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This is a preprint of an article whose final and definitive form has been published in *Democratization* © 2013 Taylor & Francis; *Democratization* is available online at:
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13510347.2012.668437>

Cite as:

Gellman, Mneesha (2013). "Remembering violence: the role of apology and dialogue in Turkey's democratization process." *Democratization* 20:4: 771-794.

**Remembering violence: the role of apology and dialogue in
Turkey's democratization process**

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In this article I ask the question: how do citizens use memories of violence in dialogue with a democratizing Turkish state? To address this, I unpack how memories of violence influence solidarity communities in addition to those who are direct descendents of survivors. I also examine how these solidarity communities are widening political space for contemporary dialogue about the Armenian Catastrophe. To demonstrate the connection between memory and political participation, I identify three discursive moments where Turkish and Armenian citizens invoke memory in dialogue with one other and with the state. I use the 2009 online campaign for a Turkish apology to address the Armenian Catastrophe, the aftermath of the murder of Hrant Dink in 2007, and a controversial 2005 academic conference on the events of 1915 as focal points to discuss how memory impacts the way people behave as citizens. My argument is twofold: first, elite-led solidarity networks play an integral role in shaping the discursive space between citizens, the state, and the international community; and second, dialogue about memory can grow space for citizen participation in Turkey.

Keywords: Armenian; Turkey; memory; dialogue; apology

They have flour, butter, and sugar. Why then cannot they make a cake? –
popular Turkish sage Nasrettin Hoca¹

Introduction

At a conference on minority rights in Turkey in 2002, Hrant Dink, an ethnically Armenian² journalist who founded the bilingual Armenian newspaper *Agos*, and who had lived in Istanbul since he was seven years old, made a statement for which he was later prosecuted by the Turkish state. Asked what he thought about the Turkish primary school requirement of reciting the phrase, 'I am a Turk, I am honest, I am hardworking', he said that 'although he was honest and hardworking, he was not a Turk'.³ For this statement, as well as for a

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2005 *Agos* column in which he critically discussed Armenian-Turkish relations and used the word 'genocide', Dink was prosecuted under Turkey's Penal Code 301, which defines 'denigrating Turkishness' as a crime; Dink responded that 'racism was the denigration'.⁴ This incident showcases the interrelationship between citizenship and identity politics for ethnic minorities and also draws attention to problems that internally hegemonic states face in democratization.

The Turkish Constitution allows freedom of thought and expression of those thoughts,⁵ though there are many articles in the Constitution, such as Articles 14 and 15, which allow the state to curtail these and other freedoms. The Turkish state wields not only constitutional or legal, court-based authority over its population, but also cultural dominance and the ability to use fear as a silencing tool. Dink's case was still in court at the time he was assassinated on 19 January 2007 in front of the *Agos* office in Istanbul. The murder, carried out by Ogu'n Samast, an unemployed teenager from Trabzon who has been linked to ultra-nationalists and gendarme conspirators,⁶ is in fact connected to a much wider web of 'deep state' or paramilitary repression against minorities and leftists in Turkey that is currently being investigated in the Ergenekon trials.⁷

Today, Turkey needs to allow free speech to increase its credibility as a democracy, but the Turkish government also appears to be profoundly threatened by freedom of expression. This is because individual actors, and the solidarity movement of academic elites that advocate on behalf of Turkey's ethnic minorities, use free speech to name the quotidian inequalities that minorities experience. By bringing to the public's attention the fact that Armenians living in Turkey do not identify as Turkish, Dink challenged both the constitutional and cultural assumptions of Turkish nationalism – that all who are born in Turkey identify as Turkish.⁸ His circle of colleagues invoked the out-pouring of support at his funeral as the critical historical juncture at which the momentum for real dialogue coalesced into a solidarity movement.

In this article I explore the process by which an elite-led social movement challenges state hegemony. Specifically, I ask the question: how do citizens use memories of violence to make rights claims on the democratizing Turkish state? To address this, I examine the coalitions of intellectuals and activists who attempt to widen political space for contemporary dialogue about the actions of the Ottoman state towards Ottoman Armenians in 1915. My underlying argument is twofold: first, that elite-led solidarity networks play an integral role in shaping the discourse in democratization processes; and second, that memory-based rights claims expand the space for citizen participation in Turkey. Although more recently studies of emotion and sequencing have been considered in the contentious politics literature,⁹ the scholarship on dialogue about memory and its connection to citizenship participation remains limited, and my work attempts to address this gap.

The outline of the article is as follows: first, I present the research puzzle and outline the key concepts used to address the research question. Conceptually, this

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includes memory, identity, violence, and citizenship, and theorizing the interaction between these components makes up the heart of the article. To illustrate the theory, in the second half of the article I present three elite-led moments of dialogue that have drawn on memories of violence and might affect how Armenians participate as citizens. Working in reverse chronological order, the first project addressed is the apology petition of 2009, an initiative of Turkish people apologizing to Armenians for the events of 1915. The second dialogue moment is the funeral march after Hrant Dink's assassination, and the third dialogue moment is a conference about 1915 that took place at Bilgi University in 2005. In all three of these moments, Turks and Armenians gathered together to discuss the interpretation of historical narratives about state violence. These three attempts at widening the space for dialogue explicitly use remembered violence as a catalyst for action and have, I argue, left lasting legacies regarding the quality of debate about pluralism in Turkey. In addition to drawing from the contentious politics and democratization literatures, data is included from interviews with scholars and journalists during my fieldwork in Turkey. Finally, I conclude with a plea to incorporate the role of memory, particularly memories of violence, in future research about dialogue during democratization.

The research puzzle

In this section I present the scope of the research and define key terms that are used throughout the article. The specific moments of dialogue probed in this article are conceptualized as mechanisms through which memory is able to exert an effect on the participation of people in the democratization process writ large. In the contentious politics literature, 'mechanisms' are occurrences or events that change relations between individuals or grouped units of analysis similarly across different contexts.¹⁰ In this article, dialogue is defined as a process that promotes verbal or textual interaction between parties who would otherwise avoid communicating with each other. Although the kind of interaction that takes place in dialogue may vary greatly, dialogue moments consistently promote interaction and foster an exchange of perspectives. Such moments, I posit, may be useful in reanimating relationships that have heretofore been marked exclusively by hostility. Dialogue opens the possibility for a reframing of past events through mutual discussion and negotiation of memory.

As those with access to power and resources, Turkish elites are well positioned to renegotiate how violence is memorialized in consultation with Armenians whose collective memories are more directly affected by the results. Without delving into the arguments about top-down versus bottom-up generated change,¹¹ it is assumed in this article that elite-led solidarity networks play a formative role in opening up the dialogue arena to new mechanisms that will reframe memories of violence in Turkey.¹² Though elites are more fully defined further on, it is important to keep in mind that the actors I am concerned with have real access to power, in that they are well educated agenda-setters who can

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shape the discourse of the country through use of media and academic institutional forums.

The connections between memory, identity, dialogue, and citizenship are all vital to the story told in this article; therefore, I want to make the links explicit here. The capacity to remember collectively is integral to identity formation and maintenance because collective memories contain the ontologies and epistemologies that people use to reinforce their senses of self, situated in community. To deny the validity of a collectively held memory that constitutes a portion of identity diminishes that identity through a manipulation of power. Though power as coercion often exists even in the most democratic of states, in the context of a democratizing Turkey, using state power to deny memories of violence that have been central to identity undermines Armenian claims to belonging. By casting Armenians as both 'outside' the acceptable state narrative of memory, but simultaneously as needing to be 'inside' Turkishness to be acceptable as citizens, both the Constitution and daily rhetoric diminish the Armenian sense of self-belonging that would encourage political participation.

The Minority Rights Group report on Turkey documents that minorities 'are seen as "foreigners" and any advocacy for their protection, particularly by European states, is seen as interference in internal affairs'.¹³ However, not all minorities wear the foreigner label equally. Sunni Kurds, for example, in exchange for silencing their Kurdish ethnic claims, have been more able to assimilate in Turkey as full citizens based on their Sunni Muslim religion that they share with the vast majority of Turks.¹⁴ Armenian Orthodox Christianity, on the other hand, essentially renders Armenians incapable of full assimilation, thus perpetuating their foreigner status even though generations of Armenian families have resided in Turkey.

But religion is not the sole issue that complicates full citizen participation by Armenians in Turkey. By denying the memory of the Armenian Catastrophe, the state perpetuates a narrative that disempowers Armenians by casting doubt on a foundational component of their identity. This paralyzes the Armenian community to a substantial degree, stymieing their political participation by weakening an epistemological attribute central to a common identity that could otherwise be used to mobilize. Denial of the 1915 events by Turkey has had larger diplomatic consequences as well, stalling the controversial reopening of the Turkey- Armenia border in 2009. In the end the deal was undone by the issue of control over Nagorno Karabakh, a disputed territory in Azerbaijan long claimed by Armenia, with Turkey supporting Azerbaijan's claim. However, the lack of apology from the Turkish state for the events of 1915 fed pessimism about the border negotiations among Armenians in both countries.

Less as a remedy and more as a starting point, I propose that dialogue moments can open communication channels to begin reversing this problematic pattern of disempowerment and deadlock. This logic draws from the work of Melissa Nobles in her book about how official apologies can influence the way national membership is experienced.¹⁵ Nobles defines 'membership in a political community' as taking shape legally, politically, and affectively¹⁶:

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The legal status of one's membership as a citizen (whether one is or is not a citizen) profoundly affects one's feeling of belonging, the political rights one may exercise, and one's perception and treatment by others. Conversely, feelings of detachment or satisfaction with membership may lead to lesser or greater participation, which may lead to the further loss or enhancement of political rights.¹⁷

My argument rests on Nobles' assertion that whether or not people perceive themselves as belonging can affect their behaviours of political detachment or engagement. First, defining citizenship as ethnically based in Turkishness, as seen in the Turkish Constitution, alienates those such as Hrant Dink who do not identify in this way yet participate actively in civic life. Second, denial of the events of 1915 has served to diminish Armenians' sense of belonging in Turkey, and has led to political non-participation that does not further a minority rights agenda. To some extent denial has created non-identification by Armenians with the state, a phenomenon that has been experienced in other post-violence countries. In Chile, for example, '[p]eople do not find in the political realm the symbolic representations that could serve them as a mirror through which to name the past and thus apprehend it. Given this lack of words and symbols, they opt for silence'.¹⁸

The moments of dialogue presented in this article address this silenced perception of self by affirming identity. By publicly recognizing what happened to Armenians in 1915 as a potent site of identity memorialization, elite Turkish solidarity coalitions impact the sense of Armenian belonging that in turn can foster increased political participation for this specific population, but also the citizenry at large as democratic practices become more mainstream. Dialogue moments, then, affirm memory-driven identity, and the resulting sense of belonging expands the potential for greater participation in the political arena. The dependent variable or outcome, namely participation, may take the form of institutionally channelled behaviour such as voting and petitioning, or extra-institutional behaviour such as public protest. These connections are not only potent for Turkey's internal democratization process, but also for its role in the international community.

The politics of remembering

In this section I provide the theoretical heart of the article by exploring concepts of memory and citizenship and how they function in relation to political behaviour. Memory as a cerebral function can be defined as the 'mental faculty of retaining and recalling past experience',¹⁹ but this is inadequate for operationalizing memory as the basis for political action. The anthropological and psychological literature describes memories as 'never simply records of the past, but...interpretive reconstructions that bear the imprint of local narrative conventions, cultural assumptions, discursive formations and practices, and the social contexts of recall and commemoration'.²⁰ Memory has a long history as a defining characteristic of selfhood. Aristotle philosophized about its role in human formation and believed that humans were formed through learning, which shaped our brains and made us more mature as we remembered.²¹ Thus, rather than mere

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neurological processing, memories both reinforce and are produced through narratives, informing the ontologies and epistemologies we use to navigate our lives as individual and social beings.

Definitions of memory often convey the sense that one is retaining an experience that one has lived through, whereas the literature on collective memory has established that memory may pass experiences on, both horizontally across social and geographic groups, and vertically down through the generations. The memories of violence that I explore enact both spatial and temporal movement, signifying that contemporary memory keepers may be thousands of miles, or multiple generations, away from the exploitation of power that first created the violent memory.

In this article, actors are *rememberers*, defined as direct descendents and solidarity community members, and *forgetters*, who constitute the majority of the Turkish public and successive government administrations, who routinely deliver both informal and official statements denying the events of 1915 as problematic for the national psyche or the nation's democratization process. A primary process explored here is the coalition-building between Armenian descendents of violence survivors and those non-Armenians who stand in solidarity. Solidarity communities – groups of actors who take up advocacy on behalf of people with less access to resources or power, in this case Armenians – actively participate in Turkey to challenge the suppression of collective memories that are integral to Armenian identity.

These solidarity communities are composed of what Tarrow labels 'rooted cosmopolitanists', who he describes as people 'rooted in specific national contexts, but who engage in contentious political activities that involve them in transnational networks of contacts and conflicts'.²² The rooted cosmopolitanists who join with Armenians to form solidarity coalitions can be defined as intellectual elites: academics, journalists, and non-governmental organization (NGO) workers who have access to media, financial resources, and a capacity to frame the issues in ways that resonate with the larger international community. Generally, this segment of the elite population: (1) resides on the political left, (2) has more exposure to their Western counterparts than only Turkish-speaking and Turkish-educated elites, (3) is multilingual, often speaking English, French, or German, due in part to being educated outside of Turkey, and (4) is also politically involved in Turkey's other divisive issues, for example, Kurdish autonomy and religious freedom characterized by the headscarf debate. Not only do these elites know how to capitalize on political opportunities like Turkey's European Union (EU) membership application, and mobilize resources necessary to stage conferences or publish books, they can also translate their message to the English, French, and German-speaking world. Indeed, the apology message online is posted in 13 languages.

Though Turkey is home to many different kinds of intellectual elites, based on these four characteristics above, I limit my focus in this project to elites coming distinctly from the left. Elite counterparts among Islamists and ultra-nationalists

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hold different agendas and are not currently prominent actors in facilitating real dialogue about the events of 1915, and therefore are not my focus here (though their powerful roles in other aspects of Turkish politics should not be dismissed). While there are certainly exceptions, the elite solidarity members in this article behave and perceive themselves more as global citizens than their Kemalist or Islamist counterparts who often support, at least tacitly, the state's policy of denial and confine their social networks to within Turkey. Of course, many leftist elites may have originally been inspired by Kemalist traditions of secularism and modernism, but ultimately they seek more international values than those espoused, for example, by the Kemalist Republican People's Party (CHP). The most tangible way this differentiation plays out is in the relationship of different elite groups to nationalism. While leftist Turkish intellectuals are by no means a homogenous group, they do generally criticize Turkish nationalism in a way that sets them apart from other intellectual elites.

In addition to the formation of solidarity coalitions, a secondary process in this democratization dialogue is the solidarity coalition's relationship with the state. The actors engage in several moments of dialogue that contest official policy in the arena of memory. The elite-led coalitions facilitating this contestation are integral to enabling active citizen participation by less powerful social groups. Tilly sees democratization processes entailing the formation of coalitions between social classes to bring marginalized people closer to centres of power.²³ Although a portion of the Armenian community has formed this kind of coalition with the Turkish leftist intellectual elite, there has been little exploration of this coalition as a participation promoting tool.

This article does not focus on the Turkish state, but it is worth mentioning because the state plays a monumental role in both the perpetuation of interethnic hostilities and the potential for reconciliation between ethnic groups. However, the notion of the state issuing an official apology remains ephemeral. This is because the Turkish state is bound to its historic policy of Turkification as modernization and therefore chooses not to recognize an event like the Armenian Catastrophe because such recognition would cast a negative pall over the state-building project and the legacy of Kemalism. Moreover, the state is bound to the public opinion its policies have manufactured, and deviance from the official discourse at this point could be labelled anti-nationalist. Rather than try to change this reality, the leftist Turkish elite has stepped up to offer the affirmation of identity memorialization that the state is unable to do by apologizing to Armenians. Although there is great concern in the political apology literature about who has the right to forgive on behalf of whom,²⁴ it is less contested that citizens may apologize to each other if their state is unwilling to participate in the ritual. Often elite pressure is needed to foment behaviour change among states and civil society alike, and such seems to be the case in Turkey.

While the role of the state in apology as mentioned above is important, the central focus of this article is the way the Armenian community has used memories of violence in identity construction and political behaviour. Around the world

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people create and maintain identity through narratives, which are the stories that people tell about themselves and that are reinforced by the social webs in which individual actors are embedded. Armenian citizen participation in Turkey is influenced by the memories of violence that shape the collective identities of this group. Related to this, ethnic minority communities such as Armenians that have experienced state-initiated violence use collective memory as cultural legacies to commemorate grievances, which in turn are used as identity rallying points. Furthermore, the subjectivity of memory – the recalling of an experience across space and time – will vary depending on the socially constructed narratives of the rememberers.²⁵ The events of 1915 within the Armenian community ‘produced an exceptionally strong feeling of ethnic cultural cohesiveness that provided Armenian intellectuals with reference points, causes, and an avid audience’.²⁶ Such reference points serve a collectively held historical memory that is denied by the Turkish state.²⁷

To create collective memory, however, there must first be collective identity, where people perceive that they are more similar to each other than to people of another group.²⁸ From the conflict resolution literature, we know that when confronted with an identity-threatening conflict, people will rely on their in-group identity all the more fiercely.²⁹ Thus, collective identity strengthens in the aftermath of identity-targeted violence, and even more so when collective memories of the violence, perceived as memorials to the victims, are challenged. In the case of Turkey, the Armenian community has clung to its collective identity and its collective memories, which put it in direct opposition to the state. This stance has hindered full citizen participation by Armenians in the democratizing Turkish state. The official negation of memory perceived as fundamental to group identity results in a silencing and sense of detachment for that group. Detachment, re-invoking Nobles’ point about the impact of apologies, may lead to less civic participation.³⁰

The role of memory in citizen behaviour becomes particularly pertinent with the added layer of historic state-driven violence. Although I refer more generally to ‘violence’ throughout this article, the specific definition of violence utilized comes from Charles Tilly’s work on coordinated destruction as a sub-category of collective violence. Tilly defines coordinated destruction as occurring when ‘persons or organizations specialized in the deployment of coercive means undertake programs of actions that damage persons and/or objects’.³¹ Furthermore, he allows that coordinated destruction can lead to genocide, in which attackers identify victims based on heritage categorization.³² Targeted bodily harm of Armenian-Ottomans by the Ottoman state – the killing of upwards of one million people – fits into Tilly’s definition of coordinated attacks and demonstrates the coercive relationships that then became stored in the memories of survivors, their descendants, and their solidarity communities.³³

Because of the sensitive nature of the topic it is important to clarify the terms employed to delimit the ‘incident’ itself. Depending on the audience, many vagaries are used to hint at past ethnic violence, such as the ‘Armenian question’, the ‘Armenian problem’, or the ‘catastrophe of 1915’.³⁴ While many scholars

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have debated terminology around 1915, sociologist Fatma Müge Göçek concisely presents the spectrum of Turkish words used to talk about what happened to the Ottoman-Armenian population in Turkey, with translations ranging from 'forced migration' to 'mass killing' or 'massacre'.³⁵ US-based Turkish historian Taner Akçam consistently deploys the word genocide to describe what Ottoman Turks did to the Armenian population in 1915.³⁶ Defined by Article II of the 1948 United Nations Convention on Genocide, acts of murder or violence 'committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group' reflect the reality that Akçam says Ottoman Armenians faced from Ottoman Turks. A member of the forced diaspora,³⁷ Akçam presents detailed documentation to justify his use of the term.³⁸ Moreover, it has been established by the larger international community as an appropriate description of what happened to Ottoman Armenians in 1915.³⁹ Nonetheless, the term 'genocide' remains highly controversial in Turkey today, and using it can shut down dialogue prematurely with those who would otherwise be open to discussing ethnic minority relations and political participation. Though 'massacre' can connote the seriousness of the violence against Ottoman Armenians in a somewhat less polarizing way, 'catastrophe' is the expression employed in the 2009 apology petition itself. Since 'catastrophe' is the term I often used during my fieldwork in Turkey to open dialogue with a range of people, it is also the term employed in this article to describe the events of 1915.

As with labels for violence, the body count of Armenians killed by Ottomans varies based on the source and is highly contested. Common estimates are that roughly 600,000–1,500,000 Armenians were killed in the deportations and massacres from 1915–1922,⁴⁰ though the Turkish government contends there were from 300,000–600,000 casualties.⁴¹ While exact dates and figures are still up for interpretation by scholars, the events of 1915 have left an indelible mark on the Turkish psyche. The myriad ways that one event can be framed through basic word choice or quantified numerically highlight the importance of elite intellectuals in the contestation of memory. Academics are often the producers of words, theories, and statistics that frame reality for the rest of the population through media and education forums. As the correct label and body count for the events of 1915 is continually renegotiated, elites, as part of broader solidarity coalitions, are trying to facilitate dialogue in the arena of memory that will prevent the Turkish state from hegemonically characterizing the Armenian Catastrophe as self defence.

Defining citizenship

Citizenship is taken to signify the status of a person with the duties, rights, and privileges of being bound to a specific territory governed by a state. This draws on Tilly's contractual definition:

Citizenship designates a set of mutually enforceable claims relating to categories of persons to agents of governments ... citizenship has the character of a contract:

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variable in range, never completely specified, always depending on unstated assumptions about context, modified by practice, constrained by collective memory, yet ineluctably involving rights and obligations sufficiently defined that either party is likely to express indignation and corrective action when the other fails to meet expectations built into the relationship.⁴²

Yet it has been the inability of Armenians to obtain this 'corrective action' that highlights the fragility of their citizenship. Though in theory each individual is bound to the same set of duties and rights as the Turkish Sunni majority, minorities as communities often lack the power to back up their rights claims. In part, this may be the case in Turkey because of minority groups' small numbers, but it may also have to do with the policy of Turkification that has characterized the development of the modern Turkish state.

Minorities, ethnically and religiously defined, do exist in Turkey.⁴³ Out of approximately 77 million citizens of Turkey, roughly 70 – 75% are ethnically Turkish, 18% are Kurdish, and 7 – 12% are 'others' such as Greeks, Armenians, Caucasians, Caferis, Rum, and Laz.⁴⁴ While the US government's 'CIA World Factbook' does not distinguish the Alevi from what it classifies as a 99.8% Sunni Muslim population, more discerning sources say that of the Turkish population, 10 – 33% of the total population are Alevi, with a breakdown of the remaining non-Muslims at 60,000 Armenians, 23,000 Jews, 16,000 Rum Orthodox Christians, and some 15,000 Syrian Orthodox Christians.⁴⁵ The temptation to overlook the potent diversity that exists both within Sunnis and among Turkish citizens should be resisted, as such homogenization obscures the real challenges that exist for the Turkish state to meet not just the needs of the majority population but those of the state's most neglected and oppressed citizens.

To be clear, Article 10 of the Turkish Constitution does protect the rights of *all* citizens from discrimination regardless of race or language.⁴⁶ However, Article 66 of the Constitution manipulates the definition of citizenship in such a way that all those 'bound to the Turkish state' are considered Turkish.⁴⁷ While straightforward at face value, this territorially derived definition of citizenship does not make space for identifying citizens such as Hrant Dink, who participated as a citizen in the Turkish state, but was, as he insisted, 'not a Turk'.⁴⁸ This definition points to the generalized ethnic and cultural assumptions wrapped into the package of the individual citizen, and can help dispel the notion that by including minorities as Turks under the Constitution, they will therefore be treated as equals. In fact, the territorial definition of citizenship is leveraged as an assimilation tool that makes all Turkish citizens the same, while disregarding the unique needs of various minority ethnic communities. The constitutional definition of citizenship in Turkey was the subject of much debate as the country prepared for the 2011 elections, but as of this writing, constitutional reform has not yet taken place. An article in *Hurriyet* described constitutional reform proposals put forth by the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) that would include adding a clause to Article 66 saying that citizens will not be discriminated against based on ethnicity but it has not been approved.⁴⁹

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The Turkish Constitution discriminates against its minority citizens in ways that fundamentally contradict the protections given to them under the Lausanne Treaty, signed between Turkey and the Allied powers in 1923. Under the treaty, Armenians, Jews, and Greeks were to be allowed to have their own schools conducted in minority languages, and the treaty obligated the Turkish government to create public, minority language schools in any location that had a concentrated population of one of these ethnic groups.⁵⁰ Yet Article 3 of the Turkish Constitution declares Turkish to be the national language, and Article 42 then makes it illegal to conduct education in any other language, in direct conflict with the Lausanne Treaty's provisions.⁵¹ Though exceptions have been made for the Lausanne minorities, as well as to allow English, French, Italian, and German-language schools in Turkey, no ethnic minority language education is technically allowed under the Constitution. While the Lausanne minorities continue to supersede various challenges to enforce the right to operate their own private schools in their own languages, the only way to continue minority language acquisition for Turkey's other minorities is through inheritance or private classes.⁵² The fact that even the Lausanne minorities have consistently struggled to obtain the access to their languages that the treaty commanded highlights the dire situations of Turkey's non-Lausanne groups who also want the right to education in their own languages, as well as the right to practice their own religious and cultural rituals.

If we take education to be a fundamental human right, as the United Nations (UN) has declared it to be in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNUDHR),⁵³ then Turkey's policy of Turkish-only education violates not only the Lausanne Treaty, but also UNUDHR's Article 26. This Article states that 'education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms'.⁵⁴ Though the Turkish government may counter that it does provide education to each citizen as per UNUDHR, by doing so only in Turkish the state is negating the ethnic heritage and associated cultural epistemologies that accompany language. This is but one of the ways that Armenians lack affirmation through official institutions.

Though Armenians are, as citizens, granted the right to vote, they are too small a population to elect an Armenian representative. Since the 1980s, even the choice of their electoral college through which the Armenian Patriarch is chosen has been dictated by Turkish government regulations, which insist that the fathers of electoral delegates must be Turkish citizens.⁵⁵ Generally, minorities in Turkey are required to 'be Turkish', to assimilate, in order to access their rights. Challenging the policy of assimilation, as Dink did, can lead to curtailed freedom through legal channels, such as Penal Code 301, but the diminishing of identity shows how this can happen more ephemerally. If Armenians refuse to accept the official Turkish state memory about the events of 1915, their inability to be Turkish in this way works against their ability to make rights claims as citizens.

Though individually citizens with guaranteed rights, Armenians' collective identity as an ethnic minority challenging state-sanctioned memory jeopardizes

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their ability to access their full range of rights. Yet constitutionally, in Articles 12 and 17, Armenians, as Turkish citizens, have the protected rights to express their identities through the right of liberty.⁵⁶ The denial of a fundamental historical event which shaped the legacy of Armenians for their descendents diminishes their identity by negating it. Armenian Turks today must downplay their ethnic identities in order to be welcomed into the arena of formal political participation.

To touch on a temporal dimension of Turkish citizenship, it should be noted that a constitutionally derived notion of citizenship, and specifically Turkishness, is a relatively recent phenomenon. In fact, 'claims premised on a direct relation between state and individual – date only to the middle decades of the nineteenth century, when sultanic regimes attempted to transform both the coercive and consensual means of rule'.⁵⁷ Citizenship was not the main objective of major reforms during the Ottoman Empire, but provides an interesting historical backdrop for understanding the way that contemporary Turkish citizenship has evolved. During the Tanzimat reforms of 1836 – 1879, 'the meaning of citizenship was continually reshaped by discussion and contention between majority and minority; between individuals, semiautonomous bodies, and an emerging legal and public sphere'.⁵⁸ Now, as under the Tanzimat, citizenship continues to be a malleable, powerful tool that is created, performed, and experienced in divergent ways by Turkey's residents. In addressing memories of violence in the Armenian community of contemporary Turkey it is critical to unpack the meaning of citizenship for minorities there, to better situate the challenges to identity-based political participation, and to foreshadow the significance of the moments of dialogue discussed below.

Dialogue moments

As ethnic minorities in Turkey today try to exercise their rights and acquire recognition in the public sphere, they face denial and blocked channels for dialogue. However, a select solidarity community of elite scholars is trying to open the dialogue channels. This section presents recent moments of dialogue that illustrate coalition-building between solidarity communities and descendents of violence survivors in order to promote citizen participation in Turkey.

Official apologies

Apologies by governments to minority populations have caught on in recent years, particularly among former British colonies: New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and the United States have apologized in some way to their indigenous peoples and Great Britain apologized to Ireland for its role in the potato famine.⁵⁹ Less consolidated democracies have also used apologies to address past grievances. The Salvadoran government, led by Mauricio Funes, apologized in January 2010 for the government's role in El Salvador's civil war. The lesson from these apologies relevant to the discussion of Turkey is that they demonstrate the kind of language

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and political space necessary to generate a discourse. Though democratizing countries may still feel threatened by the people to whom the government has a moral obligation to apologize, the act of powerful states apologizing has in a sense paved the way for weaker states to do the same. In each case, the government did not decide on its own to offer an apology, but rather prior civil society petitioning facilitated its manifestation. Turkey's solidarity community may serve this petitioning purpose as they offer a people-led apology that could bring enough international attention to eventually shame the state into some degree of grievance recognition.

As a verbal or textual arena in which states can address past offenses committed towards specific populations, apologies can have the goal of promoting peace, national cohesion, or simply increased credibility of the regime. Apologies fit into the theoretical framework of this article in that they are statements crafted by elite actors in discursive arenas directed towards marginalized communities. As presented earlier, Melissa Nobles argues that apologies can change the conditions of national membership, in part because they 'validate reinterpretations of history by formally acknowledging past actions and judging them as unjust'.⁶⁰ In line with her work, I take apologies to be a type of dialogue fostering tool that can affirm memories integral to identity. In turn, this affirmation can induce a greater sense of belonging to, and interest in, participating in the polity.

The relatively new apology movement in Turkey, though not state-led, has still had a powerful effect on the discourse about memory in Turkey. Barkan terms the apology trend in Turkey the rediscovery of guilt, which gains prominence the more denial appears as a losing political strategy.⁶¹ Though these apologies do not carry with them monetary compensation, they do affect the tenor of public discourse. Kevin Rudd, when he was Prime Minister of Australia, made the first ever apology to Aboriginal Australians in 2008, shortly after he assumed office.⁶² The impact of this apology was such that white Australians became more aware of the colonial legacy of the country and the abuse that Aboriginal people suffered, and continue to suffer, as a result of racist policies. Moreover, it had the effect of legitimizing Aboriginal people as valid citizens of the Australian state whose rights had been violated. Though some people, including Aboriginals, say that apologies should include reparations to address the inequalities that state-induced suffering produces, it is undeniable that the verbal apology alone raised the level of debate within Australia about the treatment of Aboriginal Australians.⁶³ Even as the Australian apology was transmitted through the media, discourses of the state's obligations and citizens' rights came to life both in Parliament and at kitchen tables. Why then could such a verbal arena not be the seat of discursive change in the Turkish case?

An unofficial apology

The online apology petition, *o'zu'r diliyorum*,⁶⁴ was started in Turkey in January 2009 by a small group of scholars and journalists. The text of the apology

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campaign, spearheaded by Cengiz Aktar, head of EU Studies at Bahçesehir University, and Ali Bayramoglu, a prominent writer and public intellectual, is as follows:

My conscience does not accept the insensitivity showed to and the denial of the Great Catastrophe that the Ottoman Armenians were subjected to in 1915. I reject this injustice and for my share, empathize with the feelings and pain of my Armenian brothers and sisters. I apologize to them.⁶⁵

Launched on 21 January 2009, more than 30,000 individuals signed the statement, and the majority did so within the first month of its circulation.⁶⁶ This apology is significant on many levels, but I focus on the way that a coalition of elite actors merged together to address an individual and community-held memory and rejected the Turkish state's official policy of denial. Such an approach returns us to the initial question this article explores: how do citizens participate in democratization processes when state narratives challenge their own memories of violence? While for many years of Turkey's democratization Armenians were unable to manifest sustained, contentious collective action, it seems that the support of solidarity communities in arenas of dialogue promotion has been integral to overcoming participation stagnation.

Though acknowledging that the petition began as an elite discourse from within the academic community, Aktar says it quickly stimulated public debate and dialogue through dispersion on blogs and in newspapers.⁶⁷ In fact, the main-stream public reaction to the petition was harsh (but also evidence of its widespread impact), with 11 counter-petitions formed online, saying things like 'we are ashamed of you for apologizing'.⁶⁸ One of the counter-petitions garnered upwards of 85,000 signatures, though doubts about the authenticity of the signatures abounded. Regardless, the counter-petitions, particularly one crafted by Turkish ex-diplomats, were widely publicized in the media, reinforcing the state narrative of denial and illuminating the scale of the challenge to initiate dialogue about the Catastrophe. Abundant hate mail and threats also came to initiators and prominent signatories. On the one hand hate mail can also be considered freedom of expression, like the apology petition itself, but threats to well-being cross the line of expression, violating the recipient's right to security. Sending hate mail that carries threats is a fear tactic designed to limit contestation of citizenship identity in Turkey and perpetuate unequal access to rights claims for Armenian Turks and their solidarity communities. The menacing way that opponents rejected the apology campaign can also be seen as indicative of incomplete democratization regarding civil liberties in Turkey.

While the text of the apology addresses the incidents of 1915, it metaphorically also addresses the problem of denial that has undermined Armenian identity for the last century. The ability to 'name the problem', as Ferda Keskin of Bilgi University puts it, is a compelling example of citizen participation in a rights-demanding form that is a useful indicator of democratic quality in Turkey.⁶⁹ Elite allies have clearly played a pivotal role in fostering moments of dialogue, but this is often the case

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when minority groups lack access to resources. By forming coalitions, individual and collective actions support the expansion of minority group power while furthering the elite agenda of increased democratization that entails greater freedom of expression.

While the intricacies of how the apology campaign was perceived by Armenians are not documented here, in general it seems that the campaign increased the willingness of the Armenian community to open up to solidarity coalitions interested in working with them. The apology campaign in this sense reinforced the sense of solidarity that began with the identity commonality seen at Hrant Dink's funeral, where Turks came out in the streets to support and speak out for the Armenian community. However, the politics of these solidarity coalitions remain tense – as Aris Nalcı, Redactor-in-Chief at *Agos*, put it – ‘there are people in the Turkish left who use the word genocide in private but the word catastrophe in public’.⁷⁰ Though he understands politically why solidarity activists make this kind of choice, Nalcı noted that such language-swapping feels insincere and may prove to be a stumbling block in building solidarity coalition strength.

Returning to Tilly's coalition-building as a part of collective action, the apology petition does denote a collective action, but also the importance of each individual that makes up the collective. Academic and public intellectual Ahmet Insel stated that ‘everyone signed this statement on their own conscientious assessment... [T]here are as many motives for signing on as the number of signatories’.⁷¹ Yet there is also a common platform on which the coalition can base its action, namely ‘the need to face our history without having to bow to any taboo, ban or pressure’.⁷² Keskin describes how, regardless of any personal connection to the events of 1915, ‘by being a citizen of this nation-state, I feel bad about it, and I apologize’.⁷³ This shared response allowed individual actors to mobilize together in the discursive arena. By joining forces with those who have less access to power, elite-led solidarity communities use the apology as a discursive tool to promote interaction in the arena of memory.

In some ways, textual dialogue can feel safer than face-to-face discussion because of the ability to revise one's words prior to them being publicized, and mass movements provide a safety in numbers that can be comforting for people unwilling to make controversial statements alone. The internet in this scenario grants greater political expression and distribution, but was (and is) also used as a mouthpiece for hate.⁷⁴ By placing their names on the apology petition, Turkish citizens are calling for increased discussion and revision of the national memory as it pertains to the Armenian community. The act puts one's reputation on the line and essentially says, ‘I am ready to talk about things that are difficult.’

The 2007 funeral of Hrant Dink. While Dink, as seen in the opening vignette of this article, could be rather blunt in his personal identity politics, his life's work, as shown through the creation of *Agos* newspaper, was dedicated to the idea of robust democratic dialogue and identity pluralism. Though Turkish nationalists feared Dink's call for dialogue on both the history of Armenians in Turkey as well as contemporary ethnic minority rights, Dink was also instrumental in opening up greater

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discourse about engaged citizenship within the Armenian community living in Turkey. As a colleague wrote in a memorial edition of *openDemocracy Quarterly* dedicated to Dink:

The bitter tragedy of his death is that *Agos* was an expression of his dedication to a debate not with Turkish nationalists but with his fellow Armenians. He felt that they were too much in the grip of the Armenian diaspora's obsession with the genocide between 1915 – 1917. He wanted to talk, write and publish about it freely and honestly, of course. But with the hope of this allowing Armenians to become normal, healthy citizens of a modern democratic Turkey.⁷⁵

Hrant Dink's death provoked a tremendous reaction from a heterogeneous portion of Turkish society. People took to the Istanbul streets at his funeral – some estimate more than 100,000 – holding signs and chanting 'we are all Armenians' and 'we are all Hrant Dink'. At this particular historic moment, solidarity transcended ethnicity in Turkey and allowed what Sidney Tarrow calls 'contentious collective action' to take place; when people who normally do not have access to political power via institutions gather together to voice a claim that challenges authority through sustained interface.⁷⁶ For many Turkish people, the funeral march was the first time they raised their voices in support of the Armenian community in Turkey. For Armenians, the event marked the first time many saw large scale identity solidarity from Turkish people who were generally thought of as persecutors. Transcending ethnic boundaries and discursive divides in the streets of Istanbul, people honoured the life of Dink while challenging the impunity and violence of the deep state. Nearly everyone interviewed cited the funeral march as a turning point in the relationship between Armenian activists and the elite Turkish left. The momentum generated at Dink's funeral continues today through the Hrant Dink Foundation and various solidarity communities, such as families of murdered Turkish journalists who protest in his name, and at court- side demonstrations whenever Dink's case is in front of a judge, organized by mostly Turkish activists and intellectuals.

The 2005 conference on academic responsibility. Academic dialogue was attempted most visibly through the conference entitled 'Ottoman Armenians during the Era of Imperial Decline: Academic Responsibility and Issues of Democracy', intended to take place at Bogaziçi University in Istanbul 25 – 27 May 2005. Organized by scholars from Bogaziçi, Bilgi, and Sabancı universities, the conference came under heavy scrutiny from both ruling and opposition parties of the Turkish government that led to its delay. Der Matossian commented that the conference was 'an important step for Turkish liberal historiography, because for the first time since the founding of the Turkish republic in 1923, a meeting within a Turkish university questioned the state narrative'.⁷⁷

Nationalists were enraged at their narrative being questioned in this way, and they let participants know it by throwing refuse at them as they entered the conference.⁷⁸ Additionally, denialists complained to the public university where the conference was first supposed to be held. Bogaziçi's president received hate mail and

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calls about the fact that tax dollars would be used for the event, which contributed to the conference being moved to the privately funded Bilgi University.⁷⁹ Moreover, a civil organization called the Jurists Union filed a petition to the courts asking that the conference be shut down based on its potential to damage the nation's reputation, and two of three judges upheld the petition, citing rather transparent denialist rhetoric to justify their decisions.⁸⁰ Eventually, Bilgi University held the conference on 24 – 25 September 2005, but not before the Turkish government had tried to ban it, with then Minister of Justice Cemil Çiçek (as of this writing Speaker of the Parliament and affiliated with the Islamist party),⁸¹ describing it as 'treason against Turkey'.⁸²

This incident points to the perilous role of academia as an arena of free thought and expression in a restricted though democratizing state. Individual elite actors have stepped into this arena to access their rights claims through expression that challenges the state narrative, but they do so at risk of their jobs and reputations. From the state perspective, however, limiting free speech is seen as imperative to preserving historic truths within the collective memory. On the other side of the argument, European legislation has made it illegal to deny the Holocaust, thus using restrictions of freedom of expression to preserve integrity of the collective memory of state-sponsored violence.

In the case of Turkish and Armenian advocacy, if free speech is taken out of academia and this link in the elite solidarity community network is dissolved, it is uncertain if other arenas would host the voices of survivors' descendents. Scholars play key roles in relation to citizen expression and participation because they pedagogically disseminate norms and discourses in classrooms, conferences, and writings. However, US-based Turkish sociologist Fatma Müge Göçek observes that when scholars engage with trauma and its historical actors:

[t]he conventional distance that scholars place between themselves and their texts is no longer there; the strategic negotiation enables scholars to do a couple of things simultaneously: they capture the complexity of the trauma, contextualize it without normalizing it, and, by reflecting on their own subject position during the process, are able to clarify their ethical stand in relation to the trauma.⁸³

Academics and other public intellectuals in Turkey hold a grave responsibility to keep the dialogue process rolling despite extreme resistance from the Turkish state. To draw on the language of the contentious politics literature,⁸⁴ academics facilitate dialogue within the arena of memory. Their role as elites in contesting the state narrative appears indispensable to the momentum of the movement.

For democratizing countries like Turkey, owning up to the unjust origins of the modern state is not yet going to happen at the regime level, but it is starting to happen within civil society. EU scholar Ahmet Evin said he does not think memory should inhibit the development of a modern nation state.⁸⁵ Yet he concedes that in the context of Turkey and the events of 1915, traumatic memory, for both the regime and the Armenian community, does seem to be complicating the democratization process.⁸⁶ Oral historian Leyla Neyzi is more forthright in linking memory and

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Turkey's political development. 'The modernization project in Turkey', she asserts, 'is about forgetting'.⁸⁷ Elite solidarity coalitions challenge this reality by trying to facilitate both democratization via EU channels, and memorialization of identity via dialogue moments in Turkey.

Conclusion

In this article I have argued that what transpires in the memory arena informs political participation, and that citizenship in Turkey is inextricably bound up with identity in ways that can influence the quality of democracy. Dialogue about memory is one tool that can expand participation space for all Turkish citizens. For Armenians, such dialogue may play a role in the reassertion of their right to non-Turkish identity as a fundamental right of citizenship in Turkey.

I have described the role that solidarity communities play in creating coalitions with Armenians, and have discussed memory and dialogue arenas as integral spaces for emerging frameworks of collective action. Through fieldwork findings, a snapshot of Turkey's elite-led dialogue about the Armenian Catastrophe has been created. The online apology petition of 2009, the funereal outpouring after the death of Hrant Dink in 2007, and the 2005 academic conference were presented as dialogue moments operating in arenas of memory that have opened up space for ethnic minority and solidarity citizen expression. To be realistic, it is noted that dialogue within select communities will itself not change political behaviour. A wide swath of Turkish society exists outside the dialogue and in fact stands in opposition to it. The claim here has been more subtle; that dialogue serves as a window through which Armenians and members of solidarity communities can glimpse other ways of being in relationship with each other. Dialogue is the first step to engaging alternative ontologies.

Acknowledgements

I thank Mert Arslanalp, Edward Gibson, William Reno, and Joshua Dankoff for their insightful comments on previous drafts of this article. Financial support for fieldwork came from the Buffett Center for International and Comparative Studies and the Keyman Family Program in Modern Turkish Studies, for which I am grateful. An earlier version of this article was presented at the International Praxis Conference on Cultural Memory and Coexistence in Istanbul, 2011, whose participants provided helpful feedback, as did two anonymous reviewers for this journal. I alone am responsible for any errors.

Notes

1. Cited in Mango, *Turkey: A Delicately Poised Ally*, 11.
2. Please note that throughout this article, the label 'Armenian' refers only to Armenians living within the territory of Turkey.
3. Dink, 'A Pidgeon-Like Unease of Spirit', 27; Hilton, 'Hrant Dink: An Opendemocracy Tribute'.
4. Literary figure Orhan Pamuk has also been tried for denigrating Turkishness after saying in an interview with the Swiss press that a million Armenians and 30,000

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- Kurds in Turkey have been killed – such an allegation constitutes a crime under Penal Code 301 and is punishable by six months to three years in prison, see Belge, ‘The Trials of Turkish Writers’.
5. Republic of Turkey, *The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey*, Articles 25, 26.
 6. Young Civilians and Human Rights Agenda Association, *Ergenekon Is Our Reality*, 47–9.
 7. For a brief primer on Ergenekon see *ibid.*
 8. The notion of territorially derived, unshakable identity stretches back to the Ottoman Empire. Article 8 of the 1876 Constitution reads: ‘All subjects of the Empire are called Ottomans, without distinction, whatever faith they profess; the status of *an Ottoman* is acquired and lost, according to conditions specified by law’, emphasis in original, Salzmann, ‘Citizens in Search of a State’, 66.
 9. Aminzade et al., *Silence and Voice in the Study of Contentious Politics*.
 10. McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*, 24.
 11. Higley and Gunther, *Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe*; Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*; Rueschemeyer, Huber Stephens, and Stephens, *Capitalist Development and Democracy*.
 12. This role for elites indicates a level of civil society robustness that is important for increasing citizenship participation in democratizing states. For opinions on this debate, see Collier, *Paths toward Democracy*; Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*; Viterna, ‘Pulled, Pushed, and Persuaded’.
 13. Kaya, *Forgotten or Assimilated?*, 8.
 14. While Sunni Kurds are able to use religious commonality as a basis for assimilation, this is not the case for Alevi Kurds, who are rendered outsiders by both their religious and ethnic identities, as in the town of Dersim/Tunceli.
 15. Nobles, *The Politics of Official Apologies*.
 16. *Ibid.*, 36.
 17. *Ibid.*
 18. Lechner and Gu“el 1999, 194–5, cited in Jelin, *State Repression and the Labors of Memory*, 101.
 19. *The American Heritage College Dictionary*, 850.
 20. Antze and Lambek, *Tense Past*, vii.
 21. Bloch, ‘Internal and External Memory’, 218.
 22. Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism*, 29.
 23. Tilly, *Democracy*, 76–7.
 24. Digeser, *Political Forgiveness*, 112–15.
 25. See Antze and Lambek, *Tense Past*, xviii–xix for a discussion of this.
 26. Derluguian, *Bourdieu’s Secret Admirer in the Caucasus*, 189.
 27. The way that the policy of denial affects the Armenian diaspora is quite different, as diasporans are able to have the benefits of citizenship elsewhere while holding on to a collective memory as a basis for ethnic identity. Armenians in Turkey, however, are faced with this problem through daily disadvantages as citizens, such as having no real representative government that speaks to their needs.
 28. Coy and Woehrle, *Social Conflicts and Collective Identities*, 3.
 29. *Ibid.*, 7.
 30. Nobles, *The Politics of Official Apologies*, 36.
 31. Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence*, 103.
 32. *Ibid.*, 104.
 33. See Mango, ‘Remembering the Minorities’, 276 – 7, for a problematic juxtaposition of Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis’ work on Armenian casualties to that of Justin McCarthy; and Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy*, 140, for a breakdown of several sources.

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34. Damat Ferid Pasha decries the use of the term 'deportation', as the Armenians were not resettled but driven out, thus he says 'expelled' would be a better description. See Akc,am, *A Shameful Act*, 267.
35. Mu'ge Go'c,ek, 'Turkish Historiography and the Unbearable Weight of 1915', 338.
36. Akc,am, *A Shameful Act*.
37. Akc,am received asylum in Germany in 1978 after breaking out of Ankara's Central Prison one year into a nine-year sentence that he received for being the editor of a radical leftist journal.
38. Akc,am, *A Shameful Act*.
39. International Association of Genocide Scholars, 'Open Letter to Prime Minister of Turkey'.
40. In everyday discussion it seems that this time period becomes compressed to just 1915, the year of the largest single massacre, though the whole time period was in fact part of the catastrophe.
41. Suny, *Looking toward Ararat: Armenia in Modern History*, 217. Also Akc,am, *A Shameful Act*, 4.
42. Tilly, 'Conclusion: Why Worry About Citizenship?', 253.
43. Some scholars, such as Michele Penner Angrist have called Kurds Turkey's 'sole significant ethnic minority' (Penner Angrist, 'Turkey: Roots of the Turkish-Kurdish Conflict and Prospects for Constructive Reform', 388), but members of the ethnic and religious minority groups listed here might disagree with her.
44. CIA, 'CIA World Factbook – Turkey'.
45. Kaya, *Forgotten or Assimilated?*, 10.
46. Republic of Turkey, *The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey*, 3.
47. *Ibid.*, 21.
48. Hilton, 'Hrant Dink: An Opendemocracy Tribute'.
49. Daily News Parliament Bureau, 'Pro-Kurdish Party Introduces Own Draft on Constitution'.
50. Kaya, *Forgotten or Assimilated?*, 8.
51. Republic of Turkey, *The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey*, 2, 14.
52. Kaya, *Forgotten or Assimilated?*, 8–9.
53. United Nations General Assembly, 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights'.
54. *Ibid.*
55. Minority Rights Group International, *World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples – Turkey – Armenians*.
56. Republic of Turkey, *The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey*.
57. Salzmann, 'Citizens in Search of a State', 38.
58. *Ibid.*
59. Barkan, 'Can Memory of Genocide Lead to Reconciliation?', 391.
60. Nobles, *The Politics of Official Apologies*, 112, 174.
61. Barkan, 'Can Memory of Genocide Lead to Reconciliation?', 396.
62. BBC, 'Full Text: Apology to Aborigines'.
63. Since in the Turkish case the notion of reparations is unimaginable at this point in time, I try to evaluate the significance of the discursive arena alone, without taking on the challenge of monetary calculations for state-induced violence.
64. The petition is available at <http://www.ozurdiliyoruz.com>.
65. Insel, "'This Conduct Was a Crime against Humanity": An Evaluation of the Initiative to Apologize to the Armenians', 1.
66. *Ibid.*
67. Cengiz Aktar, Interview with Mneasha Gellman on 26 June 2009, Istanbul, Turkey. Aktar has also published a book on this topic that provides background. See Aktar, *L'appel Au Pardon: Des Turcs S'adressent Aux Arme'niens*.

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68. Aktar, Interview with Mneesha Gellman on 26 June 2009.
69. Ferda Keskin, Interview with Mneesha Gellman on 16 June 2009, Istanbul, Turkey.
70. Aris Nalci, Interview with Mneesha Gellman on 22 July 2010, Istanbul, Turkey.
71. Insel, "‘This Conduct Was a Crime against Humanity’": An Evaluation of the Initiative to Apologize to the Armenians', 2.
72. Ibid.
73. Keskin, Interview with Mneesha Gellman on 16 June 2009.
74. As an example of interactive popular media that can influence dialogue, the entry for 'Armenian genocide' in Wikipedia was vandalized, editing privileges restricted, and the content declared disputed, showing how the politics of apology are far from resolved, and the public discussion remains highly charged. Similarly, non-interactive websites that deny the Armenian massacres, such as 'tallarmentale.com' have taken to embedding photos from their sites in less political websites about Turkey in order to get users to click the photo link, which then takes them to a distressingly denialist website.
75. Barnett, 'Hrant Dink: Do Not Fear'.
76. Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, 2.
77. Der Matossian, 'Venturing into the Minefield', 382.
78. Fatma Go'k, Meeting with Mneesha Gellman on 30 June 2009, Istanbul, Turkey.
79. Ibid.
80. Belge, 'The Trials of Free Speech in Turkey'.
81. From 2003 – 2007, C, ic,ek served as Minister of Justice under the Justice and Development Party (AKP), but he started his career as a Member of Parliament with the Motherland Party (ANAP) in the 1980s.
82. In Der Matossian, 'Venturing into the Minefield', 382.
83. Go'c,ek, 'Turkish Historiography and the Unbearable Weight of 1915', 355.
84. McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*.
85. Ahmet Evin, Interview with Mneesha Gellman on 23 June 2009, Istanbul, Turkey.
86. Ibid. Although Japan has long been democratic, it is interesting to note that controversy over memory about sexual slavery during World War II contributed to former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's resignation. From: Freedom House, *Freedom in the World – Japan*. Also, for more on Japan's unwillingness to apologize to China for war crimes, perpetuating its isolation see Nobles, *The Politics of Official Apologies*, 1.
87. Leyla Neyzi, Interview with Mneesha Gellman on 25 June 2009, Istanbul, Turkey.

Notes on contributor

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