

**Il viaggio in Armenia**

Dall'antichità ai nostri giorni

a cura di Aldo Ferrari, Sona Haroutyunian, Paolo Lucca

# Kemal Yalçın: Opening Silenced Memories, Seeing the Invisible

Gaiane Muradian

Yerevan State University

**Abstract** Voyaging throughout the villages and towns of historic Armenia, dissident Turkish writer Kemal Yalçın discovers hidden, secret or crypto-Armenian families whose disguise of national identity, suppression of memories of historic catastrophes and fear of discrimination are experienced as personal tragedies. Yalçın describes his journey of discovery of silenced memories and invisible identities in his book *You Rejoice My Heart* (2007) – a documentary, fact-based collection combining features of a novel and political history blended together. The significant point that the present paper emphasises is the fact that the recording of the pain and the hopes of hidden Armenians is Kemal Yalçın's autobiographical confession and his protest against Turkish nationalist and chauvinist policy, against the intolerance and aggression of Turkish authorities and his recognition of the Genocide of Armenians in 1915.

**Keywords** Kemal Yalçın. Turkey. Journey of discovery. Genocide. Free expression. Crypto-Armenians.

**Summary** 1 Introduction. – 2 Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code and the Right of Free Expression. – 3 Kemal Yalçın's Journey of Discovery. – 4 Conclusion.

## 1 Introduction

The infamous Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code claims that “denigrating Turkishness” or “degrading Turkish nation” is a crime deserving a three-year jail term. The article is a threat to Turkish intellectuals (professors, journalists, editors, writers) who support the right of free expression and criticize the nationalistic and chauvinistic policy of the Turkish authorities. The article is against any dissent, and in many cases refers to intellectuals who openly speak and write about the deportation and Genocide of the Armenian population of



Edizioni  
Ca' Foscari

**Eurasiatica 17**

e-ISSN 2610-9433 | ISSN 2610-8879

ISBN [ebook] 978-88-6969-497-4 | ISBN [print] 978-88-6969-498-1

**Peer review | Open access**

Submitted 2020-05-15 | Accepted 2020-06-23 | Published 2021-07-12

© 2021 | Creative Commons 4.0 Attribution alone

DOI 10.30687/978-88-6969-497-4/009

149

Turkey. Cengiz (2019) claims that the sudden flux of intellectuals on trial is not a coincidence, but signifies “the resurgence of a taboo against the mere mention of one issue: the 1915 Armenian Genocide” (see also Akçam 2006; 2008; Case 2013). As stated by Algan (2008, 2240), Article 301 continues to be of paramount importance from the point of view of not only its juridical aspect, but also the political one. Its application can unavoidably undergo dramatic changes depending on the changes in the political atmosphere, as well as the legal and interpretative attitudes in the field of civil and political rights. The liberticidal approach underlies this legal text, and its application is, to a great extent, related to the understanding and interpretation of the fundamental values of human rights (including freedom of expression) by sovereign powers, their state structures and especially by the judiciary.

The Turkish writer Kemal Yalçın, persecuted for his political views in Turkey, would have faced a trial under Article 301 if he had not fled in 1981 to Germany.<sup>1</sup> The dissident writer is the author of many books, and has won several awards. This particular journey of Yalçın took him throughout many villages and towns of historic Armenia and resulted in a book entitled *You Rejoice My Heart* (2007)<sup>2</sup> dedicated to the memory of Hrant Dink. According to the author, the book was initially published in Turkey but its 3,000 copies were destroyed at the publishing house, and only after ten years of court trials, he finally managed to republish his documentary, fact-based collection about Armenian families living in various regions of Turkey (Yalçın 2015).

Combining features of the novel, memoir, autobiography and political history blended together with gripping poetic prose, *You Rejoice My Heart* brings together men and women whose lives have been fashioned by fear of retribution from a state that cultivates hatred for everything Armenian. Poignantly it measures the emotional and psychological cost of having to disguise national identity, suppress memories of historic catastrophes that were experienced as personal tragedies, of having to pray in the dark of midnight, of having to speak one’s own language behind closed doors or not at all. But most importantly it tells of the enduring nobility of spirit by those who have had an aspect of their very essence entombed in dark and debilitating silence. (Arnavoudian 2008, 3-8)

**1** Kemal Yalçın was born in 1952 in Turkey’s southwestern Denizil province. After earning degrees in education and philosophy, Yalçın became a journalist and was the editor of the Turkish *Halkın Yolu* (The Way of the People) newspaper before leaving for Germany. He was also for some time a lecturer in the Department of Turkish Studies at the University of Essen.

**2** In addition to Turkish, *You Rejoice My Heart* has been published in English (London: Gomidas INST), Italian, Armenian, Spanish and French. The book presents both the physical voyage of the author and the hidden journey of Armenians inhabiting Turkey.

## 2 Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code and the Right of Free Expression

Part 3 of the Turkish Penal Code (“Offences against the Symbols of State Sovereignty and the Reputation of its Organs”) includes Article 301 which took effect on June 1, 2005, and was introduced as part of a package of penal law reform in the process preceding the opening of negotiations for Turkish membership to the European Union (EU), in order to bring Turkey up to Union standards. However, already in December 2005, Amnesty International (2005) claimed that Article 301 was a direct threat to human rights and fundamental freedoms. The fact is that the Article made it a crime to “*denigrate Turkishness*”. This wording was drawn broadly so as to criminalize a wide range of critical comments, reports and opinions expressing disapproval or negative attitude to anything related to Turks and Turkey. Initially the text did not come to attention, but it loomed large both in Turkey and the European Union after a great number of conspicuous cases and criminal investigations: more than 60 well-known university professors, writers and journalists were sued since the introduction of the Article from June 2005 up to July 2006. These people not only faced the prospect of a 3-year jail term, but also intimidation, and harassment. A vivid case in point is the bestselling Turkish novelist Elif Shafak who faced unjust trial in July 2006. Interestingly enough, Shafak could not be directly accused of “publicly denigrating Turkishness” because she herself did not perform any physical or verbal action against the state. However, she was acknowledged responsible and tried for the remarks of a fictional character in her novel *The Bastard in Istanbul*.<sup>3</sup> In fact, it was the first Turkish novel “to deal directly with the massacres, atrocities and deportations that decimated the country’s Armenian population in the last years of Ottoman rule” (Lea 2006). This did not surprise either the publishers or the readers of her book who had no doubts that this kind of attitude awaited any Turkish writer touching upon the topic of Armenian Genocide and injustices against Armenians in Turkey. When speaking about the charges that were brought against her, Elif Shafak believed that the underlying reason for all the charges she had to face

---

<sup>3</sup> In the novel *The Bastard in Istanbul* (2005) by Elif Shafak originally written in English, and published in Turkish translation in 2006, one of the characters - Armanoush says: “I am the grandchild of genocide survivors who lost all their relatives to the hands of Turkish butchers in 1915, but I myself have been brainwashed to deny the genocide because I was raised by some Turk named Mustafa”. Shafak was acquitted and the case was dropped at the first hearing, as the prosecutor announced there were no elements of the crime envisaged in Article 301 (see Algan 2008, 2239). However, later the case was taken to a higher court, and the aggressive authorities managed to overturn the decision.

was that she had been very active on taboo topics and the Armenian Genocide in particular. She definitely realised that her adherence to the position of supporting an open and democratic society in Turkey, and rejecting all kinds of manifestations of nationalism, insularity and xenophobia would never be understood by the Turkish authorities, particularly that the intolerance and aggression against free expression were firmly and officially documented in Article 301 of the Penal Code of her country.

The controversial Article became still more infamous after it was applied against world-famous persons such as Orhan Pamuk, Turkish Nobel Laureate in Literature,<sup>4</sup> Hrant Dink, a Turkish Armenian editor, journalist and columnist who was assassinated in 2007 by a Turkish nationalist,<sup>5</sup> and many other well-known journalists and writers. According to Turkey's Minister of Justice, 1189 people were taken before a court by the first quarter of 2007 for "violations" of Article 301 (Algan 2008, 2239). Writers, journalists and publishers who shared justified concerns about the alarming scale of the rise of nationalism growing to chauvinism, were increasingly being charged with "insulting Turkishness" under the Article (English Pen 2008).<sup>6</sup> The reaction that followed all these deliberate and disgraceful actions was an obvious expression of alarm of many people at the numerous charges under the notorious Article 301. It became clear that the Turkish intellectuals' personal safety and security was at stake, and the progressive thinkers demanded that increased measures were taken to bring to justice all those that threaten such intellectuals.

Following the murder of Hrant Dink, Turkish Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister Abdullah Gül had to accept that there were certain problems with Article 301, and changes should be made to the law (FM Gül 2007). The result was that Turkish authorities were urged to amend the Article, because freedom of expres-

---

**4** Nobel Laureate Orhan Pamuk was charged because of his open declaration of the fact that "30 thousand Kurds and one million Ottoman Armenians were killed in Turkey." The case was later dropped by the court after the Minister of Justice refused to issue the ruling of the case (see Algan 2008, 2238). This is what Pamuk (2005) said about the infamous Article 301, "That law and another law about 'general national interests' were put into the new Penal Code as secret guns. They were not displayed to the international community but nicely kept in a drawer, ready for action in case they decided to hit someone in the head".

**5** Dink, a very prominent member of the Armenian minority in Turkey, was best known for advocating Turkish-Armenian reconciliation and human and minority rights in Turkey. He was often critical of both Turkey's denial of the Armenian Genocide and of the Armenian diaspora's campaign for its international recognition (Amnesty International 2007; Human Rights Watch 2007). Dink was prosecuted three times for denigrating Turkishness while receiving numerous threats from Turkish nationalists.

**6** In 2006 Perihan Magden, a writer and journalist, was also prosecuted after having her article "Conscientious Objection is a Human Right" published where she openly expressed her defence of human rights in Turkey.

sion in general constitutes the core of democracy and is a key principle in determining a state's eligibility to join the European Union. On April 30, 2008, a series of changes were introduced into Article 301, including a new amendment which makes it obligatory to get the approval of the Minister of Justice to file a case.<sup>7</sup> The wording of the Article was somehow changed too – “Denigrating Turkishness” was changed into “degrading Turkish Nation”.

Nevertheless, not much seemed to change after the amendments had been introduced. In 2012 the European Court of Human Rights decided that

the scope of the terms under Article 301 of the Criminal Code, as interpreted by the judiciary, is too wide and vague, and thus the provision constitutes a continuing threat to the exercise of the right to freedom of expression, (ECtHR 2012, 93)

and noted that

despite the replacement of the term *Turkishness* by *the Turkish Nation*, there seems to be no change or major difference in the interpretation of these concepts because they have been understood in the same manner by the Court of Cassation. (93)

### 3 Kemal Yalçın's Journey of Discovery

In 1992 Yalçın and other Turkish teachers attended a course of Turkish in Germany that was delivered by Meline – a citizen of Turkey, an Armenian girl from Istanbul. All the students, Yalçın included, were enchanted by her professional charm and knowledge of Turkish. Yalçın recalled that during the course Meline brought examples of German, Turkish, French, Chinese poetry and parables. Knowing that she was Armenian, Yalçın was interested in why she did not ever select examples of Armenian parables, Armenian folk tales and Armenian poems. The teacher's answer shocked the student. She said she had been waiting to hear that question for six years. During those six years she had had 150 teachers as students and not a single one had ever come up with that question although they all knew she was Armenian. When she had just started her teaching career, she had heard a student remark “How can an Armenian teach Turk-

---

<sup>7</sup> This change was made to prevent the possibility of misusing Article 301. However, Turkish intellectuals themselves believe that the condition of approval of the Minister of Justice cannot always be considered a reliable guarantee because of the political character of the article (Algan 2008, 2251).

ish to Turkish teachers?" The remark was painful to her – the pain being the result of

the silence, the denial and the hostility for her sense of nationality and her national identity that for her are not nationalist haughtiness but a part of her very being, the sum of memories, the collection of stories, songs, poetry and music that has shaped her being and helped her comprehend everyday life. (Arnavoudian 2008, 3-8)

Understanding that her national identity was constantly being ignored, she was trying to keep it silent and invisible, and Yalçın was the first student who had made an attempt to open her silenced memory and see the invisible there. Trying to explain the shameful indifference, Yalçın himself states that at school or university the Turks are only directed to perceive Armenians as something bad, evil, hostile and do not learn anything about their history and culture (Yalçın 2015).

Depressed by the fact that for years he had supported the right of everyone in the world to learn their mother tongue, and had yet somehow overlooked the identity and the mother tongue of his Armenian teacher of Turkish, Yalçın felt inspired to begin his journey of discovery of silenced memories in Turkish towns and villages.

Thus, *You Rejoice My Heart* is based on the quest of the author to travel to certain regions of Turkey and find Turkey's hidden, secret or crypto-Armenians people who secretly adhered to their nation and faith after surviving centuries of abuse inflicted on them: the Genocide of 1915, discrimination, anti-Armenian riots. As a very sympathetic and attentive observer, Yalçın did his best to make his account of places and people more powerful and impressive.

The journey of discovery started in the author's native village Honaz, when he looked into the memories of ordinary Turkish people and found universal humanism there, when the Turk Baba Yusuf raised his voice against the silence about how Armenians were being discriminated and abused at Askale labour camps, and he, as a Turk, was feeling shame for what was happening to them. Yalçın's mother, an enthusiastic supporter of his venture, declared that both Armenians and Turks are God's servants. She baked bread and distributed it as mercy for the souls of the innocent Armenian martyrs.<sup>8</sup> Thus, the silence is painful not only for the secret Armenians but also for the truth-teller Turks,

---

<sup>8</sup> At the very beginning of the play version of the book (dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide and first performed in New York on June 12, 2015), the author declared: "That night everyone in Honaz village slept at ease". The message of these words and that of the title of the book is that if the Turks acknowledge the truth about the Genocide and apologise for it, they will lift the burden of the past from their shoulders and remedy their souls.

[e]veryone knows what was done to them. But they won't open their mouths out of fear. We've all been silent, haven't said a word. But how long should we remain silent [...]. What you'd like to know, ask! Turn on your tape recorder, take a picture of me. Even write down my name. Let the whole nation know! (2007, 86)

The journey that began in Honaz went on in Istanbul, Askale, Amasya, Erzurum, Kars, and ended in the ancient city of Ani. Yalçın discovered new places and remarkable Armenians who had suffered the silence of concealing their identity, faith and language. He also registered that there were many Armenians who had escaped death with the assistance of Turkish or Kurdish neighbours.

In Amasya, through the story of a woman called Safiye (her Armenian name was Zaruhi), he reflected the lives of other Armenians living there after 1915. The author found out that Amasya once had a thriving Armenian population. The community, along with its churches and schools, was utterly devastated during the Genocide. After 1915, only 60 Armenian families remained there. All they knew was that they were Armenian and their religion was different. Safiye said they did not let a lot of people know about it but even so, they were so afraid. Safiye and other Armenians prayed in secret and they did their best to marry within their tiny community. However, battling against her Armenian family's hostility, Safiye married the Turkish man she loved. In the same way, the Turkish communist girl Jale overcame obstacles to marry the left-wing Armenian boy Zakarya. Expressing her indignation at Zakarya's friends' belief that a Turk will not marry an Armenian, she questioned the ideology of the leftist movement - what sort of leftist movement, singing and shouting about all persons being equal and warning a Turkish girl she could not marry the man she loved because he was Armenian. As to Zakarya, he resented the fact that Armenian children could not learn their own history as it is officially forbidden in Turkey, and dreamt of "a world, a country" where he "could live freely and as a human being". He said, "[t]hese ideas of freedom, brotherhood and equality - made me who I was" (220).

While some Armenians eventually fled Amasya, most of those who remained stopped speaking their native tongue and denied ever being Armenian. As the author explained, there is big work to be done in this direction, and we all have to address and expose this inhumanity. Safiye's family survived the Genocide but they are still its victims because their religion, songs and traditions, their spirit are torn away from them. Safiye agreed that Turks who she lived among were good and friendly. But the problem is that her memory is silenced, she is a silent witness, someone who has to pretend that the Genocide never happened and she has no memories of it. She feels herself invisible because she cannot tell anyone the terrible stories heard from her mother, and she cannot live as an Armenian.

Until today I've never told anyone about those bitter days, about that calamity [...] about how my mother was left all alone with no one in the world. (8)

Surrounded by silence and invisibility, Safiye has no hope that her emotional wounds will be healed because she will always remember that from her mother's family "those who were sent away never came back, you couldn't ask what had happened to them and you never found out a thing" (59).

Another Armenian, Ohan Ozan, said to Kemal Yalçın,

[y]ou should have come here ten or fifteen years ago! There were many. But back then not a single Turk ever knocked my door. You are the first. But you're late. Everyone has since passed away. (106)

Silence and invisibility and lasting pain have become part of Vahram Karabent who eye-witnessed the Genocide at the age of ten:

What was the weather like on the day they took my father, grandfather and uncles away? What season was it? I can't remember. But I can still clearly see in my mind like it was yesterday, the way they tore my father from my mother's arms. I still see it in my dreams. I'm more than ninety now, but I still dream about those days. (118)

Krikor Ceyhan dreamt of universal human solidarity, solidarity without ethnic prejudice. Krikor had to adopt a Turkish name when he was eight and silence his true essence embedded in his Armenian name to be able to live in the land of his ancestors. He claimed he did not love a person simply because he or she is Armenian, but because he or she is a good and intelligent person.

Kemal Yalçın's voyage enabled him to learn Haji Ibrahim's story in Diyarbakir.<sup>9</sup> Here, all the survived Armenians were converted to Islam. However, they feared that they would be subject to violence, oppression and even annihilation if their identity was discovered. The silence made their life painfully unhappy. Haji Ibrahim lived in a Kurdish village with only two Armenian families. Because living as

<sup>9</sup> Situated on the banks of the Tigris river, Diyarbakir/Diyarbakir (Assyrian: Amed, Greek: Amida, Armenian: Tigranakert, Arabic: Diyar Bakr, Kurdish: Bakur) with a population of about one million, is the un-proclaimed capital of the so-called Turkish Kurdistan (Massicard, Watts 2012, 99). At the turn of the 19th century the Christian population of the city was mainly made up of Armenians and Assyrians. The Assyrian presence dates to antiquity, while Armenians had inhabited the town since the 8th century. The majority of the city's Armenian and Assyrian population was massacred and deported during the Genocide of 1915 (Jongerden, Verheij 2012, 20). Today the city is mainly inhabited by Kurds, a small number of Alevi Turkmen, and Jews (The Kurdish Project 2015), however, there are no specific data about population numbers.



an Armenian was so difficult, Haji Ibrahim never knew he was Armenian until he was nine. Until then he grew up with hatred towards the so-called Christian infidels. When he expressed this deep hatred to his elder sister, she explained to him that he, in fact, was an infidel Armenian himself. This truth became a tragedy for the nine-year-old boy, and it was difficult for him to overcome the shock even when he was an adult.

We were all alone! We lived in constant fear, but nobody said a thing [...]. Throughout my youth I suffered the pain of this humiliation a great deal. I would eat myself up inside every time I experienced such injustices or humiliations [...]. These fears made me close up and turn inward. I developed a fear of conflicts and would run from all fights every time people came to blows. (305)

Sultan Bakircigil was the other silent victim in the Kurdish village. He felt bitterness because he had to hide his true origin. He did not blame all Kurds and Turks for what happened. He declared:

My grief, my pain is with those who planned this disaster [...]. I don't harbor any enmity, either towards Turks or Kurds. I just want peace of mind! I don't want to be humiliated by people calling me "convert" or "infidel"; I don't want to have to act like a Muslim when I don't believe in Islam. I don't want to have to hide the fact that I'm Armenian. (341)

The journey helped Yalçın to disclose other truths that he did not know. In 1923 Republican Turkey did not return Armenian lands to those Armenians who were citizens of Turkey. The lands were settled by Turkish refugees from Greece instead. The public use of Armenian was legally restricted, Armenian names were turkified, Armenian history was banned from school curricula and Armenians were denied high posts in education, government, civil service.

During his voyages to Istanbul, Erzerum, Kars (and finally Ani), Yalçın talked to common people to discover that life was harsh not only for Armenians, but also for the Assyrians and Greeks.<sup>10</sup> During

**10** Erzerum/Erzurum (Armenian: Karno Kaghak or Karin, Latin: Theodosiopolis, Arabic: Ard-ar-Rum; Turkish: Erzurum) is a city in Eastern Anatolia (Asian Turkey) with a population of about 410,000. The Armenian citizens of the city were massacred not only in 1915, but before that - during Hamidian massacres of 1894-1896 (Dadrian 1999, 141). In 1882 the Armenian population in Erzerum province was 280,000 (Leart/Zohrap 1913, 59-60). There are no data about Armenian population numbers after 1915. Kars, with a population of 79,300 (in 2012) is the largest city (on the Turkish side) near the closed border with Armenia (Chopra 2012). According to Russian census data, by 1897 Armenians formed 49.7%, Russians 26.3%, Greeks 11.7%, Poles 5.3% and Turks 3.8% (Istoricheskaya biblioteka Rosii 1905). No data about the numbers of the mentioned eth-

World War II their young men were drafted into the Turkish military. They were placed in so-called infidel units. They were given brown uniforms and sent into non-combat roles like building roads and performing various other activities connected with construction. Conditions were awful as there was not enough food and proper accommodation. In 1942 the Turkish government passed the Capital Tax Law. This was aimed primarily at the wealthy. It was enforced mainly on the Greeks, Armenians and Jews who were generally wealthy merchants. If they could not afford the tax they were sent to the labour camps. They worked in freezing cold, were underclothed, underfed and slept without blankets. Many of them died.

During the fifties, there was a big wave of turkification of Armenian names. A later initiative required all citizens to speak only Turkish in public. To this day most Armenians do not speak Armenian in public. Armenians who live in Eastern Anatolia very often do not know and do not speak Armenian. They do know Kurdish or Turkish though. In most cases in Eastern Anatolia only one or two Armenian families inhabit per village, and they practice Christianity secretly.

In Istanbul Yalçın heard about the 1965 acts of vandalism. As a result of the rumour that Kemal Atatürk's house had been burnt down by the Greeks, the mob stormed through Istanbul smashing the shops and burning the houses of the Armenians and the Greeks. Not only the Armenians of Istanbul, but also those from other regions of Turkey interviewed by Yalçın claimed they continually suffer discrimination in one form or another. They face arbitrary arrests and tortures in prison. In Eastern Turkey their situation is more precarious than in Istanbul, many choose to relocate to Istanbul. Today they are being discriminated even in Istanbul, so many have chosen to move abroad.

After his journey of discovery in various regions of Turkey, and the publication of the book, when Yalçın travelled to different cities promoting his book, many people questioned his nationality. Yalçın declared he is not Armenian, his roots are indeed Turkish and his family's religion is Sunni Muslim. Although he accepted that he is fearful of the Turkish government because of the book, he claimed that the power of truth is greater than fear, truth should be written about so that more and more Turks could confront their past in a more enlightened and dignified way.

---

nic peoples are available after 1897. Ani, with a population of 78,100 (in 2013), east of Kars and near the Armenian frontier, was the Bagratid capital in the 10th century perhaps with a population of 50,000-100,000 (Redgate 1998, 210). The city has had overwhelmingly Armenian and Christian population for centuries until it was abandoned by 1735. Ani's recent history has been one of continuous and always increasing destruction, neglect, earthquakes, cultural cleansing, vandalism, quarrying, amateurish restorations and excavations (Sim 2007).

It is important to note that as the Turks learn nothing about Armenians or the Genocide at school, Yalçın's book could inform them about smashing the stereotype of evil Armenians which otherwise could not be broken. It is also evident that the author could not have his book published in Turkey due to censorship rules and Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code (Akçam 2006; Algan 2008; Yalçın 2015).

#### 4 Conclusion

At large, Kemal Yalçın's journey of discovery, his ability to sense the invisible, his observation of silenced Armenian memories disclose important notions, particularly that

- Armenian-Turkish negative relations are not only part of history, they are part of the present as well, because there are numerous individuals that are affected by these relations in the present day.
- We not only deal with distorted fates but also with distorted facts and figures, i.e. it is not easy to figure out the true number of crypto-Armenians living in Turkey today.
- Over the years, the truth about Armenians has been silenced, but today - due to numerous attempts to rediscover silenced histories - the Turkish government may come to terms with the past and recognise the fact of the Genocide.
- The ultimate goal should be to hold a dialogue between the Armenians and the Turks without letting the ethnic/ancestral background and the past restrict their discussion.
- By denying Armenian history, by humiliating the Armenian citizens of Turkey, the Turkish government is denying the Turkish history and culture because Armenians have had a great contribution to and are an indispensable part of it.
- Armenian traditions and language will add vivid colours to the tapestry of Turkish history and culture.
- Humanity is a universal value; common humanism above nationality, race or religion, peaceful human co-existence is possible although it is considered by many to be a dream.

And finally, I would like to add another, no less important notion - the opening of silenced memories, the seeing of the invisible, the recording of the pain and the hopes of hidden Armenians is Kemal Yalçın's autobiographical confession and his protest against Turkish nationalist and chauvinist policy, against the intolerance and aggression of Turkish authorities, against Article 301 of Turkish Penal Code. Taking the hat off and giving so much credit to the Turkish writer Kemal Yalçın, I will conclude with his opening words in *You Rejoice My Heart* (6):

My dear Armenian friend, the greatest pain of humanity this century, the mark of black soot on the forehead of history, is the Armenian Genocide! I bow down to the memory of all the Armenians who were killed during those years. I accept your pain as my pain. As a Turkish writer, I speak for myself and the entire world when I ask for your forgiveness. The shame of this great disaster is stamped on the forehead of humanity, and the planners, projectors and perpetrators will be cursed. When justice is finally implemented, when our great pain subsides and when we urge the world finally to ensure this injustice will never happen again, I give my heart to you and my soul will rejoice with you!<sup>11</sup>

## Bibliography

- Aghbasian, H. (2015). "Turkish Intellectuals Who Have Recognized Armenian Genocide: Kemal Yalçın". <http://hayernaysor.am/en/archives/112231>.
- Akçam, T. (2006). *A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility*. New York: Henry Holt.
- Akçam, T. (2008). *The Armenian Question Is Solved: Policies Toward the Armenians During the War Years According to Ottoman Documents*. Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları.
- Algan, B. (2008). "The Brand New Version of Article 301 of Turkish Penal Code and the Future Freedom of Expression Cases in Turkey". *German Law Journal*, 9(12), 2237-52.
- Amnesty International (2005). "Article 301 is a Threat to Freedom of Expression and Must be Repealed Now". <http://bianet.org/english/politics/71534-repealing-article-301-calls-ai>.
- Amnesty International (2007). "Turkey: Murder of Journalist Deplored". <https://web.archive.org/web/20070928005524/http://amnesty.org.uk/news>.
- Arnavoudian, E. (2008). "You Rejoice My Heart by Kemal Yalçın". *The Critical Corner. Armenian News Network Groong*, 3(10), 3-8.
- Case, H. (2013). "Two Rights and A Wrong: On Taner Akçam". <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/two-rights-and-wrong-taner-akcam/>.
- Cengiz, O.K. (2019). "Turkey Resurrects Deadly Article 301 Against Dissent". <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2019/10/turkey-nationalism-killer-penal-code-article-has-come-back.html>.

<sup>11</sup> In another speech delivered at a conference in Brussels (April 4, 2011), Kemal Yalçın addressed the participants in Armenian, Assyrian and Turkish. He said: "If there was no Genocide, non-Muslims population could have been 15 million today. History will never forgive the crimes against humanity. Let our grief become basis for peace and justice. As a Turkish writer I apologize to Armenians and Assyrians. I wish that Silk bridge on the border between Armenia and Turkey [the historic bridge in Ani] was renovated and became a symbol of brotherhood between the Armenian and Turkish nations" (Aghbasian 2015).

- Chopra, S. (2012). "All About Turkey - Kars". *Encyclopedia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Kars>.
- Dadrian, V.N. (1999). *Warrant for Genocide: Key Elements of Turko-Armenian Conflict*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.
- ECtHR (2012). "Judgment. On Application No. 25520/07". [http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#{"itemid":\["001-107206"\]}](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#{).
- English Pen (2008). "Turkey: Update on Campaign to Abolish Article 301". <https://www.englishpen.org/campaigns/turkey-update-on-campaign-to-abolish-article-301/> (2008-02-21).
- FM Gül (2007). "Changes Must be Made to Article 301". <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/fm-gul-changes-must-be-made-to-article-301-5835918>.
- Human Rights Watch. (2007). "Turkey: Outspoken Turkish-Armenian Journalist Murdered". <https://www.hrw.org/legacy/english/docs/2007/01/20/turkey15135.htm>.
- Istoricheskaya biblioteka Rosii (1897-1905). "Pervaya vseobshchaya perepis naseleniya Rosiskoy Imperii 1897 goda". St. Petersburg: Statist. Committee. <http://elb.shpl.ru/nodes/12632>.
- Jongerden, J.; Verheij, J. (2012). *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbekir, 1870-1915*. Netherlands: Brill.
- Lea, R. (2006). "In Istanbul, a Writer Awaits her Day in Court". *The Guardian*, 24(7). <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2006/jul/24/fiction.voicesofprotest>.
- Leart/Zohrap, M. (1913). *La Question Arménienne a la Lumière des Documents*. Paris: Challamel.
- Massicard, E.; Watts, N. (2012). *Negotiating Political Power in Turkey: Breaking up the Party*. London: Routledge.
- Pamuk, O. (2005). "I Stand by My Words. and Even More, I Stand by My Right to Say Them". *The Guardian*, 23(10). <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/oct/23/books.turkey>.
- Redgate, A.E. (1998). *The Armenians*. Oxford: Blackwell
- Sim, S. (2007). "Virtual ANI-Dedicated to the Deserted Medieval Armenian City of Ani". <http://www.virtualani.org/>.
- The Kurdish Project (2015). "Turkey (Bakur or Northern Kurdistan)". <https://thekurdishproject.org/kurdistan-map/turkish-kurdistan/diyarbakir/>.
- Yalçın, K. (2007). *You Rejoice My Heart*. Transl. by F. De Luca. London: Gomitast INST.
- Yalçın, K. (2015). "Kemal Yalçın: Interview on A1 Armenian National TV". <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LADXMEaXMss>.

