have the equal *kratos* (strength) to participate in politics. His words and writings were his political activity seeking to produce *politics* as "it [politics], as an extremely determined activity antagonistic to policing, occurs when there is a place and way for two heterogeneous process that are *police* and *equality*."¹¹⁴ The equality, for him, is to mutual participation of people(s) of the land in the all kinds of sociopolitical, politico-spatial and cultural constructions, from history to collective memory, from public spaces to all sorts of sociocultural tools that have their own parts in our daily life. Yet, this mutual participation is grounded in the reciprocal recognition of peoples of the *home*(land). According to him, the actual situation of the Turkish nation-state, i.e. its ongoing repressive politics, in the sense of both physical and symbolic violence practices, and its statue quo policies, did not guarantee of the probability of changelessness, but there is always a hope that should not be given up. Because hope is found in the difference between possibility and probability as long as that the latter is "just a calculated anticipation authorized by the world as it is" and so that "if we follow it there is no hope."¹¹⁵ On the contrary, "to think, to try and feel, and put into words a possibility of becoming¹¹⁶" itself, seeing that 'becoming' is a never-ending process of change of the self, endless effort for establishing relationships between discrete elements of an ensemble.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ See footnote 5.

¹¹⁴ Jacques Rancière (1999). *Op.cit.*, 29-30

¹¹⁵ Mary Zournazi (2002). *Hope: New Philosophies for Change*, Section 11: A 'Cosmo-Politics'-Risk, Hope, Change- A conversation with Isabelle Stengers, Annandale: Pluto Press Australia, p.245

¹¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹¹⁷ For the theory of 'becoming', please see: Gilles Deleuze & Guattari, Félix (1987). *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

“(…) However, there are still those who haven’t yet realized the sprout beginning to grow, and still cry together ahead of the dead tree trunk... They don’t know that if they turn elegiac tears into tears of hope as well as shed tears a little over the sprout, it will get fertile.”¹¹⁸

What would fertilize the sprout is the very hope is hidden in the reciprocal dialogue, recognition and reconciliation both between each other and in ourselves. Thus, the solution is but within us, within peoples, discrete-yet-equal, shouldering the possibility of reconstructing what had already constructed. The peoples of this land with their active participation to the deconstruction of state-sponsored narratives of any nature are those who would create the ‘multitude¹¹⁹’, as Negri and Hardt uses the term, that will grow within and in opposition to the very sovereignty of the one, the state. And, what he undertook in this challenging process of deconstruction is to be curative narrator: he verbalized what had been silenced, repressed, sunk into oblivion, or rather favored to be forgotten not only before the Turkish nation-state, but also before all the peoples themselves. In this sense, what was incumbent upon him is to be the very phantom of the Turkish state as the phantom is directly concomitant of “the interpersonal and trans-generational consequences of silence.¹²⁰” By verbalizing the unspoken and silenced horrors of the previous generations, he believed in the possibility or potentiality within the multitude of peoples of this land in their uniqueness-yet-togetherness. As he wrote once in his column that “*a more democratic position and duty await us: to start together*¹²¹”, he longed for discovering “the commonality that enables us to communicate and act together¹²²”, which means to take a part all together but with our differences in the reconstruction of already constructed frameworks, social, historical, political and cultural, introduced by the

¹¹⁸ Hrant Dink (2002). “Ermenistan-Diaspora (4): Size Birse Bana Üç”, *Agos*, 24 March 2002

¹¹⁹ For Isabelle Stenger’s understanding of the term ‘event(s)’, please see: Mary Zournazi (2002). *Hope: New Philosophies for Change*, Section 11: A ‘Cosmo-Politics’- Risk, Hope, Change- A conversation with Isabelle Stengers, Annandale: Pluto Press Australia, pp.244-273

¹²⁰ Abraham, Nicholas & Torok, Maria (1994). Secrets and Posterity: The Theory of the Transgenerational Phantom, in *The Shell and the Kernel*, London: University of Chicago Press, p.168

¹²¹ Hrant Dink (2005). “Kürt Sorunu Üzerine (2): Zihniyetimizin İmla Hataları”, *Birgün*, 7 January 2005

¹²² Hardt, Michael & Antonio Negri (2004). *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*, New York: Penguin, p.xiii

Turkish state. The past, for him, was the past, while the potentiality of the ‘now’ is of importance for transformation, hope and ‘becoming’ as concomitant of the formers. This potentiality, or rather possibility of the ‘now’ is in the very ‘events’, as Stengers uses the term, that are indeed the encounters with people(s), things, spaces, ideas, and so on, which converge people toward one another, make them think and feel within new creations and connections. In this sense, Hrant Dink’s each writings, at micro level, and his discourse, at macro level, are ‘events’ in their own right as their main goal is to make people(s) of this land encounter, understand and recognize each other. As a curative narrator, he collected both his own stories, memories, anecdotes and those of other people he encountered throughout his life; penned and/or told them at every opportunity in an attempt to tell about his peoples, i.e. Armenians in Turkey, and to protect the true life experiences from oblivion; combined someone else’s stories with his own life experiences, thoughts and feelings: in short, he took the very charge of make people(s) encounter each other in the true stories of this land, make people(s) find themselves in interlines, make them empathize with others. What is more is that the words were his only weapon, the barrel of which targeted traumas of the past. And as to traumas of the past, the only way to be purified from them, for him, is to establish dialogue just as he says as follows:

*“Come; let us first understand each other...
Come; let us first respect each other’s pain...
Come; let us first make one another live...
The construction of the collective memory shared by Turks and Armenians
is the most important process ahead of us. This process is crucial for every
individual.”¹²³*

II.VI. TO BE UNCHAINED FROM TRAUMAS OF THE PAST

As a curative narrator, he took the responsibility of bringing the past into the present, but without living-in-the-past since he believed the possibilities of the

¹²³ Hrant Dink (2014). Op.cit., p.69

present, now. His discourse, therefore, has dug an affective tunnel, narrow but bright, through which peoples of this land would understand, be reconciled each other. It was narrow due to the refractory roots of the foundations of the Turkish state's nationalist and denialist wall climbing increasingly, yet he relatively managed to excavate a tunnel just as a plant growing in the interstices in the bricks of the wall. This was his way of becoming; he was becoming as he cracked this wall with his discourse, hope and belief in possibilities in the 'now', not in the agony-laden past as an impediment to recovering all together.

"...As long as we cannot shed the trauma we transmit from one generation to the next, it does not seem possible for the Armenian word to create a peaceful future. This trauma expresses our captivity in a dark section of our history. Unfortunately, we cannot bring ourselves forth from the dark section to the present day. Of course, one may ask 'what do you mean, should we forget about those days?' It is a redundant question... It is merely an illusion of those who perceive the alleviation and normalization of trauma as being equal to 'forgetting the past.' How could one forget one's own past? And why? Yet, if a nation seeks to sustain its present and future only on the basis of that dark section of the past, the how can we describe this, if not a state of trauma?"¹²⁴

As understood from the above lines, what is of significant importance when it comes to recovering from the traumas, it is not to be stuck in the past, but to release them in the present. In other words, the past was but a means for him, not an end: he profited from memories, true-life stories and experiences he collected somehow throughout his life to repair the 'now' with an 'insightful remembrance' that "makes fragments of the past visible in the present as traces work against uncritical monumentalist forms of memory and disrupt the chronological forms of history."¹²⁵ Because the 'now' was abounded, even still abounds with gaps stemming from things that have been repressed, untold, silenced within every peoples of this land. Consequently, this intersection of the past and the present contains within itself the very potentiality in order that repressed memories of the past would be liberated in the present. This potentiality itself contains the

¹²⁴ *ibid.*, p.86

¹²⁵ Rody Rank (2000). *Op.cit.*, p.203

possibility of becoming, line of flight, in Deleuzian sense of the terms, as a site of resistance. His resistance was the discursive realm he created with his writings and words tracking the historical materialist understanding of the history and past in opposition to historicism anchoring the hopeless past to the hopeful present. His understanding of historical materialism, in Benjaminian sense, is quite apparent in one of the abovementioned quotations as well: “*They [those who cries ahead of the dead tree trunk] don’t know that if they turn elegiac tears into tears of hope as well as shed tears a little over the sprout, it will get fertile.*”¹²⁶ In short, he was resisting the wall built by the Turkish state, the bricks of which are the very nationalism-laden collective frameworks (Halbwachs) or organized settings (Barlett), the discourse of the nation-state with his own way of verbalization, simple but affective; he was crating his own realm of becoming while fighting for providing basis for dialogue, reciprocal understanding and thus equality between all peoples of this land. His fight was to reconstruct an inclusionist, or rather polyphonic the collective memory.

*“We lived on these lands for a long time, we have a collective memory. However, we have transformed our collective memory into memories that only have a single voice. Both sides are marching to their own tune. Yet why should we not transform the monologue into a dialogue, and reconstruct our collective memory? (...) In an environment of a dialogue, neither discourses of denial, nor impositions for an apology would be necessary. What’s more, this dialogue itself would constitute a process of apology in itself.”*¹²⁷

II.VII. FIGHTING FOR RECONSTRUCTION OF A NEW COLLECTIVE MEMORY

His desire for the reconstruction of a new collective memory was based on mutual understanding and recognition of the other through dialogue of different participants, i.e. people of this land. Yet, this is what Hans-Georg Gadamer

¹²⁶ Hrant Dink (2002). “Ermenistan-Diaspora (4): Size Birse Bana Üç”, *Agos*, 24 March 2002

¹²⁷ Hrant Dink (2000). “Ne İstiyoruz?”, *Agos*, 10 November 2000

referred to as ‘dialogue’ within his understanding of hermeneutics. Being considered as the activity of interpreting a context belonging to another world into the world we live in, the hermeneutics, in Gadamerian sense, is rooted in the dialogue, which results in understanding the Other –whether an individual/a group of people or a text. This Gadamerian dialogue existentially consists within itself the preconditions of openness to other’s discourse, which is to a certain extent paves the path for creating a new language and/or discourse all together as the participants of the dialogue process. As being opened to the Other’s words, each participant in this dialogic process would thus find himself/herself in an intersubjective relationship between oneself and the Other- this intersubjectivity, yet, includes not only the understanding of the Other, but also self-understanding to the degree that one finds himself/herself in a process of self-questioning while revising and breaking deep-seated prejudices that are constructed in a given social, historical, political and cultural backgrounds. Nevertheless, in opposition to the negative meaning we have attached to it, prejudices are of constructive characteristic in the sense that they cultivate our scope of understanding; without readily limiting the freedom, they can bridge the familiar world we inhabit and the unfamiliar meanings (Otherness) that resist being incorporated into our own. Thereby, in each dialogue we entered into, we form, or rather enlarge our horizon with the words of the Other.¹²⁸ The horizon built upon a given context of the past would be rendered more comprehensive in conformity with the present context, which in turn creates the fusion of horizons, in the very intersection of which there would be the genuine understanding. Considering his insistence on the establishment of a dialogue among peoples of this land, I suggest that Hrant Dink was inviting the Turkish state and those that are incorporated its ideology to a dialogue even if there were no interlocutor most often than not. As the Other of

¹²⁸ For detailed information on Hans-Georg Gadamer’s theory of hermeneutics, please see: Chris Lawn & Keane, Niall (2011). *The Gadamer Dictionary*, London & New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, and Scherto Gill (2015). “Holding Oneself Open in a Conversation- Gadamer’s Philosophical Hermeneutics and the Ethics of Dialogue”, *Journal of Dialogue Studies*, Vol.3 No.1, Spring 2015, pp.9-28.

the Turkish state, even the most prominent figure of the Otherness, he was verbalizing a counter-(hi)story as exact opposite of The Turkish History Thesis.

“Although the official Turkish History Thesis tries to state that Armenians were deported from only a certain area of Anatolia, and that particularly the Armenians in Erzurum-Van region, which might have collaborated with the Russians, were exiled from that area, this does not reflect the truth. Armenians were exiled from almost every region of Anatolia. The claim ‘Armenians were not touched at all in Istanbul’ cannot be considered a well-intentioned comment, either. Before the deportations that began in May 1915 in Anatolia, on April 24, with an operation that begun in Istanbul, within a single night, the leaders and the intellectuals of the Armenian nation were rounded up, sent off to an unknown destination, and destroyed. The main reason the deportation in May could not be implemented in Istanbul was the fact that it was in too close view of consulates and embassies. To unequivocally express this fact is, then, is a debt to humanity: The occasion of World War I was also used to expel the Armenians from their homeland, and in words of Armenian historians, ‘an attempt was carried out to uproot Armenians from Anatolia.’”¹²⁹

“At first, the story went, it was if no Armenians had lived on these lands... The Dolmabahçe Palace was not built by the Armenian Balyan after all, it was the Italian Bali. A city called ‘Ani’ did not exist... ‘Ani’ was the name. So let’s say they had lived, but they had gone too far... And since that was the case, they had been compassionately forced to cave in and migrate... Then, it was just one of those things, they had perished along the way due to disease... After all, they were some sort of human beings... It was a shame, of course... Some of them had died, true, but they had killed many... Then? There is no then... To sum up, something had happened, but those things were... Unfounded, after all.”¹³⁰*

These sayings of Hrant Dink, his claims that Armenians were not deported only from a certain of area, but from all over today’s national topography; the symbolic date of the Armenian Genocide, April 24, was but the beginning of the massacres; Armenians were deterritorialized from, or at least forced to survive as a ‘guest’ in their *home*(land); there were many Armenians, just as Balyan was only one of

¹²⁹ Hrant Dink (2014). Op.cit., p.27-8

* A ruined Armenian city situated in the province of Kars, Turkey, Ani is not accepted as toponym of the historic site by some Turkish state representatives and sometimes one can encounter that they refer to this city as “Anı” (by removing the dot on the last letter of the word), which means memory in Turkish.

¹³⁰ Hrant Dink (2003). “İnkardan İkrara”, *Agos*, 23 May 2003

them, who made undeniable social, cultural, artistic and architectural contributions to these lands; these lands are full of Armenian cities, ruined or not, inherited from Armenian dynasties, just as Ani is but one of them; Armenians who had been exiled were forced to be perished along the way of Deir ez-Zor due to disease, yes, but this was one of the tactics of the regime had decided on; and finally, too many things had happened, too many people, families suffered, and all these must be remembered and recognized all together, are in any case constituents of the counter-collective memory. His claims, to put differently, are the very call to dialogue, in Gadamerian sense, to the degree that they are the voice of Other, the voice that invite the interlocutors to widen their horizon, to release their prejudgments constrained by the past narratives. On the contrary, the present contains in itself all the possibilities, potentialities for establishing dialogue between peoples of this land, which will be the very beginning of the change itself. And, this change would be the very language of peace.

“In such a meeting, where people discuss how to establish peace, how can we establish the genuine peace if we still build our togetherness and fraternity on blood we shed together in the past, immerse ourselves in lumpen jargon of nationalist discourses, and if we still don’t develop a discourse on togetherness on the basis of producing and creating rather than of destroying and killing? Are we still going to build our prospective togetherness on the basis of the nostalgia of bloodsheds? If one of the friends you invited here to ‘talk peace together’ were an Armenian just as I am, wouldn’t he ask you now: Whose blood you shed? Despite a passed century, don’t you feel ashamed to still make use of the blood you shed as today’s glue?”¹³¹

Therefore, the language of togetherness and fraternity is embedded in the ‘now’, not in the past. The present itself contains the possibility of dialogue, or simply the action of talking as a discursively pregnant ‘event’, in the sense of Stegers uses the term, demanding and creative process, by which diverse people encounter and converge toward one another, thus in consequence of which their horizon widen, fuse, coincide one way or another. And, in this very intersection, time

¹³¹ Hrant Dink (1999). “Açtırmayın Kutuyu”, *Agos*, 23 July 1999.

dilates with the capacity of feeling and thinking the Other, that is with empathy. In short, let people talk, let people understand each other.

“I have written anything, up to now, about the history itself regarding the Armenian question. Not because I don’t know history or I forbore to write, on the contrary, I accumulated quite lot knowledge about the issue, read a lot, specifically in a comparative way. However, I believe that, at this stage, the issue of ‘how to look to history’ is of more importance than ‘discuss the history’, and that we should endeavour to realize the former. Because if discussing history necessitates documents, looking to history necessitates an ethics. At this state, we need more ethics than documents. Document is meaningless as long as there is no ethics. The principal name of the ethics concerning to the Armenian question is empathy. (...) I’m insisting on the necessity of the reconstruction of the collective memory between Turkish and Armenian societies...”¹³²

His insistence on changing the way we look at history, rather than focusing on documents, is just because of the reason that he knew that any peoples of these lands should not be stuck in the past, in numbers, in dates and whatsoever. And, 1915 was one of among others that one should face it, acknowledge and set free in an attempt to breath the ‘now.’ This is undoubtedly not equal to forgetting the past, unrecognized past agonies. Nevertheless, talking what had happened in 1915 should not be an end, but a mean to make this two close peoples, Armenians and Turks, to face with their past. On one hand, Turks would acknowledge the past with its bare facts as they hear the voice of the Other, the history of the Other, and Armenians would free themselves from traumas of the past as they break the silence, remember, talk, and make peace with their past, on the other. Consequently, both peoples would recover from the burdens of the past on their own right. The (hi)story of the Other goes as following with its all counter-statements reversing or destructing official history thesis:

“Tailor Sarkis, baker Artin, carpenter Keğam, mason Mikhitar and many others have survived this big exile with their families. They stayed and lived in Zara. But, let’s see how? Firstly, they converted all together in*

¹³² Hrant Dink (2005). “Ahlak Belge Gerektirmiyor”, *Agos*, 18 March 2005.

*A town and a district of Sivas province.

Muslim, changed their names. Sarkis became Zeki, Artin became Ali, Keğam became Kenan, Mikhitar became Hakki... They've lost their lands, fields, houses and whatsoever they had. Their property deeds were erased in a day. The church in Zara was transformed into hay storage. In short, the matter of being able to live, or to sustain made them desperately forget everything. They become regular at the mosque.”¹³³

As to the recovery of Armenians of these lands, the key that will unlock the shackles of the identity relies on not to be stuck in 1915, i.e. not to forget it but to exceed its limits to the extent that the truth of the past does not depend on political agenda of the states, their official acknowledgment or denial, but on genuine memories, discourses, speeches or any other discursive material, in written or oral, that would not only keep the truth alive, but also call peoples to dialogue and widen horizons.

II.VIII. SETTING THE ARMENIAN IDENTITY FREE OF ITS SHACKLES

Saying that the date 1915 is, perhaps, the constituent of Armenian identity would not be a misinterpretation. As a breaking point in the construction of the identity, the memory, or rather the trauma of 1915 is quite active with all of its residuals not only that are transmitted among generations, but also that are lapsed into silence. Yet, silence, likewise the oral transmission of memories, is a form of transmission of the past. To put it differently, what has been untold affects the construction of the collective identity as much as what has been told does. Leaving behind the traces of loss, 1915 and its inter-generationally transmitted trauma has been coded as the victimization of the Armenians within their culture and collective identity. In this sense, the Armenian collective identity is incarcerated in psychic state, where the aporia of the mourning, ‘impossibility of the possibility of mourning’, as Marc Nichanian puts it, impedes agency of the subject as the things that had been experienced have shattered the speech as well

¹³³ Hrant Dink (1996). “Yaşamın Sürdürülebilirliği mi?”, *Agos*, 14 June 1996.

as the sense, and damaged the articulation of the language, that is to say the ability to retell things that (had) happened.¹³⁴ Nonetheless, this does not mean that the traumatized subject would not be able to make an effort to retell his own or his ancestors' story to give them a sense, which indeed an attempt to transform the past into something that can be symbolized, to turn the blood into meaning that would lead to the possibility of mourning in its impossibility. An effort to retell the traumatic past, to recall and make others recall it would be, in this sense, a curative attempt. In other words, to put the past trauma on paper or to verbalize it, as many survivors of 1915 and their descendants did, can be considered as attempts to transform the victim into an agent, or rather the victimization of a nation into agency as long as the act of recalling the past serves to repair the articulation of the language, the shattered speech, inability to symbolize the trauma, and thus to reconstruct the collective identity on the basis where the traumatic past finds meaning in the psyche of subjects. However, if this trauma would be the only basis, or rather the main constituent of the aforementioned reconstruction of the collective identity, this would be problematic since the agent, emancipated subject who is not dependent on the determinism of the trauma but who transformed this inherited trauma into creativity, is nowhere but in the present. One of the statements of Hrant Dink elucidates this very problematic issue in the attempt to reconstructing the Armenian collective identity:

*“For instance, (...) the frequent readers of this column know very well that I would rather say ‘Don’t search the Armenian identity only in the graves of 1915’ instead of ‘Don’t search the Armenian identity in the graves of 1915.’”*¹³⁵

¹³⁴ For detailed information about Marc Nichanian's politico-philosophical thinking about the trilogy of *the Catastrophe*, implying the Armenian Genocide in Nichanian's terminology, its affect and the aporia of mourning, please see: Marc Nichanian (2003). "Catastrophic Mourning", in *Loss: The Politics of Mourning*, David L. Eng & David Kazanjian (eds.), London: University of California Press, pp.99-124 and Marc Nichanian (2009). *The Historiographical Perversion*, New York: Columbia University Press.

¹³⁵ Hrant Dink (2002). "Tepe Tepe Kullanım –Ermenistan-Diaspora (7)", *Agos*, 26 April 2002

As a curative narrator, Hrant Dink's goal was to build a dialogic basis on which peoples of these lands face the past with all of its paranoid and traumatic attachments, talk together the past, collectively and inclusively reconstruct the collective memory in which everyone can find a piece of oneself, and consequently recover all together from the damages of the past. His dream was to make peace between these two close-yet-distant peoples, Armenians and Turks. The past, without doubt, is the key element for the recovery, the roots of which is embedded in the way of how these two peoples would be reconciled with their own trauma and paranoia.

*"(...) This is why I always say, 'In terms of their relationship with each other, Armenians and Turks are like two clinical cases.' One with its paranoia, the other with its trauma. This is an accurate analysis."*¹³⁶

One's paranoia, other's trauma... Both are the psychic attachment of these two close-yet-distant peoples. However, what is problematic here is that the collective identity of both Turks and Armenians, especially those in diaspora, feeds off their psychic attachments. As the constitutive Other of each other, Turkish and Armenian collective identity have been constructed upon this antagonistic-yet-dialectic relationship, which is the problematic itself as both sides appeal to one another for recovery from their own psychic attachments –one side hopes that the other recognize the truth whereas the other hopes that its other do not claim the truth of the past and undermines its nationalistic rhetoric. However, although the full recovery is a two-layered process where both sides are interdependent one another to get rid of their psychic attachments, this does not mean that they, or even one of the sides, cannot unshackle itself from its Other and, thus set free itself.

"There are two apparent ways for that the Armenian identity be set free from the 'Turk.' (...) The second way is that the Armenian itself disposes of the impact of the 'Turk' from its own identity. In contrast with the first way, this second is more feasible as it is more dependent on its own will

¹³⁶ Hrant Dink (2014). Op.cit., p.100

*and initiative. The way that the Armenian world achieves this is completely related to its ability to look at the current situation from a new point of view. For instance, looking at 1915... Armenian world is aware of the reality of the historic drama they experienced and this reality would not be changed whether the world countries or Turkey accepts it or not. Whether they accept it or not, this reality is engraved from the very beginning in the conscience of the Armenian nation. So, expecting that neither from the world nor from Turkey to accept this reality would be the only aim of the Armenian world. Yet, the time to leave everyone alone with their own conscience has already come.*¹³⁷

This analysis of Hrant Dink on the Armenian identity, including Armenians from all over the world, both from Turkey, Armenia and diaspora, made him the target of the Turkish state. Perhaps, as the only person who was verbalizing Armenians' the state of mind, i.e. the psyche of the Armenian nation attributing its recovery to the official acknowledgement of the truth of the past by others, especially by the Turkish state, Hrant Dink became the subject of a harsh edict by the General Staff, sued with the accusations of 'insulting Turkishness', convicted to six months of imprisonment regardless of the opposing expert opinion, became the target of discriminative and hatred-laden mass media propaganda because of a statement he wrote down in his following column series treating the Armenian identity: "*Once the 'Turk' has been removed, we shall see, in the place of that poisonous blood, good clean blood running through the arteries that Armenians create with Armenia.*"¹³⁸ What he was trying to explain is but the message to the Armenians from all over the world – the message that attributing the recovery from the trauma of 1915, the trauma holding the Armenian psyche captive, to the its constructive Other, especially to the Turkish nation, would be but the captivity itself; that reconstruction of the salubrious collective identity is embedded in the Armenian subjectivity itself, that is "*shouldering the agony and bearing it proudly until the Armageddon, if needed.*"¹³⁹

¹³⁷ Hrant Dink (2004). "'Türk'ten Kurtulmak- Ermeni Kimliği Üzerine (7)", *Agos*, 30 January 2004

¹³⁸ Hrant Dink (2004). "Ermenistan'la Tanışmak –Ermeni Kimliği Üzerine (8)", *Agos*, 13 February 2004

¹³⁹ Hrant Dink (2004). "'Türk'ten Kurtulmak- Ermeni Kimliği Üzerine (7)", *Agos*, 30 January 2004

As he said once that there are still those who haven't yet realized the sprout beginning to grow and who have been elegiacally crying, as it were, ahead of the dead tree trunk, i.e. the graves of 1915, Fethiye Çetin, his lawyer, would be writing these lines after his assassination in 2007:

“Among the victims of the great catastrophe that Ottoman Armenians lived through in 1915, there were many journalists and writers as well, who had not even thought to continue their struggle by no other means than pen. Today, we are sending Hrant Dink next to these bright persons, to Taniel Varujan, Krikor Zohrab and others. They had not had even a gravestone. Henceforth, we are going to drench Hrant Dink's grave with tears we will shed in the name of one and all.”¹⁴⁰

And, as to the issue that Hrant Dink touched on by referring to those who still shed tears for 1915, the dead tree trunk, instead of over the nascent sprout splitting the soil; the issue that how much and to what extent Armenians in Turkey, young and old, succeed in watering this sprout is the subject of the next chapter, through which I will be analyzing, on the basis of Hrant Dink's writings and discourses, the practices of remembering and reconstructing a new collective memory as the counter-memory opposing and challenging the Turkish state's nationalistic discourse penetrating all the capillaries of the society.

¹⁴⁰ Fethiye Çetin (2007). “Gecikmiş Yas”, *Milliyet*, 26 March 2007

CHAPTER III

REMEMBRANCE OF THE PAST AND RECONSTRUCTION OF A COUNTER-COLLECTIVE MEMORY THROUGH HRANT DINK

In accordance with the previous chapter in which I analysed Hrant Dink's writings and discourses that gives us the very clues of his fight for justice, which is rooted in the tension between recognition of the Armenian past and changing the present, I will be analysing throughout this last chapter the affect of Hrant Dink, the affect-laden mnemonic realm coming into existence particularly aftermath of his death, on today's Armenians living in Turkey. Thus, this last chapter accordingly will be in search of how and to what extent Hrant Dink's discursive fight that is counter to the Turkish state's denialist narrative of the past overlaps and captures Armenians' dispersedly floating signifiers of past memories.

III.I. METHODOLOGY

In this context, I conducted 15 in-depth interviews with Armenians in Turkey belonging to three different age categorizations – elders, middle age and young Armenians. Dividing them into this three age cohorts, I relied on the “theory of generation” posed by Karl Mannheim in order to comprehend and compare their thoughts about the past, the way how they bring the past into present and with which intention they do so, the effect of Hrant Dink's himself on their identity formation both during his life and aftermath of his death as well as on their political stance concerning the past and present, i.e. claiming the truth of the past and their involvement, overt and/or covert, in actual acts intending to change the present, to construct a new and more inclusive collective memory before the Turkish state, and the meaning of the assassination of Hrant Dink in their own eyes.

Before proceeding with the analysis of the in-depth interviews, it would be worthy to elaborate Mannheim's theory of generation I relied on to classify my interviewees throughout my fieldwork. In his famous article called “The Problem

of Generations”, Karl Mannheim problematized the phenomenon of generation while he sought to determine the criteria for describing a generation, which indeed cannot be reduced only into a biological approach, that is chronology of year of birth. Unlike the positivist approaches to the concept of generation, he suggested that it is more than conceptualization based on age cohorts, and one should not underestimate the impacts of socio-political and socio-historical events individuals experience in their life. In other words, the in the phenomenon of generation, historical, social and political conditions are much more determinant in describing what a generation is than the chronology of individuals’ year of birth. Therefore, belonging to the same generation, to put it differently, to be in the same “generation status”, as he used the term, corresponds to sharing the same generation location, which means that one must be born within the same historical and cultural region in order to be able passively to undergo or actively to use specific handicaps and privileges.¹⁴¹ However, in his three-folded theory of generation, this abovementioned ‘generation status’ is but a generic concept underlying the importance of the ‘generation location’ rather than the chronology of births. The following two concepts he suggested, i.e. ‘generation as actuality’ and ‘generation unit’, are, perhaps, much more helpful to envisage the phenomenon of generation. The former concept, generation as actuality, involving even more than mere co-presence in such a historical and social location, is formed by the individuals who participate in the common destiny of this socio-historical unit, which means that they should experience the same concrete socio-historical processes or incidents, be exposed to the social and intellectual symptoms of a process of dynamic destabilization and, consequently, be influenced passively or actively by this destabilization process. This dimension of experiencing a same concrete socio-historical process is the dimension transforming the *potentiality* into *actuality*, in other words the generation status into actual generation. And, as to the generation unit, which necessitates a much more concrete bond than the former, implies those experiencing the same concrete historical problems –the criterion of forming actual generation- while they, within

¹⁴¹ Karl Mannheim (1952). Op.cit., p. 303

the same actual generation which work up the material of their common experiences in different specific ways, constitute separate units.¹⁴²

In the abovementioned context of Mannheim's theory of generation, I accordingly divided my interviewees into three different generational categories, and had *at least* five in-depth interviews from each generational category. Considering that the 1st generation, that is those who survived the Armenian Genocide, is not alive today, my generational categories start from the 2nd generation:

- 2nd generation; those who did not experience 1915, but who are the children of survivors
- 3rd generation; those who are grandchildren of survivors and who experienced the acts of violence of the Republican era such as the Twenty Classes (*20 Kur'a Askerlik*) during the World War II years, Wealth Tax in 1942, Istanbul pogrom of September 6-7, 1955 and the assassination of Hrant Dink in 2007
- 4th generation; those who experienced the assassination of Hrant Dink in the flesh for the first time as an act of violence against Armenians in Turkey.

As I mentioned above, I conducted five in-depth interviews with each generation apart from several conversations with the individuals I met in my field, such as street protests and demonstrations, marches, commemorations and Camp Armen resistance. I must confess that it was not a simple fieldwork, as many Armenians, young and old, do not prefer taking a part in a research focusing on the past memories. Therefore, I was rejected by a considerable amount of people I asked to make an interview with. However, it would be worthy to underline that 3rd and 4th generations are overtly more inclined to express their thought in contrast with the 2nd generation. So, the most difficult part of my fieldwork was perhaps to find interviewees from this 2nd generation. Yet, I managed to find some volunteer elders thanks to my Armenian friends, who asked their grandparents to make an

¹⁴² *ibid.*, p.304

interview with me, and thanks to one of my interviewee from 3rd generation, who referred me to a rest home preferred generally by non-Muslim population. However, even they volunteered to talk to me, many of them preferred keeping their silence and not making a point though, notably when it comes to the past, i.e. the memories about their (grand)parents. I might say that the past, for them, was a sheer taboo- even some of my interviewees from this 2nd generation did not want to talk about Hrant Dink since he implies, as far as I intuited while talking to them, the very past in their eyes. Nevertheless, their silence and vague expressions reveals in no small measure their attitudes toward the past. Besides, as to the 3rd and 4th generation, but especially the latter generation, they were relatively willing to express their thoughts, talk and face the past. Indeed, I met many of them by coincidence at protests and marches I participated in. Yet, their attendance shows as well that these 3rd and 4th generations are likely to speak out and take their part bodily and mentally in the construction of the counter-discourse engendered aftermath of the death of Hrant Dink.

After having elaborated the background of my interviewees and my fieldwork experiences, I want to underline that what I took in consideration in the context of generational categorization is the assassination of Hrant Dink since it is first historical moment, which can even be regarded as a relative destabilization process in the society, that a considerable amount of Armenian living in Turkey experienced in the flesh. In this sense, as Mannheim did, I also take in to account to a large extent the socio-historical and socio-political events my interviewees have been experiencing rather than their year of birth with the aim of fathoming the affect of Hrant Dink himself, but specifically his assassination, on today's Armenians in Turkey. Furthermore, in this generational categorization, it is worthy to indicate that what is important is not that my interviewees, most particularly those in the 3rd generation, experienced in person the socio-historical and political events in question, such as the Twenty Classes, Istanbul pogrom, and so forth. To put it differently, what I gave importance is not that, for instance, whether my interviewee had been exposed to Wealth Tax or conscripted into the

army, which means that he/she can also be in his/her childhood during these incidents, but that they, child, teenager or adult, were all in the same boat, influenced by the same socio-historical and political atmosphere of the time. I problematize, in this manner, how generations are effected by sociopolitical and historical events; how they interpret the past both with the memories they inherited from their elders and with their own experiences; the role of Hrant Dink's writings and discourses in this individual interpretation process as well as his assassination in the act of people's recollecting the past and bringing it into the present. Therefore, the subtopics that will be discussed throughout this chapter are mainly the sense of belonging to these lands, the post-memory they inherited from their (grand)parents and their affect, the relation between the past and the self, and the figure of Hrant Dink in their understanding, that is how they describe him and his efforts, the changes he brought about in themselves including the (re)construction of their identity, ethnic and political, attitude they have towards the past, and so forth.

III.II. SENSE OF BELONGING

In the previous chapter, I have mentioned the notion of belongingness with the elaboration of Derridian terms of 'home', 'hospitality', conditional and unconditional, and the relationship between the sovereign and so-called guest before the master of the home. Moreover, we have also seen how Hrant Dink, through his writings and speeches, was trying to, or rather fighting for making peoples of these lands -he was addressing notably those who have interiorized the narrative, historiography and, consequently, collective memory inculcated by the Turkish nation-state on the basis of Turkish nationalism- remember the coexistence of these ethnic and religious others of the society for many centuries on the same land. As an Armenian who is aware of the history of his society, of his ancestors and of these lands, he was saying what many Armenians in Turkey could not say: *"The Armenians really do have their eyes on this country, this*

*land, because this is where our roots are. But do not worry- they do not want to take this land, they just want to back to this land, to sink deep inside it...*¹⁴³” He wrote these sentences right after a true-life story he gave place in one of his columns- the story of an old Armenian women, living in France and coming each summer to where she belonged to, her *home(land)* that she had been forced to abandon, Sivas, who died during her last visit to her village. He wrote this story, in which he also takes part, with the aim of deeply meaningful message – “*the water finds its crack.*” It is true; the water always finds sooner or later its crack. He was claiming his roots, the roots of the Armenians, in order that his society is recognized not as a guest, but *one of* the hosts of this home.

In fact, all of my interviewees are aware of the fact that they belong to here, to these lands where their parents, grandparents, even grand grandparent were born in. All of them consider themselves as one of the ancient peoples of these lands. Young and old alike told me about their family tree, from the oldest family member they know to their youngest grandchildren; all the members of their family was born in these lands. However, what is interesting in their family story is that although almost none of them are originally from Istanbul, they all immigrated somehow, by force, compulsorily or voluntarily, to Istanbul and many of them have never gone to their original *home(land)* ever since. Dersim, Sasun, Bitlis, Diyarbakir, Van, and so on became but a nominal *home(land)* for them, while Istanbul is the terminus for them. Besides, one hears many other city names in their expressions, which are neither their original homeland nor the places they currently live in, but the way stations, i.e. the cities they had to immigrate forcefully because of the Turkish state’s demographic implementation, the aim of which is to Islamize the geography, to assimilate non-Muslim population remained after the Word War I (1914-1918) and the Turkish War of Independence (1919-1923). As to the interviewees mentioning these cities of exile, they were mostly those from 3rd generation, especially whose ancestors were originally from Dersim geography and sent into exile during the Dersim Massacres of 1938. I

¹⁴³ Hrant Dink (2005). “Su Çatlağını Bulanda”, *Birgün*, 15 October 2005

might say for those who were born in these way stations, as it were, that is the cities of exile, the post-memory of 1938 is much more alive in contrast with the memory of 1915. In addition, one realizes mostly in the expressions of this group of interviewees, who were born in the exile, the sense of being *in-between*: neither they feel like they belong to their original homeland, be it cities in Dersim geography, nor to the city of exile they were born in or to Istanbul. Nevertheless, although they have relatively ambivalent feelings about their *home(land)*, one cannot say likewise when it comes to their sense of belonging: all of them were insisting that they belong to these lands, that their ancestors had been born and had died in this land, just like the expressions of the other generations.

Having said that, we should not omit to mention one thing: the interviewees from the 2nd generation are much more pessimistic while they were saying they belong to this country. One of my interviewee was saying “*Does it matter to them when I say I’m from here? They’ve already categorized us in such a way that we don’t belong here! I’m a foreigner according to them. But, where I belong to if my parents and grandparents’ graves are under this soil? Well, their grave has been already ruined though...*” Taking into consideration their age –the youngest interviewee from 2nd generation is 75 years old; we should not perhaps be surprised by their air of nonchalance.

And finally, unlike the 2nd generation, my interviewees from 4th generation were quite self-assertive: one does not see among the members of this generation any sense of being in-between or apathy toward their *home(land)*, but an insistence and emphasis on where they belong to. Many of them were saying that people consider them as they are from Armenia and that they insistently try to tell people that they belong to these lands. Surprisingly, almost all of them know their family stories, the names and memories of their grandparents, even their grand grandparents. Having said that, one intuitively feels from their expressions the anxiety, or rather the sense of uneasiness: one of my interviewee telling me like “*Sometimes I find myself thinking like perhaps I’d better carry my passport with me in case of*

need that we got to go suddenly. Sometimes I find myself making plans like this. I think what if something happens and we got to leave here... It's such a feeling that we don't have much time here." Or, one can read this uneasiness in the words of another interviewee of mine: "*This weekend certain people chanted slogans of 'Cizre Kürtlere, Kurtuluş Ermenilere mezar olacak'¹⁴⁴ This is what makes me scared; yet we always live with a feeling like pigeon-like unease. Even if you're a native pigeon, if I may say so, you suddenly become a migrant pigeon."*

To sum up, even if all of my interviewees were expressing that they belong to this country, to these lands, where their ancestors had been born in, their expressions concerning the sense of belonging is yet problematic. To feel at home, in Derridian sense, is a two-folded sense: it has subjective and intersubjective aspects at the same time. On one hand, one can consider a land as his own *home(land)*, which is the subjective facet, but his assertion should also be affirmed by the other, which makes the sense of feeling at home an intersubjective issue. Therefore, this sense of belonging is a sense developed through the tension between the individual himself and others' judgments about that individual in question. What is the most determinant in this sense of belonging to a land is not, perhaps, the self but those that one lives *with* in the land in question. Considering the nation-building process, the Turkish nation-state is established on the very so-called absence of the Ottoman Armenian. One might consider the Catastrophe, i.e. the Armenian Genocide, as the destruction and the reconstruction of the *home(land)*, where the survivors would be rendered guests under the domination of the sociocultural and political hegemony of the newly established Turkish state. Of course, I do not assert that Armenians as well as other non-Muslim communities had been regarded completely as the co-owners of the *home(land)*; we know that 1915 is neither the first nor the last state violence against the population that have been regarded as not capable of being assimilated in the Turkishness. But, what makes 1915 different from the preceding acts of violence is that it was not an intention to exterminate the Armenian population massively,

¹⁴⁴ Cizre will be grave to Kurds, Kurtuluş to Armenians.

which would comprise not only the physical extermination, but also economic, cultural, social, political and religious suppression of those who were going to survive the genocide. Consequently, the *home* would be no longer the same *home* thereafter: the Armenian *society* with its considerable amount of population would be shrunk to a *community*; their economic, political, sociocultural and artistic productivity would be killed and made infertile. Their presence, or rather accommodation in their *home(land)* would be subjected to the *condition of* lapsing into silence, forgetting the past and incorporating the denialist narrative of the past of the newly established sovereignty of the Turkish state, in short, acting as a docile and respectful guest in the *home*. The abovementioned condition indeed is the very reason of this the feeling of being in-between; the situation of knowing where your *home(land)* is and where you belong to, but never feeling completely comfortable as you are at home; to state of being always on the qui vive, watchful and alert – in a word the psychical uneasiness. Yet, this is what Hrant Dink wrote in his last column about his lawsuit process concerning Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code:

*“(...) Curiosity and uneasiness...
I am just like a pigeon...
I am as obsessed as a pigeon about what is happening around me.
I keep turning my head like a pigeon.
And here is the cost for you.
(...) That must be what they call a matter of “life-or-death.” I could have resisted out of my own will, but I do not have the right to put my loved ones into danger.
(...) If I said, ‘Let’s go’ they would go; if I said ‘Let’s stay’ they would stay.
We were the ones who volunteered to transform the hell they lived into heavens...
We were going to stay and we were going to resist.
If, however, we would be forced to leave one day... We would hit the road just like people did in 1915... Like our ancestors... Without knowing where we are going... Walking the roads they walked on... Feeling the ordeal, experiencing the pain... (..) Yes, I may feel like I have the spiritual unease of a pigeon, but I do know that people do not harm pigeons in this country.
Pigeons lead their lives deep into the cities, among people.
Yes, somewhat timid, but just as free.”¹⁴⁵
Yes, pigeons are the very part of cities, they are free to fly, perch on everywhere they want, though they are always timid, feels the unease lest they will be hurt by*

¹⁴⁵ Hrant Dink (2009). “Ruh Halimin Güvercin Tedirginliği”, *Agos*, 19 January 2009

anybody even if they know people do not harm pigeons in this country. Nevertheless, they know somehow they were forced to abandon their places, their nests were ruined, and even they were slaughtered. Perhaps those who were killed are not themselves, but their ancestors. Therefore, people could harm pigeons in this country; they know it inwardly as they listened many stories, read many memoirs like this. Otherwise, why do they feel this unease? Yes do feel, because they inherited the unease from their parents and/or grandparents. This is the very unease of the traumatic past, the memory of which is still alive yet to a certain extent dim. They feel uneasy because of feeling completely not at *home*; they know inwardly that they are like guests of this land since they experienced it many times; they know that people sometimes shoo them away. They saw it for many times, experienced it in the flesh. Many of them could not find the places where they shooed out; could not find the nests their families made, the trees they perched, the grasslands they were soaring above... They were right to feel insecure against people. Because they people make them feel this or that way that they are the masters of the land while pigeons are invisible, unobtrusive guests of the land. Just as Uncle Ferman complaining about the insecurity of his life in these lands:

“Uncle Ferman, who plants plenty of tomatoes and peppers, corns and sunflowers, but not a single tree in the garden of his summerhouse on the sea in Marmara Ereğlisi, explained his reason for this as follows: ‘I won’t, my friend. At every stage of my life, I planted trees everywhere I went, but others ended up eating their fruits. I never had the chance to. And that’s why; I am not planting a single tree here. I just grow enough vegetables to keep me going, and that’s all.’ This mood of the citizen who feels insecure against the State that threatens its citizens within a security concept suffices to explain the severity of the situation.”¹⁴⁶

This is how Uncle Ferman was coping with the sense of never feeling at *home*; he stopped growing perennial trees if he would not eat their fruits, if he would be forced once again to abandon his *lands*. He had been forced to do so for many times: his ancestors, as he says, have been living, since Adam and Eve until 1938, in the neighborhood called Kitoro in Mutki district of Bitlis. They had orchards.

¹⁴⁶ Hrant Dink (1998). “Ferman’in Dermanı”, *Agos*, 15 May 1998

Due to the Sheikh Said rebellion, troops on one hand and brigands on the other bombed their arable fields, looted houses so that they could not live there anymore... They were exiled to Osmancık district of Çorum, where they have lived right next to a wheat warehouse they showed them for ten years. Then, they plant trees in one of the wastelands around. When we were just about to pick and eat their fruits, they exiled us to Amasya. Two years later, they took us to Ahlat and some time later to Kötibe village in Kurtalan district of Siirt. The state gave them 100 acres of land in 1950. But, six years later, they were forcefully exiled to Diyarbakır and from there to Istanbul. Uncle Ferman bought a land in Avcılar district in Istanbul in 1972, planted thirty-five trees there. He was just about to eat the fruits of the trees he planted flotsams bothered him this time... Then, he moved to his final destination, Marmara Ereğlisi.

Exiles, forced migrations, or vicarious feeling of the indispensability of the migration, of leaving the *home*, be it city, village or country, are the very reason of this feeling of insecurity as a psychic state of mind of pigeon-like unease.

III.III. REMEMBERING THE ANCESTORS

Going to every corner of the Anatolia, one will feel undoubtedly the haunted character of the cities as if something was missing in those places. One frequently sees abandoned, even ruined chapels, debris in the middle of villages with no official explanation, or overhears stories conflicting with the official narrative of the state. One might run into someone that refers to a village or neighborhood with a different name that he has not heard it before, even that makes confessions about what his ancestors or the tribe of which he is one of the members had done in the past. Yet, he might come across with a desolated graveyard where gravestones are in a language he do not know, which has no visitor at all and is consigned to oblivion; with an unfrequented place of worship that opens its doors in certain special days, but has no permanent community living there. Or, with children playing in the debris and telling you stories about treasure hunters and

treasure maps, which are in fact not fabrications, but stories that they witnessed as well. All these oddities –they are so as they are part of a different narration– creates indeed the very gaps in one’s mind, the missing parts of which can be found in counter-narratives about these lands. Yet, these counter-narratives are the very stories about the deterritorialization of peoples of these lands, the story of the past that is intergenerationally transmitted, in which one can find out why the rest of the population of the society in question do not live in their original *home(land)*, but gathered only in one city, Istanbul. In this sense, these transmitted memories are the very stories embracing the history of wealth transfer, the attempt of annihilating a culture, assimilation, the underlying reality of conversions, secret worships, ruptures between and dispersal of family members, orphanages, getting hold of each other after many years, to a large extent of diaspora, exile and the miles to the unknown, irreplaceable yearning for the *home*, and so forth. This yearning for *home(land)*, for (grand)parent and siblings that one could not have chance to spend more time with, for the days before the Catastrophe, the traumatic affect of which will never be forgotten in time, will be transmitted to subsequent generations on way or another.

When it comes to remembering the homeland, the attitude of my interviewees toward remembering their original *homeland* and their interest in knowing, even visiting those cities or villages differs considerably from generation to generation. Almost each interviewee from the 2nd generation, i.e. those who did not experience 1915, but who are the children of survivors, are not willing to talk about their (grand)parents’ cities or villages. They all knew the story of their parent, their living in their hometown -I saw that they knew it in their eyes, but they didn’t prefer sharing these memories with me. This unwillingness and silence would be seen as well their expressions about 1915. Unlike the 2nd generation, the interviewees from 3rd and 4th generations are quite aware of and interested in their (grand) (grand)parents’ *homeland*, yet some of them visited their villages, which made them feel the very frustration since what they heard from their (grand)parents and what they saw are not tally just as the narrative of the Turkish

History Thesis does not tally with the counter-narrative of the survivors. Particularly, what made me surprised is that four of five interviewees from 4th generation, despite their relative young age, told me that they have visited recently their original *homeland*, the villages of their (grand) grandparents. And, there was an obvious common statement in their expressions: the abovementioned frustration. All of them were telling me that what they had seen in those cities is but an absence – absence of the materiality they had been imagining while listening the stories of their (grand) grandparents. The descriptions of the cities they have listened and seen during their visit were entirely conflicting. This immense gap between their imagination and the reality itself begets this very frustration, emptiness in deep inside and meaninglessness. Even some of them were telling that they wished they had not visited there since what they had been picturing before having seen the reality was much better and familiar. Yet, this unfamiliarity led them, as they were expressing, one more time the sense of being in-between; the state of being neither the owner nor the guest of the *home*-_where they are belong to: this feeling is indeed quite obvious in one of my interviewees who is 19 year-old boy originally from Dersim, and who have visited a year ago the homeland of his ancestors to trace his roots:

“My grandparents and parents went to their homeland for the first time after ninety-nine years, and I also went with them. I visited all of their villages one by one. But, in fact there is no village as talked about. All the villages changed enormously. For example, in the expressions of my grandparents, there was a ‘vank’, a monastery, up on the highest hill of the village, where there was also a school in its yard, full of with fruit trees, from apricot to pomegranate... My grandparents were describing their villages like this. But, when I went there, I’ve seen any of them. Cause they’re all ruined, destroyed... They leveled all. And, this made me think like, yes we are from Dersim, my grandparents are from there, the culture I acquired is the culture of Dersim, but I felt like I’m but a guest in there. I felt like I went there as a guest. There is a song of Metin Kemal Kahraman; its name is Meyman... It means guest. I listened to that song all the way back to home. You can never say ‘I’m from here’, but it turns out in some way ‘I was from here.’”

II.III.I. Memory of Ancestors: Remembering the Memory of the Catastrophe

As is mentioned above, the attitude of my interviewees from 2nd generation toward remembering the memory of 1915, sharing the memories of their ancestors was almost the same with their manner or position regarding remembering the memories of the *homeland* they inherited from their grandparents. They were all silent, even some of them were denying the past- even if they did not explicitly reject the truth of the past; they were insisting somehow the easiness they feel. For instance, one of my interviewees, an 88 year-old woman living in a rest home was repeating constantly '*We're so serene here, we're really happy here, the life is so peaceful for us*', which is in fact a problematic statement. Actually, I did not ask any of them a direct question about the memory of 1915, but asked them to tell me their grandparents, their life and so forth. Many of them dodged questions about remembering the past as they said they knew nothing. However, later on some of them found their tongue little by little, even if just a smidgen: they started to tell me that their parents had suffered sad bereavements, however they were directly adding that they did not know who were they and how they had been killed, and so forth in order to put an end to potential questions. And, it seemed to me like they were regretful because of telling me these memories – these moments, perhaps, were the most difficult times of my interviews. In addition to this group of people sharing with me a crumb of memories, the number of my interviewees denying the past was much more. I respected their silence and did not ask any other question to make them elaborate the abovementioned 'happiness' and 'peace' they fill, however I knew inwardly, intuit that they were but strategies to dodge the questions about the past. None of them wanted to face the past memories; they buried deep, as it were, the post-memory they inherited, more or less, from their (grand)parent within their unconscious so as not to remember them anymore, nevertheless this post-memory of the past trauma haunts somehow them.

As Nicolas Abraham pointed out, the presence of the phantom indicates the effects, on the descendants, of something that had inflicted narcissistic injury or even catastrophe on the parents: “It is a fact that the ‘phantom’, whatever its form, is nothing but an invention of the living. The phantom is also a metapsychological fact: what haunts are not the dead, but the gaps left within us by the secrets of others.”¹⁴⁷ As a phantom, the memory of 1915 transmitted one way or another to subsequent generations is the very tomb of the ancestors enclosed within the psyche of the post-generations –the tomb of the ancestors that had not been buried under the soil, but in the descendants of the Catastrophe. Yet, the tomb of the ancestors, which corresponds to a traumatic past stuck in the unconscious of the witness as well as the descendants manifests itself in folklore, tales, dirges and elegies, night terrors, and can be read between the lines of expressions as well as the silence itself. And, as it is the case of my interviewees from the 2nd generation, the phantom of the past incarnated itself in the very silence, even denial of this generation. In other words, objectifying itself in the silence, or rather in the unspeakable, the phantom of 1915 requires them to ignore, even to deny of the past. Being repressed in the unconscious of this 2nd generation, the phantom nevertheless manifests itself in states of anxiety, bizarre acts and symptoms such as hysteric reactions (particularly my interviewees from 4th generation, for instance, were telling me their grandparents’ bizarre reactions to the signifiers implying their Armenian identity) when a subject transgresses the obligation of ignorance; disturb the order; splits the Symbolic and reveals the secret of the past. The past is a taboo for those peoples, i.e. (grand)parents and/or relatives of my interviewees or the interviewees themselves from 2nd generation, since the memory of the past tears a hole, as it were, the symbolic order, the speech.

As to my interviewees from 3rd generation, their attitude towards the past and remembering the memory of their ancestors, one realizes two main inclinations to know the story of their (grand) grandparents. On one hand, some of them were telling me that their (grand)parents did not transmit them the past of their families

¹⁴⁷ Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok (1994). Op.cit., p.171

and they somehow resigned themselves to maintaining the silence by not questioning the past or asking them the past so as to dig out the memory of their ancestors. Nevertheless, certain interviewee from this group, i.e. those who do not know their family stories because of the general silence in their family, told me as well that they tried to construct this post-memory by themselves by visiting the homeland of their ancestors in order to gather information about their roots or reading books, but particularly memoirs whose authors had been born in the same place with their (grand) grandparents to learn the history of their the cities or villages, or rather what had happened to the residents of these places. On the hand, the rest of them were telling me that they listened their family stories from their (grand)parents. Besides, what was interesting is that they were divided into two subgroups in themselves: While some of these interviewees were telling me that they did not prefer transmitting these memories to their own children or grandchildren because knowing these memories does not change anything in their life, even it often times makes them feel depressed and sorry; the others were arguing that transmitting what they inherited from their (grand)parents to their own (grand)children is their very duty. They were emphasizing the duty to know and remember the past as their ancestors had paid a price for the sake of them, the subsequent generations. For them, the duty to remember and transmit their memory is the very respect for the ancestors.

Lastly, all my interviewees from the 4th generation were expressing their interest in knowing the past, the past of their own (grand) grandparent. Many of them were saying that they know, even if not in person but by sight as they saw them in their family photo albums, only the generation of their grandparents: *'I don't know anything about my grand grandparents and their own parents. Why? Because they're gone, which is the very proof of the genocide!'* were saying one of my interviewee. Many of them don't know their name, their story, their physical appearance and so forth, which beget indeed an irreparable lack deep in themselves. Perhaps, this very lack leads them to dig out the past and the memory of their own (grand) grandparents. I have already mentioned above that many of

my interviewees from 4th generation have visited their original homeland – note that all of them were born in Istanbul. In addition, some of my interviewees said me that they gather memories of their grandparents; either they collect their diaries, photos, and correspondences. Even one of them identified himself as “*visual heritage bearer*”; in fact, he decided to be so after the death of his maternal grandfather because he realized that he knows very little number of things about his family elders; he shot thereafter the first documentary short film about the Istanbul pogrom of September 6-7, 1955, based on his grandfather’s narratives; later on shot another short film about the genocide through the life of Gomidas; and finally, he insisted her paternal grandmother to pen her own memories that he plans publishing posthumously one day. Moreover, this interviewee of mine was complaining that his short films were criticized by certain respected Armenians for not being too violent and bloody, and telling me that these films reflected his own imagination of the atrocity. In fact, he was completely true as my interviewee shooting those short films is the only master of his own fiction –even if the main theme of the films relies on true-life stories, he has the right to be free to decide the way of depicting the event in question. Therefore, the life of Gomidas can be depicted, or mirrored in a bloodless fashion; Istanbul pogrom of September 6-7, 1955 can be displayed circuitously, by referring to the peacetime.

Furthermore, another interestingly common point in their expressions is that they were telling that their grandparents, but particularly their maternal grandmother, which make us think about the issue of gendered memory, had started to talk about the past, about the experiences of their own grandparents during the genocide years and, those who had experienced the genocide in the flesh, about their own eyewitnesses late in their declining years. Besides, my they also said me that their grandparents were telling these stories generally to them, so to say their grandchild. At this point, I want to underline the gendered character of the collective memory: as is read in the many memoirs about the atrocities, be it Adana massacre, Armenian genocide or Holocaust, the reader often times stumble

across a narrative from women's account portraying to a large extent the suffering women, mothers and grandmothers, children being orphaned, young girls that had been abducted, raped, women's suicides and infanticides and so forth. Indeed, the genocidal memories that my interviewees inherited from their maternal grandmothers were more or less analogous to what we read in these memoirs— the witnesses to women making suicides, murdering their own children so as to save, protect them from the atrocity of perpetrators; misery suffered during the deportation; diseases; starvation and thirst; crying jags of children, and so forth. The tears in the memories, were saying my interviewees, intermingle with the real tears shed by their grandparents narrating these stories. However, they also expressed that their grandmother, who had been at the tender age during the genocide years, had been relieving while narrating. And, as to my interviewees who listened these memories from their grandmothers also at a young age, they were telling me that they could not forget certain scenes of these stories, just as one of them said me *“there's only one thing that I can't forget... Mothers were putting their children's head into tree hollows, so that soldiers couldn't hear the voices of their crying. And the other is that they unfortunately had to drink their urine when they were thirsty. These two run through my head all the time.”*

It might be true that talking about the past, telling again and again one's own traumatic witnesses and true life experiences, remembering and even narrating one's own traumas to the others -her losses through bereavements and dispersal of family members, being left alone with remaining few memories about their parents in their child's mind, adoption stories, years passing in orphanages- would have indeed a remedial affect despite all their senselessness in and of itself. In other words, to verbalize, either orally or in black and white, these past traumas might have an emancipatory role to the extent that the speaking subject lightens his/her psychological burden of the unconscious as well as adds his/her words to the campaign against denial, by which the subject loses to a certain degree the passivity of victimhood by speaking out. Perhaps, the phantom of the Catastrophe manifesting itself in the narration opens a way for sense making in its all

impossibility, thus for redemption of one's psychological burdens. If it is so, the act of narrating one's own past trauma, as the very act shattering the master narrative and dominant discourses of the nation-state about the past, is subjectivity to the degree that narrating trauma splits the signifier chain of the nation-state, the desire escapes from the nation-state's authority for the determination of what is worth to remember and to forget, and that narrating is the process of becoming as Deleuze and Guattari uses the term. Therefore, the subject, in Deleuze and Guattari's point of view, might be producing desire throughout his/her narration of castration-laden life experiences. Thus, it might be an 'ethical subject', as Rossi Bridotti uses the term, who is the "one that can bear the pain of confronting 'Life' as zoe... (since) the ethics is the thin barrier against the possibility of extinction, (and it) consists in re-working the pain into threshold of sustainability..."¹⁴⁸ Hence, bearing the pain and suffering while remembering the past, the ethical subject narrating his/her own trauma is a resisting subject inasmuch as s/he is the narrator, or rather transmitter of the phantom, the tomb of the ancestors, as it were, the memory of the Catastrophe to his/her (grand) children, and consequently the one who defies the ban of the Turkish state, the sovereign, against what has to be forgotten, sunk into silence. And, as to both the narrating subject and my interviewees shouldering the burden of the past while remembering the painful narratives of their (grand) grandparents, they re-members the bereaved family members, or more generally ancestors, whose life is worth to be remembered, and whose bereavement is worth to mourn for, grieve for, individually or publicly, despite the fact that Turkish state forecloses the official and legitimate public mourning for the people killed in 1915.

¹⁴⁸ Rossi Bridotti (2006). "The Ethics of Becoming Imperceptible", in *Deleuze and Philosophy*, Constantin Boundas (eds.), Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, p. 121

III.IV. THE FIGURE OF HRANT DINK IN THE EYES OF ARMENIANS IN TURKEY

In the previous paragraphs up to here, we mentioned the issues of sense of belonging and the memory of ancestors within the scope of the in-depth interviews conducted with three different generations, which is classified according to the common socio-political and historical events they experienced. Even though the responses of the interviewees were given with today's context, in other words with their current consciousness and awareness as each socio-political and historical case one experiences influences his/her identity construction, which can be thought as a never-ending process continuing until the end of one's life, my main concern was to fathom rather their familiarity with the past, i.e. their family tree, family history, stories about their (grand) grandparents, the lands they had been born, hence their attitude toward the past in general, which are relatively not in close relation with Hrant Dink himself, but with their early socialization in the family, school as well as other people sharing the same social environment with the one him/herself. But, the following topics and issues that will be touched on will be related directly Hrant Dink himself, including his writings and discourses, in order to seek an answer to our main problematical issue, that is how Hrant Dink affected today's Armenians in Turkey both in his lifetime and after his assassination. In this direction, it would be rather worthy to see the big picture, as it were, concerning my interviewees' understanding of Hrant Dink himself.

The responses given by the interviewees are in no small measure similar to one another: Hrant Dink, in the eyes of each generation, is courageous, outspoken and revolutionist; the only speaking man among Armenians; the only man who dared saying 'We, Armenians, are here and we belong to these lands'; the only person laying for the first time claim to his belongingness to these lands; the only one who found the true way to make people listen someone they consider as the Other and, remember to a certain extent the truth of the past. In this sense, he became one of the constitutive parts of the collective identity of Armenians in Turkey

inasmuch as many Armenians think that he managed to give the Armenian people voice and inasmuch as his memory continues to do so aftermath of his death. Furthermore, considering the wordings of some of my interviewees from 4th generation, he is their ‘dove’ - indeed, he was a real peace dove soaring high above to untie the knot between the past and the present, to disentangle not only the peoples of this country, but also Armenians from all over the world from the trauma’s knot impeding them for years. In a sense, he was an excavator, as it were, digging up the ground to bring the memory of his ancestors into the consciousness of today’s peoples: In doing so, he sought not only to face the Turkish state and people recalling the past and, consequently, perceiving the issues of the present within the frameworks given by the state; but also to disentangle Armenians, both in Turkey, Armenia and the rest of the world, from their psychic attachments, so to say the shackles of the trauma of the past.

My interviewees had many things to say about him, however those from the 2nd generation preferred relatively to keep their silence, perhaps because of the ‘pigeon-like unease’ they have been feeling deep inside when it comes to remember traumatic events of the past. Besides, unlike the 2nd generation, one considers that the other two generations, but notably the 4th generation, that is those who experienced in person the assassination of Hrant Dink for the first time as an act of violence or a traumatic event concerning Armenians in Turkey, are more affected by him, specifically in the sense of politics, as they expressed their admiration for him, for his efforts and speeches. In fact, one sees much clearly the reason of this admiration for him, particularly in the eyes of the 4th generation, in the following subtopic examining the affect of Hrant Dink on the interviewees themselves.

III.V. THE AFFECT OF HRANT DINK AND HIS DEATH

Starting with the 2nd generation, as seen in the previous responses concerning the figure of Hrant Dink in their eyes, some of my interviewees didn’t want to talk

about Hrant Dink, even couple of them said they didn't know him, and to a large extent kept their silence. Indeed, this very silence is perhaps sufficient per se to fathom his affect on the generation in question itself. Their ongoing silence, particularly concerning the issues of the past, can be interpreted as the affect of the assassination of Hrant Dink, as the never-forgotten figure being such outspoken, laying claim to the truth of the past dauntlessly, is to a certain degree analogous to that of 1915 that is transmitted, explicitly or implicitly, expressly or latently, by those who had experienced the trauma in the flesh. As the first bearers of the trauma, this 2nd generation, that is to say the offspring of the survivors, are still under the influence of the fear, unease or rather hopelessness they saw in their (grand)parents' eyes. Thus, the death of Hrant Dink, his assassination due to the fact that he was telling the very truth of the past as the Other of the dominant culture of this country, was such a legitimizer proof of that unease they saw once. Unlike the former generation, one sees that the death of Hrant Dink has broken the silence among the members of the 3rd generation. It was quite obvious in their expressions that they identified themselves, or rather find themselves in an affirmative cathartic relationship with Hrant Dink himself. I used the word 'affirmative' in the sense that their cathartic identification with his death is not related to fear, but to courage. To put it differently, as a metaphor originally used by Aristotle in the Poetics, catharsis is the purification or purgation of emotions, notably pity and fear, through any kind of artwork. In order that the audience feels for somebody, he must believe the character in the tragedy is a moral person. Believing his morality, the audience-subject thus puts himself into this moral character's shoes, and in doing so he both pity the moral character and fear the catastrophic event that takes place in the tragic story. Therefore, empathizing first with the moral character and then cringing with the thought that he might experience the same catastrophe as well, the audience-subject impedes his own desires for a while and tries to think himself in an optimistic fashion. Nevertheless, the case of my interviewees from 3rd generation corresponds to a certain extent the general understanding of the term catharsis: while they empathize themselves with Hrant Dink and his death, they do not fear to be killed

because of their Armenian identity, and likewise, they affirm publicly their Armenianness in stead of castrating their desire for defending and revealing who they are and where they belong to. In this sense, one can say that the affect of the death of Hrant Dink on the 2nd generation would be more suited to the conventional understanding of the term catharsis, as Aristotle pointed his “Poetics”, whereas the affect of his death would correspond rather to the affirmative catharsis in case of the 3rd generation.

And, as to the 4th generation, i.e. individuals who experienced the assassination of Hrant Dink in the flesh for the first time as an act of violence against Armenians in Turkey, the affect of the death of Hrant Dink is totally different from the case of former generations. In fact, the youngest and the oldest interviewee from the 4th generation are individuals who were born respectively in 1999 and 1984, which means that they were 8 and 23 years old in 2007, when Hrant Dink was assassinated. For an 8 year-old child, it was obviously impossible to understand the meaning of his death and the underlying political reason of his assassination. But despite their relative unawareness because of their ages, they were telling me though how that day, the day Hrant Dink was killed, was such a confounding day for them. Perhaps, they were the most affected group among other generations- imagine that you are a primary-school-age children, or even high-school-age teenager being aware of neither who Hrant Dink is nor the political connotation of being Armenian in Turkey, and one day –it was at first just an ordinary day like yesterday or the day before- you witness that your parents are terrorized by something that you do not understand at that time but would comprehend as you grow in time. For most of them, it was indeed the first moment that they saw the darkness in their parents’ eyes; they witnessed their parents’ lamentations, mournful tears for someone they do not know in person. Their parents’ reactions, the catastrophic atmosphere following that day, the day of his funeral with the immense crowd marching to Holy Mother-of-God Patriarchal Church, and so on are, no doubt, the first trauma they experienced in the flesh through their child’s eyes. Yet, they all were telling me that his death had sparked something in their

deep inside, despite their ages, and that when they grew up and became relatively aware of the underlying reasons of his death, they had found themselves in an irreparable lack. Many of them were expressing that as they had watched his videos, read his columns on the Internet for days and promised themselves that they would follow in his footsteps – these are the words belonging to one of my young interviewees, who was an 8 year-old boy in 2007: *“I was 8 years old, and as far as I remember it was a Friday and we were about to return home from school. I remember that all of our teachers started to cry all of a sudden. I didn’t understand why. Then I came home and asked my aunt who Hrant Dink was, and she answered like ‘He was the voice of Armenians.’ And, later on, as I grow up, I realized the issue, the importance of Hrant Dink and the reason why he was killed. I was so sorry and annoyed. I promised that I would follow his faith and sustain his fight. I promised that I would defend peace, because Hrant Dink loved everyone in this country.”*

All in all, all of my interviewees, no matter how old they were at that time, regardless of which generation they belong to, have been affected by his death. Even if it cannot be generalized, one can interpret to a certain degree that the death of Hrant Dink, for the Armenian youth in Turkey, is a spark-like event, as it were, the traumatic affect of which forced a rethinking of their relationship to Turkish nation state, recollection and reevaluation of the past on the basis of the present needs, the meaning of the past regarding their individual and collective identity, consequently forming their political identity in a strict relationality with the very counter-collective memory that Hrant Dink was seeking to construct through his writings and speeches. Accordingly, when it comes to the 3rd and 4th generation, but particularly the latter, we see active side of the memory in the sense that they do not only remember the past, but also take an action in the present either by revealing their Armenian identity in public, instead of withdrawing into their shell, as it were, or retreating into silence, or by opting to politicize on the basis of their identity. Therefore, it would not be misleading to suggest that the death of Hrant Dink has transformed this relatively *passive* act of

remembrance into an *active* process, which should be thought within the context of agency and subjectivity, through which a good number of middle-aged and young Armenian in Turkey construct a political identity in relation to their past and memory of their ancestors, and in the aim of speaking out, laying claim to their truth of the past.

In fact, considering the relative abyss between the stance the 2nd generation and the other two generations took, the continuing silence, as a passive reaction, of the former and the act of speaking out, and being involved in a politicization process, as an active reaction, of the latter can be read within the intensity of the phantom of the past trauma. Thinking the affect of the phantom, as Nicholas Abraham points out, “it is reasonable to maintain that the phantom effect progressively fades during its transmission from one generation to the next.¹⁴⁹” In this sense, with respect to the trauma of the Catastrophe of 1915, perhaps this is the reason why the subsequent generations, starting from the 3rd generation, i.e. the generation of grandchildren – yet, Hrant Dink was also in this generation- and continuing with the 4th generation of grand grandchildren, bring up the past trauma of their ancestors’ to the public agenda, which is indeed the case epitomized by the Armenian self-organization, as they describe themselves, called ‘Nor Zartonk¹⁵⁰’. Being launched in 2004 as an online mail group by a couple of Armenian, Nor Zartonk, which means New Renaissance in Armenian language, is the first and only political organization of Armenians in Turkey fighting for equality, justice, peace, freedom of speech and expression, and against racism, discrimination, nationalism, militarism, patriarchy and so forth. With respect to the emergence of Nor Zartonk, what should not be overlooked is that it is initiated by the affect of Hrant Dink on the Armenian youth in Turkey. One of my interviewees, who has been playing role since the very beginning of its foundation, was telling me the story of Nor Zartonk as following:

¹⁴⁹ Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok (1994). Op.cit., p.176

¹⁵⁰ For their official website, please see: <http://www.norzartonk.org/nor-zartonk/>

“We didn’t have a political organization before and this was our one of the biggest deficiencies. Nor Zartonk was established at first as an email group in 2004, we were seeking to discuss the political and intellectual issues between each other. It was the days when email groups became newly popular. Zartonk means Renaissance, enlightenment. Yet, Nor Zartonk refers to the Armenian Renaissance, so to speak the period between the years of 1850-1915. These years were the period of Armenian Renaissance in the fields such as theatre, art, politics, and so on, by dint of the emergence of Armenian intelligentsia who had been educated in Europe and returned to their homeland. In deed, we gave this name to our organization in order to make a reference to the past. (...) At first, we were six people in total- two high school students, two university students and two graduates. In 2005, in the 90th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, we arranged an event with Hrant Dink The following year, we arranged our second event with him; we organized something like ‘Armenian week’ that year. Our aim was to tell people, but especially to university students, what happened to Armenians in 1915. However, it was necessary that we put flesh on the bones of our organization; we were only an unofficial email group in those first years. We also talked to Hrant Dink about our aim and he invited us to his office to think what could we do. But we couldn’t visit him, because somehow we decreased in number and hesitated to talk to Hrant Dink. We didn’t go to his office and still feel regretful about it. Then, that inauspicious day fell, I mean January 19, 2007. He was assassinated. In deed, his death incited us to launch Nar Zartonk as a visible and official organization. We said that this would be our promise to Hrant. In this sense, the emergence of Nor Zartonk is quite personal as well as political and social. We were once 6-7 people in total, but today we manage gathering like thousand of people. Our effort is related not only to Armenians, but all peoples of Turkey. Yet, our motto is, ‘Kurtuluş yok tek başına, ya hep beraber ya hiçbirimiz!’¹⁵¹”

In addition to the abovementioned statements of my interviewee, my other interviewees from Nor Zartonk, both promoters and those who became member of the organization later on, expressed their involvement in the organization in reference to the promise they gave to Hrant Dink. In fact, many people in Turkey, not only Armenians but everyone in general, got acquainted with Nor Zartonk in Gezi protest, during which young Armenians from the Organization manifested themselves by setting up a stand in the Gezi Park with their banners in Armenian language, their mother tongue. Becoming more and more visible in the commemorations of January 19 and April 24, Nor Zartonk, in this sense,

¹⁵¹ There is no escape alone; either together nor none of us!

legitimized itself and its determination during the Camp Armen Resistance. Built with the hands of Armenian children -Hrant Dink was also one of those children- Camp Armen provided needy Armenian families' children and orphans with service as orphanage affiliated to Gedikpaşa Armenian Protestant Church, but, in 1979, the Turkish state seized the premises and gave it to its former owner of the land on the basis of the Law of Foundations of 1936, which obstructs minority foundations to appropriate any kind of immovable property. Thus, the state canceled the very same title deed that had certified once by asserting that it was illegitimate, and all the lawsuits filed against the state in order to reappropriate Camp Armen were unsurprisingly all vain. From that day to this, this orphanage is isolated until 6 May 2015, the day when the so-called legitimate landlord took the caterpillars to ruin the orphanage building that was built by the hand labor of children. On that day, Camp Armen resistance, which would be lasted for 175 days, was initiated by the Camp Armen Solidarity Movement, the then sub-organization of Nor Zartonk. The resisters' aim was obvious in their expressions as well as the slogans on the walls surrounding the premises: "*Tarihine Sahip Çık!*"¹⁵²", "*Soykırım Süriyor!*"¹⁵³", or "*Soykırımın Belgesi Hrant'ın Yetimhanesi!*"¹⁵⁴" As I spoke to some of the resisters at the camp area, they told me that they were claiming the truth of the past, the recognition of the past as well as the continuing grief both their ancestors and they have been struggling for years. Here, you see some of their expressions:

"There's no need to build genocide memorial in Turkey, because there is already one: Camp Armen. One of its parts is ruined, just as Armenians, but its other part is still vivid with its resisting children. (...) When we were resisting in the Gezi protest, we also tried to tell people how Armenians in these lands were annihilated, assimilated and how the history was changed... We were saying that there was an Armenian cemetery, Cemetery of Surp Agop, in place of the park, and Gezi Park was built with the graves of that Armenian cemetery. They first seized our cemetery, then our park. Thus, we told them that you did seize our cemetery, but cannot seize our park. Even if we couldn't resist for

¹⁵² Lay Claim to Your Past!

¹⁵³ Genocide still continues!

¹⁵⁴ Hrant's orphanage is the proof of the genocide!"

graveyards of our ancestors, we did it now for our park and we transmitted our own collective memory in doing so.”

“We’re experiencing here the practices of collective life that Armenian people have lost. This resistance shows our will, and we’re trying to vivify in the centennial of the genocide the orphanage, where descendants of the survivors were grown up.”

As is seen in their statements, Armenian youth resisting so as reappropriating the orphanage, Camp Armen, which they consider as a legacy inherited from Hrant Dink, associates the confiscation of the building by the Turkish state with the never-ending genocide taking Hrant Dink as well away from them. In their eyes, one does not need to build an Armenian genocide memorial in the Turkish nation-state’s topography, because there is already one, the ruined building of the Camp Armen. Therefore, the camp is transformed into a ‘site of memory’ crystalizing the memory and struggles of Hrant Dink as well as the memory of the genocide. Following in his footsteps, the Armenian youth continued Hrant Dink’s fight for taking back their ‘*Atlantis civilization*¹⁵⁵, from the state, because this orphanage meant Hrant Dink for them; he was one of the children who contributed to the construction of the building, who had grew up there and then raised, protected and supported other children coming to the camp later on, even who had undertaken the directory of the camp as its former director had been arrested for ‘raising Armenian militants.’ Hrant Dink could not accomplish his fight for the reappropriation of the outcome of their own children labor; he and his proponents in this lawsuit had been defeated despite 5-year resistance, but the Armenian youth sticking his principles succeeded in their resistance and got the property back. Today, the rightful owner of the property, the Gedikpaşa Armenian Protestant Church Foundation had an architectural project designed and commenced the construction works in order to (re)construct from the ruins of the orphanage a ‘youth center’, by sustaining its nature of orphanage, will be in service of the children from all walks of life and backgrounds.

¹⁵⁵ To read the story of the Camp Armen in Hrant Dink’s words, please see: Hrant Dink, “Davacıyım Ey İnsanlık!..”, *Agos*, 16 July 2010 (<http://hrantdink.org/tr/hrant-dink/hrant-dink-yazilari/723-davaciyim-ey-insanlik>) / Hrant Dink, “Dear Humanity, I would like to press charges!”, *Agos*, 16 July 2010 (<http://hrantdink.org/en/hrant-dink/hrant-dink-articles/724-dear-humanity-i-would-like-to-press-charges>)

Camp Armen resistance is a performative social movement to the extent that the resisters, who are in no small measure the Armenian youth in Turkey, used the space, i.e. Camp Armen's building land, to link their struggle with their ancestors, the memory of the past trauma, and consequently the past and the present. Therefore, they performatively constructed their Armenian identity in the very present time within a close relationality between history and memory. They both laid claim to their past and memory as well as continue Hrant Dink's fight for the reappropriation of the orphanage, in the construction of which he had taken his part and where he had grown up too. Yet, we see the same performativity in the commemorations of January 19, the death anniversary of Hrant Dink, and April 24, the symbolic day of the genocide.

III.VI. COMMEMORATIONS AND REMEMBRANCE

We have already seen in the first chapter the relationship between nation building, historiography, commemorations and recollection of the past. As a bodily performance, commemorations are of particular significance and play role in the construction and yet the sustainment of the collective memory of nations and/or collectivities within a nation. Therefore, it contributes to the act of remembering the past as well as re-membering the commemorators within the narrative dictating the commemoration in question. Furthermore, when it comes particularly to the nation-building processes and the continuation of subjects' loyalty to the nation-state itself, commemorations can be thought as the very instrumental rituals rendering memories docile, or to put it differently sculpting the truth of the past into imagined memories harmonized with its meta-narrative. Therefore, the problematical issue of what is worth to be remembered before the state is strictly related to what is worth to be 'officially' and 'legitimately' commemorated. Thus, it would not be erroneous to suggest that 'unofficial' commemorations, which have no legitimacy, that is to say has any reflection, or even has a counter-reflection in the state-sponsored narration of the past, are of

much more significance in the construction of counter-collective memories and their bearers inasmuch as these rituals are the very spaces of resistance short-circuiting the recollection of the past within the collective frameworks imbued by the state.

III.VI.I. Commemorations of Hrant Dink

Many of my interviewees too expressed that they give an irreducible importance to two counter-commemorations that are commemoration of Hrant Dink on 19th January and of the Armenian genocide on 24th April, but notably the former one. Unsurprisingly, none of my interviewees from 2nd generation can attend any of these commemorations because of their age-based physical condition, nevertheless one of them were saying me that he was not sure whether he would do so if his health has allowed him to attend these commemorations. Well, taking into consideration of their relative timidity when it comes to speak out against the right to remember and claim the truth of the past, I cannot estimate either their attendance at these commemorations.

As to my interviewees from 3rd and 4th generation, each of them declared their attendance *at least* one of these commemorations. In effect, all my interviewees, young and middle-aged, said that they always attend the commemoration of Hrant Dink. All of them stated that their presence in the commemoration held in each January 19 in front of the building of his newspaper, Agos, is their duty, a binding duty that is incumbent upon them because of the reason that, they were saying, he was killed for the sake of his truth, or rather the truth of the past. He dared venture his opinions- the opinions that none of the Armenian had dared speak out before; he shouldered all alone the responsibility of giving voice to his voiceless or silenced people. This is the reason why commemorating the memory of Hrant Dink is beyond compare. *“It would be unseemly for the Armenian to stay at home on 19th of Januaries”* one of my interviewees was saying. Some of them attend to

speak out against the state hegemony, some of them to grieve for, mourn for his loss, some of them to document the commemorative performance, some of them to claim justice despite Turkish state's denial, and to call the Turkish state to account for his murder as well as his procrastinated murder trial. In short, the commemoration of Hrant Dink has a different meaning, or serves a different purpose for them, however in their statements it was clearly obvious that this commemoration is a very emotional and affect-laden investment for all of them. *"That moment of silence accompanied by touching background music... 1915 comes to my mind and those convoys. We're waiting like a lamb to the slaughter within in a feeling like whose turn is going to be the next..."* said on of my interviewees from 4th generation, or another interviewee of mine was articulating his feelings likewise, *"The commemoration of Hrant Dink makes my hair stand on end. We feel that we're not alone on one hand, but we live in these lands within a pigeon-like unease on the other- we all know it."* What is at stake indeed in their statements is the cathartic state in which they found themselves – they feel the pigeon-like unease that Hrant Dink had felt right before his murder, even he had mentioned his state of mind in his last column. Besides, they also feel the burden of the past in the very space where the commemoration takes place. Because this space has already been laden with the affect – the very affect of the past memories of the ancestors (we saw in previous paragraphs how Hrant Dink's assassination is associated with the genocide in time) as well as the memory of Hrant Dink and his struggles for the recognition of the past, their belongingness to the land, justice for the peoples of these lands. Indeed, the commemoration of Hrant Dink is evolved into a performance that is beyond, or much more a simple commemoration: it has turned into rather a performative space dedicated to call for Justice. As is abovementioned, this Justice is quite subjective conception; each commemorator stands on each 19 Januaries for claiming Justice in their own understanding- it might be justice for their past bereavements, for the past, for the agonies of their own (grand) grandparents, for the murder of Hrant Dink; a claim of freedom of expression, remember the past with its bare fact; bring call the state to account for their centennial silence and uneasiness, and so forth. Yet, this

commemoration is not only evolved into such a performative space for the Armenian, but also for all the peoples of these lands, including Kurds, Alevis, Yazidis, Assyrians as well as Turks –each of them has their own reasons to attend at the commemoration, be it to face and acknowledge the past, to recognize the past agonies, to revere the memory of Hrant Dink, or to speak out in the name of their own identities. Therefore, 19 Januarys became the very space of memory and identity conflict inasmuch as the death of Hrant Dink and his dead body lying on the street in front of his newspaper building is imprinted in our minds as the very injustice against the Other of the Turkish state.

III.VI.II. The Funeral As the Psychic Projection of the Uneasiness of Us

In fact, the connotation of call for Justice has been attributed to the death of Hrant Dink since the very beginning, so to say the day of his funeral, which was the very breaking point for many people(s) in Turkey. Perhaps, it was the first and only moment that gathered *spontaneously* tens of thousands on the streets; it was the first time as well that tens of thousands mourned for a man being the Other before the state. The funeral was turned into a mass protest, a resistance to the state violence against its marginalized peoples. It was such moment that people, regardless of their ethnic and religious identities had been at the end of their tether, and said enough. The slogans and the banners of ‘We are all Hrant, We are all Armenian’ that each people shouted and hold in their hands was the sheer projection of their psyche. The tacit so-called agreement of ‘people don’t hurt pigeons’ was torn to pieces with the killing of Hrant Dink. People understood once again that it was but a phantasm. The slogan of ‘We are all Armenian’ was therefore the very manifestation that people want no longer believe in this phantasmal agreement; people dared saying to the Turkish state, so to speak, ‘I am also Armenian; if you dared killing Hrant Dink, then kill me too.’ But, the thing is that one can dare killing a man, but not thousands. In this sense, this slogan is imprinted in our minds, yet it would have be seen over and over again on the

following 19 Januarys and would have shatter over and over again the signifier chain of the Turkish state, reverse Turkish state's narrative of the past inasmuch this slogan affirms the phantasmal characteristics of the Article 10 in the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey dictating *'Everyone is equal before the law without distinction as to language, race, color, sex, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion and sect, or any such grounds.'*

As to my interviewees' thoughts about that funeral day, at first I should indicate that each of them said that they attend the funeral, even my interviewees from 2nd generation despite their age, yet they were relatively healthier ten years ago. The interviewees from 4th generation, they also declared that they had attended the march with their parents, or rather their parents had took them to the march despite their relatively young age- especially for those who were at elementary school age in those years. Each of them were expressing that they had not seen such a crowd before in their life, that there were peoples from all walks of life and backgrounds, from Kurd to Alevi, from conservatives to seculars – *"even the stallholder from whom I buy fruits and vegetables had attended his funeral. He is Kurd. It was incredible for me. Then, I comprehended the greatness and importance of Hrant Dink for everyone in this country"* was saying me one of my interviewees. Furthermore, many of them expressed that they felt at ease at the funeral as they realized that they were not alone. The slogan of 'We are all Hrant, We are all Armenian' shouted by every single one was a shock for them, as they said, they never would have guessed such a thing- *"I felt at ease at the funeral- it was the ease of being able to say that I'm Armenian. I felt more confident."* these words belongs to one of my interviewees was 17 year old in the year Hrant Dink was killed.

See, this story starting from the first day, that is the funeral, the story of how 19 Januarys are evolved into the very moments of call for justice and call the Turkish state to account for its unjust executions against peoples of these lands shows us the road of how it connoted fight, speak out and claim for Justice. I

suggest that the slogan of ‘We are all Hrant Dink, We are all Armenian’, which would have taken its place in the recent political history of Turkey, was the very origin of peoples’ calls for Justice, breaking their silence and speak out against, challenge and castrate the Turkish state’s meta-narrative of the past- the past being laden with loads of atrocities, injustices and violence against peoples of this lands and this world. In deed, we witnessed this year that the commemoration of Hrant Dink provided also a basis for speaking out for the memory of genocide victims in all over the world. Nor Zartonk arranged a march not only in the memory of the victims of the Armenian genocide, but also in the memory of people that were killed in Sinjar Mountains and of Assyrians, women and men, that have been tormented in Mosul –which shows us that the commemoration of Hrant Dink gains each year a much more comprehensive meaning in proportion to the previous year when it is considered that it started as a commemoration of his memory and step by step evolved into a platform of calling for Justice in the name of peoples of the world.

In addition to its evolution into an appropriate space of resistance to worldwide state violence, call for humanity, as it were, one sees that the commemoration of Hrant Dink, notably the building of his newspaper Agos one of the main thoroughfares of Istanbul, Halaskargazi Street, is transformed into a site of public remembrance, *lieux de mémoire*, by which the memory of the past crystallizes and solidifies itself. As a site of memory, it has been crystalizing, since the killing of Hrant Dink, ethnic discrimination against peoples of this land, atrocities that have been consistently executed by the Turkish state ideology, unidentified murders and unsolved murder cases, as it is in the case of Hrant Dink, unjust past and present, and so forth. In this sense, it is not only a mournful collective act, but also resistance to the state hegemony itself, which makes indeed this commemoration ‘countermourning’¹⁵⁶, as a political action, not at the behest of the Turkish state, but because they want to speak out, to take steps to fight against the state

¹⁵⁶ Leslie Jo Frazier (1999). “Subverted Memories: Countermourning as Political Action in Chile”, in *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present*, Mieke Bal, Jonathan V. Crewe and Leo Spitzer (eds.), p.105-109

hegemony on the past and its Others as well as the prevailing violence against humanity all over the world.

Moreover, one might also argue that it became such a ‘*counter-invented tradition*’ –I used the invented tradition as Eric Hobsbawm uses the term- implying continuity with the past. Hobsbawm uses the adjective of ‘invented’, in effect, in a quite pejorative sense since he problematizes the modern development of nation-states and nationalism, whose main purpose is to create a solid national identity along with the national unity and its continuity. Put differently, he theorizes that the nation-states of modernity have to invent traditions and make its citizens believe their oldness and authenticity so as to they interiorize the national narrative, history and national symbols imbued by the state. On the contrary, by regarding the commemoration of Hrant Dink, which become in a sense a ritualistic bodily performance in time, as ‘*counter-invented tradition*’, I argue that it reverse and splits the invented traditions of the Turkish nation-state to the degree that it reveals the very phantasmal characteristic of its nation-stateness. Considering, in the simplest term, for instance, the Student Oath that is recited in primary school at the beginning of the every school day: it is perhaps the most familiar ritual for all of us that we had to perform since our early childhood. We all recite every morning before class “*I am a Turk, honest and hardworking. My principle is to (...) love my homeland and my nation more than myself. (...) My existence shall be dedicated to the Turkish existence. How happy is the one who says ‘I am a Turk!’*” Imagine that a child, notably a child who is Armenian, Jewish, Greek or Kurd, is forced to recite this oath each day and how s/he is inculcated since his/her childhood by the nation-state ideology with the obligation of feeling him/herself as a Turk, or even the oppression of being Turk and of renouncing the right to identify oneself with one’s authentic ethnicity. No doubt, to make all the children of this country, regardless of their ethnic identity, recite these abovementioned nationalism and Turkishness-laden sentences would not be that much problematic if the term nation had a connotation of, or emphasis on *jus soli* in opposition to *jus sanguinis*. But it has not in reality; the Turk connotes not

a person who was born in Turkey, but who is ethnically Turk –it has been so since the very beginning of the Republic established on the basis of the Committee of Union and Progress ideology being the very ideology that led to the Catastrophe. To return the main issue, as is aforementioned, I suggest that the commemoration of Hrant Dink is evolved into a counter-invented tradition at the very day of his funeral with the slogan of ‘We are all Hrant, We are all Armenian’, which shattered the inventedness of the discourse of ‘*How happy is the one who says ‘I am a Turk!’*’ Their counter-discourse of ‘We are all Armenian’ was the very uproar of peoples of these lands: they spoke out that “it might not be happy to say ‘I am a Turk.’” Yet, this was what Hrant Dink was defending too in one of his writings: “*Yes, in our [Armenian] schools too, we have to recite the Student Oath every morning. I do not remember what I was feeling while reciting it, but what I feel now is this: ‘I am honest, hardworking but not Turk. I am Armenian in Turkey.’*”¹⁵⁷

Accordingly, 19 Januaries should be regarded as the very space, where the subjectivity and intersubjectivity manifests itself. Commemorator-resisters’ bodily performance during the commemoration is the very proof of their act of remembering past and present injustices, wrongdoings and inequities of the state(s) not only in the context of the Armenian question, but of all humanity. In fact, it is the very characteristic of commemorations in and of themselves inasmuch as they provide an appropriate basis to link the past to the present: we have already seen how they create an affective channel, vertical and horizontal, between the self, the person(s) being commemorated and other participants in the act of commemoration. Considering this point of view, the Halaskargazi Street, on which Hrant Dink was shot in the back, is imprinted on our memories as the psychical feeling of pigeon-like uneasiness, being defenseless before the Turkish state. Put it differently, this street has been laden with deeply loaded affect – the affect of Hrant Dink’s dead body lying on the street, which will ceaselessly haunt the phantasmal topography of the Turkish state. Nevertheless, this does not mean

¹⁵⁷ Hrant Dink (2003). “Türkiyeli Olmak”, *Agos*, 12 September 2003

that commemorator-resisters consider themselves as victim. On the contrary, they show up every January 19 in front of the Agos building to turn their victimhood in the eyes of the Turkish state into an active agency. Their body and hands rewrite the collective memory over and over again; re-determine the frameworks bound for recollecting the past since the killing of Hrant Dink was, perhaps, the last straw leading many of us to fathom the state-based antagonism between the sovereign identity and its Other. Commemorator-resisters act of changing the street nameplate of Halaskargazi Street with the 'Hrant Dink Street' even for a couple of hours during the commemoration activity should be thought and assessed concretely as a metaphorical act of defying and shattering Turkish state's meta-narrative of the past. This is why 19 Januaries are not only a simple mournful performance, but also sites of struggle and resistance in the footsteps of Hrant Dink, a site of performing subjectivity and intersubjectivity.

III.VI.III. Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide

As to the commemorations of April 24, unlike the similar expressions of the interviewees about the commemoration of Hrant Dink, their thoughts about commemorating the genocide and the memory of victims as well as survivors differs considerably from each other: certain of the interviewees think that commemorating the memory of their ancestors on 24th of April is a duty they are bound to respect for the memory of the ancestors, whereas the others consider it as an insistence, or political imposition on Turkish state and Turks.

In effect, excluding the 2nd generation, as they cannot attend commemorations because of their age-related physical condition, the number of interviewees, pros and antis, is on a par with each other. However, one realized from their expressions that each party, in which both 3rd and 4th generations takes their part, has its own argument that the interviewees attributed their presence or absence in the commemorations of 1915. On one hand, with respect to the participants, they all pointed out the same thing: the respect for the memory of the ancestors, the

victims of the genocide. By remembering the genocide and its victims, feeling their sorrow in their deep inside, and grieving for the loss, these people perform thus their Armenianness, their own sense of Armenian identity inasmuch as being Armenian, for them, means shouldering the burden of 1915 and to living under this affective shadow. Their presence in this commemoration transforms their victimhood, as the descendants of the survivors, into agency to the extent that they recall the past within their own frameworks, which are counter to Turkish state's frameworks; their performance brings the past into the present to make the Turkish state and those who denies the past recognize this intersubjective memory; the posters of the victims commemorators hold in their hands in silence haunts and shatters the Turkish state's phantasmal narrative of the past and topography built upon its meta-narrative.

On the other hand, regarding the interviewees who do not prefer participating in the commemoration of 1915, they all argued that commemorating 1915 is but imposing the Armenian grief on the Turkish state and express their preference for the commemoration of Hrant Dink, which they find more significant. I do not think that it would be worthy to discuss here how much commemorating the Catastrophe is significant since its significance or meaningfulness is rather subjective. Nevertheless, what is worth to emphasize is that all the interviewees, except those from the 2nd generation, regard the commemoration of Hrant Dink as a 'duty to remember'¹⁵⁸, both Hrant Dink and his fight, efforts and struggles, including the recognition of the Catastrophe and the memory of the ancestors. Well, I am not sure whether Hrant Dink would support and attend the commemoration of 1915 or not if he was alive today. One cannot estimate though whether hundreds of people would dare commemorating publicly the Catastrophe. As is known, the killing of Hrant Dink was a milestone, an historical moment in the sense that people has broken relatively the silence, felt more confident to declare publicly their ethnic and religious identity, remember the past with its bare facts and claim the truth of the past. Leaving aside these if-clause questions, what

¹⁵⁸ Pierre Nora (1996). *Realms of Memory*, New York: Columbia University Press, p.3

should be emphasized in here is Hrant Dink's emphasis on the necessity of shedding the imposition of 1915 to the Turk: as he wrote, "*How the Armenian world may achieve this [the way Armenian identity can free itself of the 'Turk'] is entirely related to whether it can look at the current situation with a new approach. For instance, the way it looks at 1915... The Armenian world is aware of the reality of the historical drama it experienced, and this is not about to change today by the acknowledgment of other countries of the world, or of Turkey. Even if they do not accept it, the name of what took place is inscribed in the conscience of the Armenian nation right from the beginning. Therefore, expecting either the world or Turkey to recognize this reality cannot be the sole target of the Armenian world.*"¹⁵⁹ See, he was always criticizing the Armenian who is obsessed with make the Turk acknowledge the reality as this obsession, according to him, castrate the Armenian identity and its potentiality in the now. In this sense, considering the interviewees expressing that they do not prefer attend the commemoration of 1915, although none of them articulated it explicitly, one might say that they have similar thoughts with Hrant Dink.

II.VII. MEANING-CONSTRUCTION OUT OF THE DEATH OF HRANT DINK

We have seen in the first two chapters how the present is intermingled with the past, particularly when it comes to the perception of the present. One side of the coin, the past and its memory, be it counter or state-sponsored memory, would always be a useful framework by which collectivities perceive and interpret the incidents of the other side of the coin, that is to say the present. Furthermore, what matters in here is that the difficult or traumatic incidents collectivities go through influence as well the perception of the past, how they remember it and what they consider as worthy to remember in the past. In this sense, the new events that

¹⁵⁹ Hrant Dink (2004). "'Türk'ten Kurtulmak- Ermeni Kimliği Üzerine (7)", *Agos*, 30 January 2004

collectivities experience in person would trigger the creation of a relative awareness and consciousness of the past that they did not experience in the flesh, but inherited either this or that way. It is yet this present awareness and consciousness that would make the post-memory, the memory one inherits intergenerationally, much more meaningful, significant, suggestive of the narrative of the past and worth to be remembered.

As to what is at stake here, i.e. meaning of the killing of Hrant Dink, one realizes that his death is not considered as an event per se, but rather as a process, even an ongoing process that has been continuing since 1915, which is generally taken as origin by the interviewees as is seen in their expressions. Each generation arguing, explicitly or implicitly, the same: the genocide still continues. Nevertheless, the way of how they articulate their thought and/or feelings differs more or less from one another. My interviewees from 2nd generation were quite timid, they did not prefer saying explicitly that his killing is the projection of the genocide; their wordings were rather implicit and veiled whereas the expressions of the other two generations were considerably unequivocal –many of them stated that the killing of Hrant Dink had inferred them ‘1,5 million + 1’, which means that he was the ‘+1’ among one and a half million victims of the Catastrophe. As is understood, his death made all of them relieve the past. In other words, Armenians in Turkey, young and old alike, has linked the figure of Hrant Dink and his memory to the memory of the Catastrophe. Therefore, Hrant Dink himself can be read in this sense as a counter-site of memory challenging the Turkish state’s narrative of the past, as one of the main constituents of the actual collective memory of Armenians in Turkey. He himself, or rather his memory, including his speeches and writings, has evolved in time into a mnemonic symbol that reveals hidden, forgotten past inasmuch as his death transformed the tale-like post-memory carried by those who did not experience the Catastrophe in person into an authentic memory. His assassination became one of the milestones in the Armenian collective memory; even his death precipitated, perhaps, more the process of the reconstruction of Armenian collective memory in comparison with

the things he did in his life. Thus, one might suggest that the trauma of his death has awakened the awareness and consciousness of the past in the descendants of the Catastrophe, but particularly in the 4th generation, whose members have experienced any traumatic event until the assassination of Hrant Dink. Indeed, as is also apparent in this fieldwork's findings, although we cannot see many explicit changes in the 2nd generation's attitude towards remembering, transmitting and claiming the past, even intuit that they have ossified their abstention, silence and partly their pessimism, one observes, on the contrary, different attempts to break the silence, recall the past as it had been lived, claim one's own identity in the 3rd and 4th generation. These attempts that should be read as a form of political action, the outcome of agency are the very acts of reconstruction of collective memory, or rewriting authentically the past on the basis of the interrelation tension between the past and present. Being etched into the recent past, the assassination of Hrant Dink, the affect of his death as well as the underlying reason of this murder are imprinted in the memory of Armenians in Turkey both to reflect the memory of their ancestors and to perceive the present-day. In this sense, Hrant Dink became a meaning-making apparatus, a symbolic framework that would make the gaps of the past fall into place, the past more fathomable and, thus enable the counter-collective memory more claimable before the state's authoritarianism.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation investigated and presented the issues of collective remembering and reconstruction of Armenian collective memory through the affect of Hrant Dink, notably aftermath of his killing in 2007, among Armenians in Turkey. It took us on a journey from Hrant Dink's writings and speeches, in short his discourses, about the tension between Turkish nationalist discourse, Turkish state's narrative of the past and the Armenian memory concerning the past atrocities, state violence and traumas of the past. His discourses told a counter-narrative of the past; the real-life stories he gave place in his columns and/or speeches, the stories that he listened from people he met in his life, and his lines about his own state of mind as an Armenian living in Turkey shattered and still shatters posthumously Turkish state's meta-narrative of the past. Analysing Hrant Dink's fight and struggle for creating relative equality between the conflicting memories, in other words for opening a pave for a discursive realm through which peoples of these lands would negotiate, face and, ideally, recognize the forgotten past of the Other, I accordingly trace the affect of Hrant Dink and his discourses, particularly aftermath of his assassination, on today's Armenians in Turkey.

Throughout my ethnographic fieldwork, to trace his affect on the reconstruction of the Armenian collective memory, I made participant observation in commemoration ceremonies, both commemorations of Hrant Dink (on 19th of January) and of the Armenian Genocide (on 24th of Aprils), as well as in several protests in the aim of claiming the truth of the past. Furthermore, I conducted fifteen in-depth interviews with Armenians in Turkey that I classified them in three generations -2nd, 3rd and 4th generation- on the basis of Karl Mannheim's 'theory of generation.'

I would like to point out that it was somewhat a difficult fieldwork- I had a difficulty to find my interviewees, specifically those from 2nd generations. I was rejected by tens of people who wanted to talk neither about the memories of their

(grand) grandparents nor Hrant Dink. However, each rejection as well as each silence of people I wanted to talk to and/or my interviewees was a data per se. In addition to this, it was difficult for me to conduct this ethnography in an ethical sense too. Most of the times I found myself criticizing myself, especially right after the interviews, for making my interviewees remember and talk to me about their (grand) grandparents' past memories that, perhaps, they would prefer not to know ever. My interviewees from 2nd generation kept mostly their guards up by their silence; silence was such self-defence against the past, whereas almost all my interviewees from 4th generation and many of those from 3rd generation did not choose to be silent. They preferred rather talking the past despite their emotional fluctuations during the interview, which caused me to criticize myself in turn. I do owe all my interviewees a debt of gratitude for their sharing their family stories, even secrets, and their doleful memories with me.

To mention the results obtained from my ethnographic fieldwork, I want start with the sense of belonging of my interviewees. As seen in the third chapter, I have discussed the notion of belongingness within the context of Derridian terms of 'home', 'hospitality', conditional and unconditional, and of the relationship between the sovereign and so-called guest before the master of the home. Their expressions indicate that all of the interviewees are aware of the fact that they belong to these lands where their parents, grandparents, even grand grandparent were born in. All of them consider themselves as one of the ancient peoples of these lands. However, what was interesting in their family story is that although almost none of them are originally from Istanbul, they all immigrated somehow to Istanbul and many of them have never gone to their original homeland ever since. Therefore, Dersim, Sasun, Bitlis, Diyarbakir, Van, and so on became but a nominal homeland in time, while Istanbul is the terminus for them. Furthermore, what was remarkable in the expressions of my interviewees from 3rd generation, especially whose ancestors were originally from Dersim geography, is their memories about the 'cities of exile', where they were forced to settle during the Dersim Massacres of 1938. Yet, considering their statements, for those who were

born in these way stations, as it were, the post-memory of 1938 is much more alive in contrast with the memory of 1915. One realizes mostly in the expressions of this group of interviewees, who were born in the exile, the sense of being *in-between*: they feel like they belong neither to their original homeland, be it cities in Dersim geography, nor to the city of exile they were born in or to Istanbul. As to the 2nd generation, they were much more pessimistic about their belongingness. They all know that they belong to these lands to the core, but a kind of nonchalance or lethargy was prevailing in their words. Unlike them, my interviewees from 4th generation were quite self-assertive: one does not see among the members of this generation any sense of being in-between or apathy toward their home(land), but an insistence and emphasis on where they belong to. Surprisingly, almost all of them know their family stories, the names and memories of their grandparents, even their grand grandparents. Having said that, one intuitively from their expressions senses the anxiety, or rather the sense of uneasiness.

Secondly, when it comes to remembering the ancestors and the homeland, the attitude of my interviewees toward remembering their original homeland, their interest in knowing, even visiting those cities or villages differs considerably from generation to generation. Starting from the 2nd generation, one sees that they are not willing to talk about their (grand)parents' cities or villages, they all knew their story though. As to the 3rd and 4th generation, my interviewees were quite aware of and interested in their (grand) (grand)parents' homeland. What was interesting is that for those who have visited there, they all were talking about frustration because of the immense gap between their imagination and the reality itself. The gap begets indeed emptiness in deep inside and meaninglessness. Even some of them were telling that they wished they had not visited there since what they had been picturing before was much better and familiar.

Thirdly, regarding remembering the memory of the Catastrophe, the expressions of my interviewees varied considerably from generation to generation. My interviewees from 2nd generation were all silent, even some of them were denying

the past- even if they did not explicitly reject the truth of the past; they were insisting somehow the easiness they feel. As to the interviewees from 3rd generation, there were two main inclinations. On one hand, some of them were telling me that their (grand)parents did not transmit them the past of their families and they somehow resigned themselves to maintaining the silence by not questioning the past or asking them the past so as to dig out the memory of their ancestors. Nevertheless, certain interviewees from this group, i.e. those who do not know their family stories because of the general silence in their family, told me as well that they tried to construct this post-memory by themselves either by visiting their ancestors' homeland in order to gather information about their roots, or reading books, particularly memoirs whose authors had been born in the same place with their (grand) grandparents. On the hand, the rest of them were telling me that they listened their family stories from their (grand)parents. Besides, what was interesting is that they were divided into two subgroups in themselves: While some of these interviewees told me that they did not prefer transmitting these memories to their own children or grandchildren because knowing these memories does not change anything in their life, even it often times makes them feel depressed and sorry; the others were arguing that transmitting what they inherited from their (grand)parents to their own (grand)children is their very duty. Finally, the interviewees from 4th generation were expressing their interest in knowing the past, the past of their own (grand) grandparent. A considerable amount of them made an effort to gather information about their ancestors, roots, and the experiences of their family members.

Fourthly, perhaps, the only point that my interviewees from each generation arrived at a consensus was the figure of Hrant Dink. The responses given were in no small measure similar to one another: Hrant Dink, in their eyes, was courageous, outspoken and revolutionist; the only speaking man among Armenians; who dared saying 'We, Armenians, are here and we belong to these lands'; laying for the first time claim to his belongingness to these lands; who found the true way to make people listen someone they consider as the Other and,

remember to a certain extent the truth of the past. Therefore, I suggested that he became one of the constitutive parts of the collective identity of Armenians in Turkey inasmuch as they think he managed to give the Armenian people voice and as his memory continues to do so aftermath of his death. Nevertheless, I have to indicate that my interviewees from the 2nd generation preferred relatively to keep their silence; perhaps because of the ‘pigeon-like unease’ they have been feeling deep inside when it comes to remember traumatic events of the past. Unlike them, one sees that the death of Hrant Dink has broken the silence among the members of the 3rd generation. It was quite obvious in their expressions that they identified or rather find themselves in an affirmative cathartic relationship with Hrant Dink himself, which means that Hrant Dink became a moral character in their eyes. They were empathizing themselves with him and his death; they were telling me that they do not fear to be killed because of their identity, and likewise, that they affirm publicly their Armenianness instead of castrating their desire for defending and revealing who they are and where they belong. And, as to the 4th generation, my interviews revealed that the death of Hrant Dink, for the Armenian youth in Turkey, was a spark-like event and its affect forced them to reconsider their relationship to the Turkish state; recollect and re-evaluate the past on the basis of the present needs. His death was a turning point for the youth in the sense of their politicization: the memory of Hrant Dink, including his discourses and writings, was alive as they formed their political identity in a strict relation with the very counter-collective memory that Hrant Dink was seeking to construct.

Accordingly, for the 3rd and 4th generation, but in particular the latter generation, i.e. Armenian youth in Turkey, I suggest that one sees the active side of memory in the sense that they do not only remember the past, but also take an action in the present either by revealing their Armenian identity in public or by opting to politicize on the basis of their identity. Therefore, thinking within the context of agency and subjectivity the death of Hrant Dink has transformed this relatively *passive* act of remembrance into an *active* process inasmuch as a good number of

middle-aged and young Armenian in Turkey construct a political identity in relation to their past and memory of their ancestors as well as in the aim of speaking out, laying claim to their truth of the past.

Fifthly, I discussed commemorations- I take them as bodily performances of remembering the past as well as of constructing and/or fortifying the collective memory of collectivities. Each of the interviewees from 3rd and 4th generation declared their attendance *at least* one of these commemorations. All my interviewees, young and middle-aged, told that they always attend the commemoration of Hrant Dink; their presence in the commemoration on each 19 January in front of Agos building is their binding duty incumbent upon them. Indeed, what was at stake in their statements is the cathartic state in which they found themselves – they feel the pigeon-like unease that Hrant Dink had felt right before his murder, even he had mentioned his state of mind in his last column. Besides, they also feel the burden of the past in the very space where the commemoration takes place. Because this space has already been laden with the affect – the very affect of the past memories of the as well as the memory of Hrant Dink and his struggles for the recognition of the past, their belongingness to the land, justice for the peoples of these lands. Therefore, I suggested that 19 Januaries became the very space of memory and identity conflict: the commemoration of Hrant Dink is evolved into a performance that is beyond, or much more a simple commemoration: it has turned into rather a performative space dedicated to call for Justice.

Lastly, considering the meaning of the killing of Hrant Dink in the eyes of my interviewees, one realizes from their expressions that his death is not considered as an event *per se*, but rather as a process. Each generation was arguing, explicitly or implicitly, the same: the genocide still continues. His death made them relieve the past: they linked the figure of Hrant Dink and his memory to the memory of the Catastrophe. Therefore, I suggested that Hrant Dink himself could be read in this sense as a counter-site of memory challenging the Turkish state's narrative of

the past, as one of the main constituents of the actual collective memory of Armenians in Turkey. His assassination became one of the milestones in the Armenian collective memory; even his death precipitated, perhaps, more the process of the reconstruction of Armenian collective memory in comparison with the things he did in his life. Thus, one might suggest that the trauma of his death has awakened the awareness and consciousness of the past in the descendants of the Catastrophe, but particularly in the 4th generation, whose members have experienced any traumatic event until the assassination of Hrant Dink. In this sense, he became a meaning-making apparatus, a symbolic framework that would make the gaps of the past fall into place.

Before concluding, I would like to make certain remarks about my dissertation. Of course, there are many studies and analysis, academic or semi-academic, about Armenians in Turkey, in particular about the memory of 1915 and Hrant Dink. However, I think the point that makes this ethnographic study different from the others is that its focus is neither the genocide nor the killing of Hrant Dink, but the way of how today's Armenians in Turkey (re)construct their collective memory on the basis of these two facts in despite of pervasive nationalist discourses. None of my interviewees were the survivors; they all somehow inherited the memories concerning the Armenian past of this land- the transmitted memoires, which took their places alongside the only common trauma experienced by all of them, that is the death of Hrant Dink. We all witnessed that Hrant Dink posthumously turned into something different than what he was in his life. He became a cult figure, as it were, as he or his death has crystalized the residues of the past in the very present. Thus, it was important for me to analyse how Armenians belonging to different socio-political background, i.e. generations, articulate his death with the past in the process of remembering and laying claim to the truth of the past as well as of reconstructing their counter-memory –which I think is one of the missing points in Armenian studies up to date.

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