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**Genocide as a Process:  
Comparison of the Armenian and Cambodian Genocides**

MASTER'S THESIS

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I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that the work presented here is entirely my own, based upon the literature and resources clearly indicated in the text and duly acknowledged in the reference section.

In Olomouc on

Signature:

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## **List of Abbreviations**

<b>ARF</b>	Armenian Revolutionary Federation
<b>CUP</b>	Committee of Union and Progress
<b>CPK</b>	Communist Party of Kampuchea
<b>FANK</b>	Khmer National Armed Forces
<b>FUNK</b>	National United Front of Kampuchea
<b>GRUNK</b>	Royal Government of the National Union of Kampuchea
<b>KLP</b>	Kampuchean Labour Party
<b>KPRP</b>	Khmer People's Revolutionary Party
<b>RAK</b>	Revolutionary Army of Kampuchea
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>US</b>	United States

## Introduction

While still relatively young, since its inception in the 1970s and particularly over the last 30 or so years, the field of genocide studies has greatly expanded and is now the primary subject of an ever-growing body of journals, handbooks, research centers, international organizations, or government agencies. Moreover, it has matured into an independent and varied field of study, that „... *no longer stands in the shadow of Holocaust studies*.“ (Hinton, 2012, p. 4) The goal of this thesis is to provide a modest contribution to the growth of this field by offering an in-depth comparison of the Armenian and Cambodian genocides, i.e. the atrocities committed against Armenians across the Ottoman Empire following the outbreak of World War I, and the campaign of violence and murder undertaken by the Khmer Rouge regime of Democratic Kampuchea between 1975 and 1979. With the combined likely death toll of up to well over 3 million, and with countless more lives unsettled and ruined, these two tragedies certainly rank amongst the worst of acts of the inhumanity of modern history. However, while both these cases are arguably among the more notorious and well-studied examples of modern genocide, and are understood to be an integral part of the „genocide studies canon“ as defined by Hinton,<sup>1</sup> their mutual targeted comparison remains understudied. In particular, this is especially true when the notion of genocide as a process, rather than a result of a process, is considered. Therefore, in this thesis, the two genocides are analyzed and compared not as an event, but rather as series of a gradually unfolding developments, an approach forwarded by researchers such as Sheri P. Rosenberg, Helen Fein, or most relevantly in this thesis, Gregory H. Stanton, whose „Ten Stages of Genocide“ model is utilized to examine and compare the two studied cases.

Over the past several decades, a vast library of resources emerged on both the Armenian and Cambodian genocides, including survivor or witness testimonies and personal accounts, official documents by both the perpetrators and third parties, and perhaps most voluminously, the academic research. The Armenian genocide in particular, despite having previously sometimes been termed the „forgotten genocide“<sup>2</sup> is subject of intense scholarly interest and, together with the Rwandan genocide, represents arguably the most notorious example of 20th-century genocide after the Holocaust, likely in no small part due to the political controversy that has surrounded validity of labeling it as such for the past century. A plethora of researchers, including both Armenian and non-Armenian scholars such as V.

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<sup>1</sup> Hinton, 2012

<sup>2</sup> e.g. Boyajian, 1972 or Minassian, 2020

Dadrian, R. G. Hovhannisian, T. Akçam, or I. Charny, and many others, have developed a comprehensive and reputable body of research on the topic of origins, course, or specific aspects of the Armenian genocide. Research of Cambodian genocide, while somewhat limited when compared to the former, is too a well-established and sizeable category within the genocide studies, with scholars such as B. Kiernan or D. P. Chandler spearheading the construction of an expansive academic body of work on the nature of the atrocities committed by the Khmer Rouge regime.

However, within the admittedly narrower field of comparative genocide studies, the attention devoted to each of those two cases of genocide is relatively more limited, particularly in terms of the selection of targets of comparison. Specifically, this includes comparisons to the Holocaust in general, or in some more specific aspects such as the genocide denial, and particularly in the context of ongoing discussion regarding the uniqueness of the Holocaust. This is true especially in the case of the Armenian genocide,<sup>3</sup> but such comparisons are not unseen in the case of Cambodia either.<sup>4</sup> Naturally, this is in line with the idea that within the genocide studies canon, Holocaust represents „ ... *the Prototype case ... to which others are compared.*“ (Bachman, 2020, p.5) That is not to say that comparative studies with other instances of genocide do not exist, as both Armenian and Cambodian cases have been compared to genocides or massacres and other violent occurrences in Rwanda, Bosnia, or Ethiopia.<sup>5</sup> However, to the best of this author’s knowledge, no in-depth direct qualitative comparative study of specifically the Armenian and Cambodian genocides exists,<sup>6</sup> let alone one that would focus primarily on the unfolding of the broad genocidal process. It’s for this reason that these two cases of genocide had been selected, as the author believes that studying and contrasting them, particularly via the relatively under-utilized processual lense, represents a novel case study and will positively contribute to the broader field of comparative genocide studies.

In order to fulfill this goal, the basic approach of comparative analysis is utilized, as it is, by definition, the mainstay of comparative genocide studies and most readily enables the comprehensive answering of the research questions in a qualitative two-case study, such as this thesis. Additionally, it is also partially supplemented by simple description, particularly in

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<sup>3</sup> e.g. Dadrian, 1996; Hovhannisian, 1996; Karlsson, 2015; Marutyan, 2014; Melson, 1992; Melson, 2002 etc,

<sup>4</sup> e.g. Kidron, 2018 or Levine, 2016

<sup>5</sup> e.g. Cook, 2005; Jackson & Wunsch, 2014; Miller & Miller, 2006; Kissi, 2006 etc.

<sup>6</sup> With the notable exception of Ben Kiernan’s chapter *Pol Pot and Enver Pasha: a Comparison of the Cambodian and Armenian Genocides* in *Studies in Comparative Genocide*; which is however primarily concerned with comparing the personages of the two leading genocidaires without dwelling too much on the genocides themselves

sections concerned with providing the contextual and historical background of the genocides. Nonetheless, while seemingly somewhat straightforward, the comparative approach to the research within the genocide studies is not entirely without problems. As Adam Jones noted, the growth of this field has been accompanied by a plethora of issues and, at times, contentious debates. The field has been in a „*constant state of evolution, exploration - and confusion.*“ (Jones, 2013, p. 5) Such contention had become particularly apparent in the still somewhat nascent subfield of comparative genocide studies, born into the opposition to the hitherto dominant Holocaust studies discourse and the continued discussions regarding its comparability to other instances of mass murder. Per Anton Weiss-Wendt, despite the rapid growth of the Comparative genocide scholarship: „*There is barely any other field of study that enjoys so little consensus on defining principles such as definition of genocide, typology, application of a comparative method, and timeframe.*“ (Weiss-Wendt, 2008, pp. 42–43) It’s for this reason that selection of research tools is of particular importance to mitigate some of the perceived shortcomings or limitations. Also taking into account the functionalist understanding by some scholars of the role that gradual intensification of policy played in both examined cases,<sup>7</sup> an instrument that is reflective of this processual understanding of the two genocides is appropriate.

For this reason, Gregory Stanton’s processual model had been selected. While the detailed reasoning and justification for its selection are more closely presented in the first chapter, broadly speaking it’s reflective of some of the key conclusions by other genocide researchers, including the recognition of the processual and sequential nature of genocidal occurrences. (i.e. Fein quoted in Rosenberg, 2012, p. 18) Moreover, as the purpose of this thesis is not to alter the methodological landscape of comparative genocide studies by proving or refuting the utility of novel research instruments, it had also been selected for the existing recognized legitimacy it had gained throughout use by scholars for studying both the established and less notorious cases of genocide. Therefore, it represents a fitting tool for attaining the objective of this thesis, that is comparing the Armenian and Cambodian genocides, through answering the main general research question of „*What are the key similarities and differences in the individual stages of the genocide process in Armenian and Cambodian genocides?*“ Examining this question, however, necessitates also the understanding of the broader historical and societal context in both cases, and as such, the

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<sup>7</sup> As such, while not research objective *per se*, this thesis implicitly examines also the validity of this basic, underlying assumption. Some of the authors that directly or indirectly support this view include Bloxham, 2003; Melson, 2015; Owens, 2014, or Path & Kanavou, 2015.



supplementary research question of „*What are the key similarities and differences in the contextual and historical background of the Armenian and Cambodian Genocides?*“ will also be answered. Here, the focus will not lie in a comprehensive discussion on each of these factors, as structural background to the genocides has received sizeable academic attention already, but rather only some broader conclusions resulting from the comparison will be presented.

Regarding the specific resources utilized for this thesis, as previously mentioned, an intense and long-term academic research over the past several decades produced a sizeable array of comprehensive secondary sources focused on examining the Armenian and Cambodian genocides. The utility of such resources is reflected also in this thesis, where they serve as the essential basis for the genocides comparison, particularly when discussing their respective contextual background. In the case of the Armenian genocide, works by several Armenian diaspora authors such as Vahakn Dadrian, particularly his monography *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus*, or Ronald Grigor Suny's *"They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else": A History of the Armenian Genocide.*, have been utilized. Of particular note is Raymond Kévorkian's *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History*, which provides perhaps the most comprehensive and meticulously researched and documented account of the genocide as of yet, contextualising the Genocide within a wider political, social and economic framework. Perhaps primarily, however, non-Armenian sources have been used. Most notably, several monographs of historian Taner Akçam, the first Turkish scholar to acknowledge the genocide, whose attempts to reconcile the Turkish and Armenian narratives regarding the genocide provided a balanced and unique source of information, were tremendously useful, especially by the virtue of incorporating a great number of hitherto underutilized Ottoman and Unionist primary sources, and as such intermediating them to a wider non-Turkish audience. *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians* by David Bloxham and *Katastrofa křesťanů: Likvidace Arménů, Asyřanů a Řeků v Osmanské říši v letech 1914–1923* by Řoutil, Košťálová, and Novák also have to be specifically recognized for furnishing an objective, balanced and comprehensive accounts of the genocide. *Katastrofa křesťanů*, perhaps the most exhaustive Czech-language work on the topic, in particular was useful in placing the genocide of Armenians into the wider context of the persecution of Ottoman Christians in the 19th and 20th centuries. In addition to the literature focused on providing a general overview of the genocide, secondary resources limited to more niche and specific topics had also been utilized in specific portions of this thesis, such as

Stephen Duguid's article *The Politics of Unity: Hamidian Policy in Eastern Anatolia* when discussing the late 19th century developments in Eastern Anatolia, or Hans-Lukas Kieser's work on the development of Turkish nationalism and emergence of the Committee of Union and Progress as a foremost political force of the late Ottoman Empire.

Regarding the secondary sources used in examining the Cambodian genocide, the works by a wide array of international authors had been utilized. Of particular importance are the writings by Ben Kiernan who, despite holding pro-Khmer Rouge views early in his academic career, is now regarded as a leading Cambodian genocide researcher. Specifically, these include his monograph on the nature of the Khmer Rouge regime and the role that ethnicity and culture played in the genocide, *The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power, and Genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, 1975–1979*, largely based upon hundreds of interviews with refugees, survivors, or former cadres of the regime, but also works on more specific aspects of the genocide process, such as his article *External and indigenous sources of Khmer Rouge ideology*. Other significant secondary sources include also the works of David Chandler, such as the *Brother Number One: A Political Biography of Pol Pot*, which provided some insight into the ideological motivations and certain decisions of not only Pol Pot, but of the Khmer Rouge as a large, or *Voices from S-21: Terror and History in Pol Pot's Secret Prison*, perhaps the most comprehensive account of the internal security apparatus of the Khmer Rouge regime as of yet. Works by Alexander Hinton, particularly *Why Did They Kill?*, which is one of the earliest anthropological attempts to analyze the origins genocide, and provides some important insight into the internal workings of the regime, had also been tremendously useful for constructing a comprehensive picture of the Cambodian genocide. Moreover, journal articles on specific aspects of the genocide had also been used in particular segments of the successive chapters. These include, for example, *Pol Pot's Strategy of Survival* by Suriya Chindawongse in the sections examining the Cambodian Civil War, or *The Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese Communists: A History of Their Relations as Told in the Soviet Archives* by Dmitry Mosyakov that served as a crucial resource for understanding the roots of tension between the two communist parties which would ultimately contribute to some of the genocidal violence.

That being said, while secondary sources did play an outsized role in this research, primary resources are also available in both cases, and while many of these are originally in Turkish, French, Khmer, or Armenian, where possible and appropriate this author attempted to consult the English-language translations of such resources, in addition to some English-language firsthand accounts and reports. Such primary sources are somewhat more numerous

and more readily available in the case of the Armenian genocide and could be broadly classified into several categories. These include survivor accounts and memoirs and firsthand or secondhand accounts by third parties not participating in the events, such as those by foreign diplomatic missions or western missionaries active in the country, who were the first foreign eyewitnesses of the genocide. In the case of Cambodia, the principal primary sources are the translations of documents produced by the Khmer Rouge regime, including the records of the Central Security service, and the documentation connected to the trials of leading genocidaires, most notably the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia.

This thesis is structured into three general sections, each of which is further divided into more specific subchapters. The first chapter focuses on establishing the conceptual and theoretical framework of the thesis, ensuring clarity of which is of particular importance when discussing the sensitive, tragic, and unfortunately heavily politically charged issue of genocide. To this end, the most widely accepted definition of the crime of genocide, as put forward in the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, is introduced, together with an acknowledgment of some of its most widely recognized shortcomings. However, since developing alternate definitions of genocide is by no means an objective of this thesis, these are discussed only briefly and for purposes of this thesis, the concept of genocide is understood in line with the definition as set out in the Convention. Closely linked to the issue of what constitutes genocide in the first place, and highly relevant to the topic of this thesis is the question of genocide recognition. Various approaches to determining the validity of genocide allegations are briefly discussed, together with the current state of recognition of both the Cambodian and Armenian genocides. Given the historical or contemporary perceived controversy regarding this labeling, raising this issue beyond a brief footnote is crucial, especially in connection with the phenomena of genocide denial, which is studied in the later section of the thesis. The final portion of this chapter is dedicated to introducing the Ten Stages of Genocide model, which is later utilized for the processual comparison of the two genocides. Following a brief overview of the model's origins and reasoning for its selection, each of the stages is described in detail. This will establish a clear theoretical framework for the final section of this thesis in order to avoid any possible conceptual or theoretical missteps.

Recognizing that the contextual background of genocide is a crucial factor in the field of, particularly comparative, genocide studies, the second chapter examines the historical context which enabled the genocidal process to take place. Accounting for the circumstantialities, such as politics, ideology, or historical developments and motivations, is

necessary to counter some of the shortcomings of the ten stages model and to provide a clearer picture of the genocidal process as a whole. However, since the goal of this thesis is not to substitute the existing research into underlying causes of the studied genocides, the chapter is limited to examining only the most essential of the contextual aspects of the two cases, that is the overview of the crucial developments within three broad areas relevant to the genocidal process. These are the historical roots and factors that impacted the relationship between perpetrator and victim groups, the emergence and rise of the ideologies that provided the driving force behind future genocides, and finally a brief characterization or motivations of the genocidaire groups themselves. However, as the genocidal process, by definition, cannot be separated from the events that preceded the mass extermination, some of the phenomena such as the Ottoman millet system, that will be more closely examined in the final chapter, are also briefly mentioned in this one. It should also be noted that while comparison utilizing the „Ten Stages“ model is the central objective of this thesis, some preliminary observations regarding the similarities and differences between the two analyzed are already drawn based upon the second chapter.

Finally, the third chapter provides a more elaborate analysis of the genocidal processes in Armenia and Cambodia as they unfolded, beginning with the characterization and comparison of the emergence and nature of the classification stage and concluding with a discussion on the historical and current state of genocide denial in both cases. The manifestations of each stage are examined, while the reasoning behind their inclusion in the given stage is explained. Despite some overlap with the second chapter, the discussed phenomena and events are described in greater detail, and notable similarities or differences between the two studied cases are emphasized in line with the general principle of the utilized comparative method. Moreover, reflecting the contextual realities discussed in the second chapter, the individual stages are not treated as analogous in the two genocide processes, i.e. certain specific actions or measures of the genocidaire might not necessarily be included in the same stage in both genocides, as broader contextual background or circumstances need to be taken into account.

Together, all three sections of the thesis contribute to the singular goal of comparing the Armenian and Cambodian genocides by providing a combined and holistic overview, analysis, and comparison of the two genocides through the prism of their historical and contextual background and underlying foundations, unfolding of the two respective genocidal processes, as well as supplementary issues such as the current state or history of their recognition by international or domestic actors.

## 1. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

Before moving onto the examination of the historical background and immediate course of the two analyzed cases of mass atrocities, the conceptual and theoretical framework needs to be established. Even if ultimately the internationally accepted definition of genocide as set out in the United Nations *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* („the Convention“) is utilized, some of the criticism aimed towards this definition is also briefly recognized. Closely linked to the issue of what constitutes genocide in the first place, and highly relevant to the topic of this thesis in particular, is the question of genocide recognition. Overview of various forms of such recognition is provided, and evolution and the current state of recognition of the Cambodian and Armenian genocides are briefly examined, largely due to the historical and contemporary controversies surrounding their classification as „genocides“. The final portion of this chapter is dedicated to introducing Gregory Stanton’s „Ten Stages of Genocide“ model. Following a brief overview of the model’s origins and reasoning for its selection, each of the stages that Stanton provided will be described in more detail. This ensures the establishment of a clear theoretical framework for the analytical section of this thesis in order to avoid any possible conceptual or theoretical missteps.

### 1.1. Defining Genocide

While the instances of group-targeting mass killings have taken place throughout history, it was not until 1944 that the term 'genocide' was coined by a Polish lawyer and scholar Raphael Lemkin, who combined the Greek *génos* (race or tribe) and the Latin *cide* (killing) to describe the murderous implementation of Nazi policies in occupied Europe and some of the other historical atrocities. Lemkin described genocide as the destruction of a nation or an ethnic group, including not only the immediate destruction of a nation but also a coordinated plan of aiming towards the annihilation of the group through the disintegration of political or social institutions, culture, or economic existence. (Lemkin, 1944, p. 79–80)

It was in large part thanks to Lemkin's lobbying efforts that the issue of genocide was addressed at the newly established United Nations (UN). In December 1946, resolution 96–I was passed, declaring genocide to be a crime under international law and leading to the first draft of the Convention. This draft, created with Lemkin's participation, included many of his concepts such as cultural genocide or focus on racial and ethnic groups as those most vulnerable. Following extensive debate, negotiations, and compromises, the Convention was adopted by the General Assembly on 9 December 1948. (Mayersen, 2001; Schabas, 2000, p.

69) The Convention provided the first internationally recognized definition of genocide as a crime under international law. The crime itself was defined as:

... any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- a) Killing members of the group;
- b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

In addition to the act of genocide itself, the conspiracy, incitement and attempt to commit genocide, as well as complicity in genocide, were all declared punishable, and the nations ratifying the Convention pledged to prevent and to punish genocide whenever they are capable of such. (United Nations General Assembly 1948)

However, in the decades since the adoption of the Convention, the concept of genocide became a subject of contentious definitional debate. A number of issues have been raised, with some scholars going as far as to suggest that „... *it is unacceptable ... to accept the definition as set out in Article II of the 1948 Genocide Convention.* „ (Gallagher, 2010, p. 87) Most often, it has been criticized for not including broader forms of societal and cultural destruction that were originally envisioned by Lemkin. Most controversially, the final Convention omitted groups of victims based on their political actions or beliefs, despite their inclusion in the initial draft, largely due to objections by several countries, spearheaded by the Soviet Union, which could have potentially been subject to allegations of genocide. Murders committed in the revolutionary or counterrevolutionary context have therefore often avoided the legal label of „genocide“ precisely due to being primarily motivated by political reasons.<sup>8</sup> (McCormack, 2003, pp. 266–267; Theriault, 2010 p. 489) This flaw had been recognized by many national governments which often utilize less restrictive genocide criteria, but was acknowledged even within the UN as demonstrated by the so-called Whitaker Report of 1985, which suggested, among many other recommendations, the inclusion of political groups as

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<sup>8</sup> Beth van Schaack illustrated this shortcoming by applying the Convention to the atrocities in Cambodia. Even if the murderous policies of Khmer Rouge are recognized as genocide even by the unaltered standards of the Convention, a legally unwieldy situation is created if the massacre of a group of Vietnamese Cambodians would be considered an act of genocide, but politically motivated killing of Cambodian Khmers in the same killing field would be not. (van Schaack, 1997, pp. 2268–2272)

victims of genocide in the same manner that religious groups already were. Furthermore, it also argued that political motivations are generally always present in the decision to exterminate a minority population to some degree. (Whitaker, 1985, p. 18) This is reflected in the real nature of politically-motivated mass killings, as when compared with some of the universally accepted cases of „conventional“ genocide, it becomes apparent that: „*mass killings of political groups show similarities in their causes, organization and motives.*“ (Fein quoted in Harff, 2003, p. 58)

Similar to the politically-motivated killings is the ambiguous relationship of the Convention with the phenomena of „cultural genocide“, or destruction and weakening of out-group cultures without the physical destruction or violent removal, which was also almost completely excluded from the final Convention.<sup>9</sup> The term has seen relatively widespread use by some genocide scholars, who apply the concept in case studies examining instances of alleged cultural destruction where physical destruction, or „conventional“ genocide, does not occur.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, the cultural genocide represented one of many tools and types of the crime of genocide even in Lemkin’s original holistic understanding of the term, in which the mass murder and destruction of culture in all forms had been intrinsically connected. (Bilsky & Klagsbrun, 2018, pp. 376–380; Davidson, 2012, pp. 18–19; Lemkin, 1944, p. 79–80) Even what *is* included in the Convention had been subject to scrutiny. Most notably, the requirement for „intent to destroy“ as a key element for identifying cases of genocide, particularly in the legal sense. Considering that the perpetrators of acts of genocide only rarely signal their intentions clearly, and with the undisputable goal of mass atrocities, the question of how can observers or researchers reliably infer the intentions of authorities has been raised in the past.<sup>11</sup> (Harff, 2003, p. 58)

These and other factors led some researchers to conclude that the Convention represents primarily a legal instrument and as such the concept of „legal“ genocide has to be differentiated from the general understanding of the term outside of the criminal proceedings with genocide perpetrators. This led to the development of many other alternative,

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<sup>9</sup> Mirroring the motivations behind opposition to the inclusion of political genocide, this notion had also been opposed by states that could potentially been accused of committing it, largely as a result of their colonialistic past. (Bilsky & Klagsbrun, 2018, pp. 387–390; Schabas, 2000, p. 84)

<sup>10</sup> Some of the more common study subjects include assimilation of North American Indigenous, Sinicization of Tibet or the targeted destruction of cultural heritage by religious extremists. (e.g. Davidson, 2012; Kingston, 2015; Luck, 2018; Sandhar, 2015; or Short, 2010)

<sup>11</sup> In general, genocide researchers recognize that explicit admissions of genocidal intent are rare, and as such often argue for removal of intent as a necessary condition, expansion or reimagining of „intent“, or opt for identification of possible intent by inferring it from certain actions or processes of the future perpetrators. (e.g. Goldsmith, 2010; Greenawalt, 1999; Harff, 2003 or Strauss, 2013)

significantly divergent, definitions over the past several decades, often reflective of the individual priorities that their authors believe should be tackled first and foremost regarding the conventional definition's insufficiencies.<sup>12</sup> For this reason, a single universally accepted alternative genocide definition has not yet emerged and the definition used in Convention, even if seen by some academics as a not suitable research tool, continues to be used for this purpose. Additionally, it has established international legal credibility that other, alternative definitions lack. Finally, as both Cambodian and Armenian genocides have been widely recognized as such even per the unmodified criteria of the Convention, it is sufficient also for the purposes of this thesis.

## **1.2. Recognizing Genocide**

Reflecting the contentious and prolonged scholarly debate on what constitutes genocide, there are only a few cases of historical atrocities where such a label is universally accepted. In addition to the Holocaust, this includes for example the Rwandan genocide, largely due to the legal recognition it has received in 1998 via the first conviction of genocide by an international tribunal since the Convention's adoption. (Kenney & Norris, 2018) Nonetheless, legal recognition in the form of internationally accepted convictions for the crime of genocide remains rare. Principally, such recognition can come from rulings of the International Court of Justice, responsible for settling disputes between states, which for example ruled in 1995 that the massacre at Srebrenica was an act of genocide. (International Court of Justice 2007; Schabas, 2007, pp. 111–114 ) On the level of individuals, the International Criminal Court was established in 2003 to replace the previous ad hoc tribunals, including in regards to punishing the crime of genocide. However, only a few individuals have been convicted so far, and even with the inclusion of earlier genocide convictions by the tribunals, the number of genocide judgments remains low and largely limited to the prosecutions of the Rwandan genocidaires. (Kenney & Norris, 2018; Zamfir, 2018, p. 5) In the context of this thesis, however, the value of criminal convictions for genocide recognition is somewhat limited, as in the case of the Armenian genocide, many of the principal perpetrators and initiators died decades before the crime of genocide was even instituted. As such, other forms of recognition, such as that by individual states or other international actors, as well as the academic community, have to be considered.

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<sup>12</sup> Daniel Feierstein provides a more detailed overview of the „Question of Definitions“, including some other examples of proposed alternative definitions. (Feierstein, 2011, pp. 257–260)



The Cambodian genocide has been relatively uncontroversially accepted for some time. Most recently, in 2018 it has received international legal recognition when the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, an UN-backed international tribunal, convicted the most senior surviving members of the regime, Nuon Chea and Khieu Samphan on charges of genocide. Nonetheless, since its formation a decade earlier the tribunal has been criticized for overall ineffectiveness, compounded by the tension between international and Cambodian legal systems and judges, as well as frequent political interference by the Cambodian government, which at times consisted also of former members of the Khmer Rouge. Despite these obstacles, the court conclusively validated the Khmer Rouge atrocities as genocide, even as the limited number of convictions and questionable impact in terms of national reconciliation, as well as the duration and financial costs of the tribunal continue to be criticized. (Beech, 2018; Un, 2013, pp. 783–785) Recognition by the Cambodian government itself came several years earlier when in 2013, the Cambodian parliament passed a law criminalizing the genocide denial, largely in response to the claims by opposition leader Kem Sokha that some of the genocide evidence has been fabricated by Vietnam following its 1979 toppling of Khmer Rouge regime. (Greenwood, 2013) It should be noted, however, that the genocide label had not always been universally accepted by the international community, mostly due to the Cold War geopolitical considerations and ideological motivations of the Khmer Rouge sympathizers abroad. This long-term foreign unwillingness, and the underlying motivations, to acknowledge the genocidal nature of the Khmer Rouge actions is more closely discussed in the third chapter of this thesis.

Unlike the Cambodian genocide, the Armenian case lacks conclusive settlement via international legal recognition and punishment of the perpetrators, which enabled the discourse regarding labeling of the Armenian genocide to fully transform into a highly politicized dispute with considerable symbolic value, as is discussed in one of the later chapters. Even if the genocide achieved universal international recognition, the practical impact of this development would remain limited. There are no living individual perpetrators, and it's likely that the recognition would not result in any territorial claims on Turkey, despite the claims by many Turkish policymakers that the genocide resolution would be the first step towards territorial concessions. (de Waal, 2015a, p. 145) The improbability of any legal resolution of the matter reflects the missed opportunities in the immediate aftermath of World War I, as the perpetrators of the massacres of Armenians and other Christians within Ottoman Anatolia have generally evaded any meaningful legal sanctions for their actions. Nonetheless, despite not producing any lasting convictions or deliver a tangible legal recognition of the

committed atrocities, the abortive Entente-planned international tribunal and series of 1920-1920 Ottoman courts-martial with the Ottoman war criminals prove that the severity of wartime massacres against the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire has been recognized even by the contemporary powers and that legal action against their perpetrators had been deemed appropriate and desirable.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, they remain relevant as it was during their course that most of the resources that are today used to document the genocide first emerged. Nonetheless, in absence of binding legal recognition, the perceived legitimacy of describing the massacres in Ottoman Armenia as genocide is today derived from the recognition by states or institutions at the international level. In terms of direct or implicit recognition by the UN, the single document that could be constructed as closest to such is the previously mentioned Whitaker report, which was in part also concerned with the issue of the Armenian atrocities, and which it considered as constituting genocide per the criteria set out by the Convention. (Robertson, 2010, p. 119; Whitaker, 1985, p. 9) Formally and officially, however, the Armenian genocide remains unrecognized by the UN or any of the subordinate or associated organizations. As such the allegations of genocide do not have the firm legal recognition that the Cambodian genocide has, festering its ongoing denial, even if other forms of international recognition provide a much clearer picture.

Since 1965, when Uruguay became the first country to recognize the Armenian genocide, 30 more countries did so on the national level by either legislative or executive actions, with many countries taking this step only in the 2010s, signifying a clear trend towards recognition, particularly in Western societies. In addition to the acknowledgment of the genocide, several countries also criminalized its denial, including Slovakia or Switzerland. Other actors that recognize the genocide include some supranational organizations such as European Parliament, nongovernmental institutions including the Catholic Church, and many different subnational administrations worldwide ranging from municipal authorities to regional governments. (Barseghyan, 2020; Kates, 2015; Koinova, 2019) Perhaps most impactful had been the recognition of the genocide by the United States, finalized on the Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day on April 24th, 2021, when the newly elected president Biden fulfilled his campaign promise and formally recognized the genocide,

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<sup>13</sup> While the Ottoman government and parliament acknowledged the Armenian massacre and leading perpetrators were convicted and sentenced to death for their crimes, with the outbreak of the Turkish War of Independence these courts were disbanded and their sentences were never carried out. Subsequent replacement of Treaty of Sévres, which provided for International war tribunal, by Treaty of Lausanne, which expunged all references to the tribunal and Armenian massacres, meant that the remaining perpetrators held prisoner by the British were release without sentences as well. (Balint, 2014, pp. 94–99; Dadrian, 1998, p. 510; Kuyumjian, 2011, pp. 261–264)

prompting a sharp condemnation by the Turkish government. (Din, 2021) The path of the United States to the Armenian genocide recognition is emblematic of the politicized and contentious nature of the issue, as positions of both the national governments or legislatures and supranational institutions are subject to geopolitical considerations and security interests.<sup>14</sup> Tellingly, this line of thought is perhaps best illustrated by an excerpt from one leaked British Foreign Office memorandum for the government ministers dating back to 1999, which said about the continual alignment of the British position with that of Turkey that „*given the importance of our relations [with Turkey] ... the current line is the only feasible option*“ and that „*Recognising the genocide would provide no practical benefit to the UK.*“ (Robertson, 2010, p. 110)

Notwithstanding the lack of internationally accepted legal recognition and despite the extremely politicized nature of continued international disputes over the matter, an ongoing and arguably accelerating trend towards Armenian genocide recognition can be observed and will likely continue in the future. In addition, the acceptance of the validity of genocide claims within the academic context has to be stressed. While a number of American historians and researchers, such as Justin McCarthy or Heath Lowry, continue to refuse the claims, they are often subject to criticism and accusations of revisionism and genocide denial. Already in 2000, 126 major Holocaust and genocide studies researchers published a petition that affirmed the „*incontestable fact of the Armenian genocide*“ and urged the western governments to formally recognize it. (Zarifian, 2013, p. 78) Three years earlier, the International Association of Genocide Scholars unanimously passed a formal resolution,<sup>15</sup> recognizing the Armenian genocide and condemning the continued denial by the Turkish government. (Association of Genocide Scholars, 1997) In sum, in this author's view, labeling the Armenian genocide as such is simply a statement of fact, and as becomes apparent throughout this thesis, cannot be convincingly doubted.

### **1.3. Ten Stages of Genocide**

Following the answering of the secondary research question via examination of the historical background in the second chapter, the primary research question is answered via

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<sup>14</sup> Examples of such considerations include admissions by former Obama administration senior officials that the non-recognition was a direct result of effort to maintain working relationship with Turkey; similar considerations also influenced the erstwhile stances of Germany or Netherlands on the matter. (Ben Aharon, 2019; Toosi, 2018)

<sup>15</sup> Additionally, the genocide saw recognition by the current and former presidents of the Association, including Henry Theriault, William Schabas, or Israel W. Charny, among many others. (Charny 2003; Schabas, 2000; Theriault, 2010 etc.)

comparison of the two genocidal processes as they unfolded in the third chapter. The notion that genocides tend to unfold over time in varied, distinguishable phases as opposed to sudden, isolated, or unplanned outbursts of violence is recognized and has been regarded as a core trait of the concept since its inception, as illustrated by Lemkin's notion that: „*Genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves.*“ (Lemkin, 1944, p. 79) Nonetheless, identifying the precise nature of this general process remained on the sidelines of genocide studies.

Moreover, in addition to the academic debates regarding (re)definition of genocide or validity of genocide assertions, genocide scholars have largely been concerned with attempting to explain genocides through the identification of shared causal factors that might have contributed to their occurrence. Broadly speaking, such theories could be primarily divided into agency-oriented or structural approaches. The former focus on the rationale, actions, and behavior of leading elites, those carrying out their orders, or of the ordinary members of society, while the latter are concerned with the cultural, societal, institutional, or ideological factors that could have led to the onset of genocidal processes. (Hiebert, 2008a, p. 310) Works within these two groups brought invaluable insight into what constitutes a fertile ground for genocides to occur, such as Leo Kuper's conclusion that societies with particularly persistent and pervasive social cleavages are more prone to experience genocide or Helen Fein's identification of defeat in war or internal strife as one of several predisposing conditions for mass atrocities to occur. (Fein, 1993, p. 84; Kuper in Hiebert, 2008a, p. 318)

For the purposes of this thesis, however, a different approach must be selected, one that reflects the phenomena of gradual radicalization and intensification of policies that is sometimes associated with both Armenian and Cambodian genocides.<sup>16</sup> Specifically, this means turning to the third category of comparative genocide theories – those focused on genocide as a process. Essentially, these theories argue that if it is to be fully explored then it's necessary to understand the „... *social phenomenon of genocide as a process rather than as the outcome of a process.*“ (Rosenberg, 2012, p. 17) Prevalent focus on exploring causal contexts of genocide by structure or agency theories means that only relatively few typologies or generalizable genocide process models have been proposed. Some scholars have attempted

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<sup>16</sup> While intentionalist views are also prevalent in study of both Armenian and Cambodian genocides, the functionalist notion of „cumulative radicalization“ and „ideological conversion and radicalization“ seems to have some credency, as becomes apparent throughout the next chapter. (see Bloxham, 2003; Melson, 2015 or Path & Kanavou, 2015)

to synthesize the different previously identified causal mechanisms and reduce the complexities of their interaction within the genocide process into less specific, but generalizable, genocide phases. Among the earliest, for example, Helen Fein identified five necessary, and what she believed are sequential, stages of genocide: „*definition (identifying discrimination victims), stripping (of rights, roles, offices, claims), segregation (enforced compulsory wearing of the yellow star), isolation, concentration.*“ (Fein quoted in Rosenberg, 2012, p. 18) In many ways similar to Fein’s model is the more recent, „Ten Stages of Genocide“ model outlined by the Genocide Watch founding president Gregory Stanton, which, for the reasons outlined below, will be used in this thesis.

First presented in 1996 in the aftermath of the Rwandan Genocide, Stanton framed the progression of perpetration of genocide in eight distinguishable stages, which he considers predictable, but not inexorable: classification, symbolization, dehumanization, organization, polarization, preparation, extermination, and denial. Subsequently, in 2012, Stanton expanded his original model to ten stages with the addition of discrimination and persecution stages. While originally proposed as a risk-assessment tool aimed at identifying and preventing impending or ongoing genocides, it has since seen a wide use by comparative genocide scholars in a number of varying contexts. Among others, over the past several years it has been invoked to study not only the recognized and undisputed cases of genocide and ethnic cleansing, such as the Holocaust, the Rwandan genocide, or the ethnic cleansings in former Yugoslavia, but also the arguably less prominent or not universally recognized cases of possibly genocidal mass violence, including the destruction of Native American populations or the mass-scale killings in Darfur.<sup>17</sup> However, even without taking into account its previous use in a relatively broad area of studies, the model also presents a logical, convenient and flexible tool in its own right.

On the most basic level, this is due to the model’s generality and broad applicability. For this thesis, a generalizable and well-developed processual model with defined successive phases is immensely beneficial, as it enables a comparison of two seemingly very dissimilar cases of genocide in each of their constituent stages, facilitating identification of key similarities or differences in the process. Moreover, the model has been chosen also due to Stanton’s decision to recognize and draw upon the existing research by key genocide scholars and incorporate some of their crucial conclusions. In other words, the model places the previously identified risk or contextual factors and developments, including the

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<sup>17</sup> Abimbola & Dominic, 2013; Booker, 2008; Cameron & Phan, 2018; Drew, 2020; Grant et al., 2015; Memišević, 2015 etc.

aforementioned Leo Kuper's conclusions regarding the importance of societal divisions, or the risk factors identified by Barbara Harff such as exclusionary ideology or practice of human rights violations, into the context of a processual model, providing a tool for more structured and process-oriented comparative genocide analysis. Such an approach is of particular importance when comparing the Armenian and Cambodian genocides, as it allows for better-organized examination of some of the key differences and similarities between the two cases, a large part of which lie also precisely in the way that the genocidal process unfolded, rather than only in the contextual particularities of the contemporary Ottoman or Cambodian societies. Moreover, when compared to other similar proposals, such as the aforementioned Fein's sequential model, Stanton's framework accentuates some crucial observations. While Stanton asserts that each stage logically has to be preceded by earlier stages, the model also convincingly emphasizes that the genocide process is not linear and individual stages may not only occur simultaneously but also continue to operate at various levels throughout the entirety of the genocidal process. (Stanton, 2016) This notion also holds true for the topic of this thesis, as in both examined cases the genocide processes did not unfold evenly in either the spatial or temporal sense, and as such multiple stages could be observed concurrently, in line with the basic presumption of this model.

However, it's important to recognize that the model is not without shortcomings. While the stages as proposed by Stanton are broad enough to provide a useful tool that can accommodate most cases of genocide, some considerations need to be taken into account before its application. Researchers noted that it's unlikely that there is a single, universal way in which every genocide unfolds, as the particularities of genocidal processes can take different forms, varying in sequences of action, scale, technological sophistication, or concentration of victims. (Rosenberg, 2012, p. 18) Given the rather generalized nature of the model, in its most basic form, it's not sensitive to these and other case-specific factors and is by no means an all-encompassing structure that accounts for all aspects of any given genocide. As Gerteiny points out, Stanton's model is „*generic, and must be flexibly and cautiously applied ... with history, environment, causality, circumstantialities, intentionality, intensity, politics and ideology taken into consideration.*“ (Gerteiny, 2007, p. 92) This holds especially true for the topic of this thesis, as there are significant contextual differences between both of the analyzed cases, separated by roughly six decades. As such, the distinct local contexts of the Armenian and Cambodian genocides are accounted for not only through close examination of the historical, cultural, and institutional background and motivations or

role of the perpetrators in the second chapter, but have to be entertained also when assessing the individual stages of the genocidal process itself in the third.

### ***Classification***

Stanton identifies the first stage of genocide as classification. During this stage, the society is fractured into various groups, based on ethnicity, race, religion, nationality, or other criteria, with the „dominant“ group clearly identified, cultivating the „Us and Them“ mindset. This categorization of people into distinct groups is to some degree prevalent and natural, and as such should not be interpreted as signaling an immediate risk of genocide. Instead, such a threat emerges only after the pre-existing divisions are transformed into antagonistic cleavages or ethnic polarization, usually as a result of a cascade of mutually interacting developments.<sup>18</sup> (Stanton, 2016) Precise identification of which is the goal of the aforementioned structural and agency-oriented genocide theories. (e.g. Kuper, 1981, p. 17; Mayersen, 2014, pp. 12,15; Somer, 2001, p. 128; Williams, 2016, p. 138) The causal background which contributed to the emergence of these antagonistic cleavages in the two examined cases is discussed in detail throughout the second chapter.

### ***Symbolization***

Much like the classification, symbolization is somewhat natural and prevalent across civilizations, e.g. in the form of traditional ethnic clothing. As such, it's only when symbolization is combined with hateful or divisive identity politics and rhetoric that it becomes dangerous. In the genocidal process, the various methods of symbolization are generally utilized in order to easily distinguish members of various groups, usually by marking the persecuted groups through forcing the symbols upon their unwilling members, or instead identifying those that do not belong to such groups. (Stanton, 2016) In other words, symbolization primarily functions to represent and reinforce the societal differences and divisions introduced in the classification stage. Therefore, it can take on many different forms, ranging from the abuse of the already present language or attire differences to the forced adoption of symbols such as identity cards, group uniforms, or other markings.

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<sup>18</sup> The alleged causality behind the emergence of these divisions has not been conclusively identified. It can be influenced by the group identity and ostensible incompatibility of interests (e.g. Horowitz, 1985 or Suny, 2004); stoked by the activities of so-called ethnic entrepreneurs (e.g. Lipschutz, 1998 or Roeder, 1998); or caused by combination of these two approaches in a phenomena sometimes described as „symbolic politics“ (Kaufman, 2001, p. 2; McLoughlin, 2014, p. 33)

### ***Discrimination***

Since the early work on causes of genocide, political and institutional discrimination was understood to be one of the central predictors of incoming mass atrocities, even if views on the particular nature of this causal link differed. This perceived general importance of entrenched discrimination and prejudice has represented a mainstay of early genocide scholarship, including that of pioneering researchers such as Leo Kuper, Israel Charny or Helen Fein. (Fein, 1993, p. 89; Straus, 2007, p. 480) More recent research provides a somewhat more nuanced view on the linkage between discrimination and mass killing, although the importance of this relationship remains recognized.<sup>19</sup> In short: „*While discrimination may not predict when genocide occurs, it is an important component to setting the stage for such atrocity.*“ (Uzonyi & Asal, 2020, p. 363) Discrimination is therefore recognized as an internal genocide stage also in the ten stages model. Once the targeted groups have been classified and detached from the wider society, the discrimination stage can occur. The dominant group commences the denial of the rights of other groups through the use of political power, law, or even customs. The goal of perpetrators is to legitimize the victimization of weaker groups while monopolizing or expanding their own power, e.g. by curtailing civil or voting rights. (Stanton, 2016)

### ***Dehumanization***

The crucial role of dehumanization in enabling and perpetuating the genocide process has long been recognized by genocide scholars as both the underlying ideological justification and the ultimate rationale for destruction.<sup>20</sup> Dehumanizing propaganda or rhetoric is often accompanied by, and mutually reinforcing with, the conceptualization of the victims as an alien to the majority population and as a powerful and dangerous threat, necessitating the „total elimination of the disease“. (Charny, 1982, p. 207, Lifton, 1986, p. 479) Moreover, in addition to justifying the genocide process, dehumanizing narratives also directly enable it by providing the internal justification for individual perpetrators and weakening the natural moral inhibitions against violence. Further dehumanization is then reinforced via the dehumanizing nature of massacres themselves and through the gradual „routinization“ or „bureaucratization“

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<sup>19</sup> For example, Barbara Harff concluded that active discrimination does indeed represent a significant factor in outbreaks of ethnic conflict, even if it isn't sufficient to explain the transformation of such conflict into a genocide. (Harff, 2003, p. 70)

<sup>20</sup> Dehumanization is, however, not necessarily exclusively an indicator of ongoing genocide process. Instead, it can be utilized by plethora of actors in varied contexts, including within democratic societies that are not at risk of mass violence. In recent years, scholars have moved towards studying discursive dehumanization in the confines of modern political discourse, where it can be used to target the political opponents or marginalized groups such as immigrants or beggars. (e.g. Kteily & Bruneau, 2017 or Cassese, 2019)



of the process. (Charny, 1982, p. 192; Kelman, 1973, pp. 48–50) This general understanding of dehumanization as a crucial and necessary step in the genocide process is reflected by Stanton in his definition of the dehumanization stage. Perpetrators attempt to overcome the natural human aversion to murder by stripping the targeted groups of their humanity. Using propaganda, these groups are vilified, and the majority group is encouraged by state-distributed hate speech and propaganda to regard them as not human, alien to society, and harmful to everyone. (Stanton, 2016) While not explicitly mentioned by Stanton, rape and sexual violence against women is also widely recognized as a common dehumanization and „othering“ tactic prevalent within many cases of genocide, with the goal of objectifying the victims and degrading their worth as human beings. (Waller, 2012, pp. 88–91)

### ***Organization***

Genocide is the result of institutional or group effort, and as such requires significant organizational effort and groundwork by the perpetrator, usually the state. This organization is usually reflected in the formal creation and training of military, law enforcement, or militia and paramilitary units.<sup>21</sup> Where secret police or similar organizations do not yet exist, the state might establish them to spy on, arrest or torture suspected opposition and initiate preparations for the acts of genocide. However, the role of the bureaucratic and political organization should not be underestimated either, as organized mass killing usually requires a complex and efficient system of administration or logistics. (Markusen, 2000, pp. 112–113; Stanton, 2016) The establishment of designated paramilitary groups remains perhaps the most unambiguous sign of the organization stage, as in many cases their singular *raison d'être* is the participation in the genocidal process. Several reasons for why states rely on paramilitary groups during genocidal violence have been identified, including the benefits of plausible deniability or provision of domestic force multiplier to the regular military. Moreover, for genocide-inclined states, the militia groups might be preferable to utilizing the regular military forces, as they aren't bound by instilled codes of honor and tend to be recruited from segments of society that are more susceptible to radical and violence-centered ideological indoctrination, further ensuring their willingness to commit atrocities. (Alvarez, 2006, pp. 6, 18–29)

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<sup>21</sup> However, the genocidal groups do not necessarily have to be directly tied to the central state authority. Illustrating the possible decentralized form that the genocidal violence can take, the Indonesian mass killings of 1965–66 have been in large part committed by informal bands of vigilantes and civilian militias, sometimes acting entirely independently of the, also responsible, armed forces and the government. (Roosa, 2016, pp. 286–287)

### ***Polarization***

Following the clear identification of separate groups, perpetrators proceed to entrench the societal divisions and drive apart the in-group and out-groups. Hate groups ramp up polarizing propaganda and laws that prohibit mutual contact between groups can be passed. A crucial component of polarization is also the intimidation, silencing, or removal of centrist or moderate figures within the general society or even the perpetrators' own group. By arresting, killing, or silencing the center, further polarization is enabled and perpetrators are free to move on to more drastic measures. (Stanton, 2016) Driving a wedge between groups and harassing moderates into silence is crucial if genocide is to proceed and overcome any internal opposition. Murat Somer argues that ethnic polarization represents perhaps the most important factor that enables the occurrence of mass violence, including genocidal killings. Crucially, the growing polarization „... *becomes self-propagating if the protagonists of a certain image of ethnic identities, called the divisive image, appear to have reached a critical mass.*“ (Somer, 2001, p. 127) In other words, a self-sustaining polarization can dominate the society to such a degree that it becomes the norm, fully entrenching the previously introduced internal societal division. (Bozic–Roberson, 2001, pp. 239–240; Somer, 2001, pp. 143–145).

### ***Preparation***

Preparation is in some aspects similar to the organization stage, but in this phase, the imminent threat of genocide becomes more apparent and concrete. Leaders of the perpetrator group prepare specific plans for removal of the targeted groups, often using euphemism when referring to their goals, such as „counter-terrorism“ or „purification“. By this point, the persecuted group is precisely identified, and plans to completely separate them from the general population through deportation or isolation are being drafted, sometimes including the provisions for their eventual extermination. At this stage, the political processes that ultimately lead to the outbreak of genocide itself can be triggered. (Stanton, 2016)

### ***Persecution***

The persecution stage represents the immediate precursor to mass-scale killings. In this phase of genocide, victims are being precisely identified and separated out as death lists are being drawn up. By this point, the property is often expropriated and deportation into concentration camps, or other methods of forced relocation are being implemented. Generally speaking, this stage can also include acts of group-wide victimization that do not yet constitute direct or indirect mass-scale murder. However, limited violence is nonetheless

present in this stage, including torture, extrajudicial killings and forced displacements or even localized massacres. (Stanton, 2016) Such small-scale massacres can be a product of local tensions that escalated without any involvement or directions from higher authorities, but which were nonetheless targeting a specific group. These events are sometimes described as „ethnic cleansing“, a term that is seen by some scholars as somewhat problematic.<sup>22</sup> However, for process-focused genocide researchers, it represents an expedient way to describe phenomena that precedes a systematic and centralized large-scale extermination, but at the same time constitutes an ethnically or culturally motivated mass murder: „...*ethnic cleansing bleeds into genocide*.“ (Naimark quoted in Üngör, 2006, p. 173)

### ***Extermination***

The extermination stage represents the culmination of the genocidal process into organized mass killing and destruction, fulfilling the „intent to destroy“ entirety, or part, of a clearly defined group in accordance with the Convention via exterminatory policies such as killing members of the group, forcibly transferring children of the group to another group, or deliberately inflicting conditions of life incompatible with its continued survival. Moreover, in line with the previous discussion regarding the „Cultural genocide“, the destruction of the cultural and religious legacy of the victims is also in order to remove the targeted group not only physically, but also erase it from history is also seen as belonging to this phase. Even if, much like the other stages, extermination can take many different forms, there is no doubt that in this stage the conventional understanding of what constitutes the act of genocide is fulfilled. (UNGA 1948; Stanton, 2016) Given its relevance to both cases examined in this thesis, a brief note regarding the indirect forms of extermination, such as forced starvation, is appropriate. This form of genocide, recognized even in the Convention, but elaborated further by Silina under the notion of „genocide by attrition“, represents different means to arrive at the same objective, that is the extermination of a targeted group, albeit in an indirect and prolonged manner. (Fein, 1997, p. 12; Reeves, 2005, p. 21; Silina, 2008, pp. 7–9)

### ***Denial***

The final stage of genocide is Denial, which can accompany the ongoing genocide or can follow one that concluded. Perpetrators might attempt to cover up the evidence of killings, intimidate witnesses or destroy the remains of victims. The committed crimes are either denied, or the blame is placed elsewhere, sometimes on the victims themselves. If there

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<sup>22</sup> E.g. Aydin, 2014; Blum, Stanton, Sagi & Richter, 2007; or Singleterry, 2010

is an ongoing armed conflict, acts of genocide can often be presented as counter-insurgency operations. Third-party investigations of the violence tend to be blocked, and perpetrators can continue to govern until they flee into exile or are removed from power, after which they might continue to avoid facing justice unless captured and tried. However, genocide denial can continue even long after the massacres concluded or the direct perpetrators were punished. (Stanton, 2016)

<b>Stages</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>1. Classification</b>	Members of a society are divided into groups of " <i>us</i> " and " <i>them</i> " by the dominant group based on ethnic, racial, religious, or other differences.
<b>2. Symbolization</b>	The classified " <i>them</i> " are accorded symbols or (often derogatory) names in order to highlight their nonbelonging to the dominant group.
<b>3. Discrimination</b>	The dominant group uses laws or political power to strip the targeted groups of rights or privileges and expands its power at their expense.
<b>4. Dehumanization</b>	Perpetrator group denies the humanity of minority groups, members of targeted groups are equated with animals or diseases, hate speech becomes normalized.
<b>5. Organization</b>	Top-down organization by formal or informal groups manifests through the organization of military and paramilitary forces or broader institutional framework.
<b>6. Polarization</b>	State propaganda or hate groups intensify efforts to instill the social cleavages, attacks against out-groups are intensified, moderates from the perpetrator's own groups might also be targeted and socially isolated.
<b>7. Preparation</b>	Detailed plans are drawn up for the genocidal killings and initial preparation is commenced.
<b>8. Persecution</b>	Victims are identified, separated out, and targeted for abuse, maltreatment, or extrajudicial killings.
<b>9. Extermination</b>	The culmination of previous stages, direct or indirect destruction of targeted groups begins, accompanied by other forms of violence such as mass rapes or other war crimes.
<b>10. Denial</b>	An attempt is made to destroy evidence of the atrocities, deny that any crimes took place, or assign blame to the victims themselves.

*Table 1. Overview of Stanton's updated ten-stage model (Based on Stanton, 2016)*

## 2. Historical Context

Understanding and examining the contextual background of genocide is an important factor in the field of genocide studies. While for structure or agency-oriented approaches, the historical or ideological factors that preceded genocidal violence represent a centerpiece of scholarly focus, for processual theories of genocide, such factors play more of an explanatory or contextualizing role. Particularly in relation to the utilized model, accounting for the historical context and circumstances is necessary to counter some of the model's shortcomings and provide a clearer picture of the genocidal process as a whole. Therefore, in this chapter, a general historical background of both genocides is presented by exploring crucial developments within several broad areas relevant to the genocidal process, which include the emergence of the genocidal ideologies, the relevant historical developments, and the nature and role of the specific perpetrator groups. However, as the genocidal process, by definition, cannot be separated from the events that preceded the mass extermination, some of the phenomena that are discussed here are later also examined in greater detail in the third chapter. In the case of the Ottoman Empire, the long and tumultuous history of the Ottoman relationship with its Armenian minority is delineated, particularly through the prism of the significant external and internal developments of the 19th century, including the phenomena of persistent fears of the Russian threat, gradual loss of territory, or the emergence of the Muslim-Turkish nationalism. Conversely, when discussing Cambodia, where the genocide victims represent a more internally diverse and stratified group, separation of which from the perpetrator group is not as historically deep-rooted, more attention will be instead given to the immediate rise to power of the Khmer Rouge, including the formulation of their ideological thought, which had been deeply intertwined with the historical development of the Khmer nationalism.<sup>23</sup>

Even before moving to a more elaborate comparison in the third chapter of the thesis, several key observations regarding the similarities and differences between the two analyzed cases become apparent already throughout this chapter. In particular, these include some general similarities that are in line with the broad conclusions of agency and structure genocide theories regarding the possible contextual predictors of genocide,<sup>24</sup> including the

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<sup>23</sup> While the common tenets of communism no doubt played an important role in formulation of the genocidal Khmer Rouge ideology, scholars now recognize the crucial impact of the ethnic, racial and cultural supremacist attitudes and the Khmer ultra-nationalism as well. (e.g. Dommen, 2001; Grant, 2009; Kiernan, 2005; or Rowley, 2017)

<sup>24</sup> E.g. Fein, 1993; Hiebert, 2008a; Markusen, 2000; or Melson, 1992

central role that revolutionary upheaval played in thrusting the genocidaires to power, political and economic upheavals that preceded them, or a broader wartime context, although here a key difference can be drawn, in the sense that while in Ottoman Empire the genocide culminated during the war, in Cambodia it took place only after the war concluded. Nonetheless, some more specific shared traits can be identified, including the ideological idolization of distant past, paranoia regarding the threat of dissolution of the state by outside forces, or even some striking circumstantial similarities, such as the influence of Europeans, French in particular, on the early stages of the genesis of the genocidaire's respective ideologies. Finally, there are also some important, if obvious, differences, such as the fact that in the case of the Ottoman Empire, unlike in Cambodia, immediate roots of the genocidal process can be traced to decades or even centuries before it culminated, or the clear distinctions in the overarching ideological motivation of the perpetrators.

## 2.1. Ottoman Empire

If there's one thing to keep in mind when discussing the history of ethnoreligious minorities within the Ottoman state, it's the fact that from its very foundation, the Ottoman state was a culturally diverse unit, despite the later claims of some Ottoman Turkish nationalists.<sup>25</sup> In many ways, however, it was only with the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 that the Ottoman state was consolidated and its relationship with the non-Turkic, non-Muslim, minorities was formalized into an order that would, in effect, survive until the 19th century. (Fleming, 2003, pp. 70–71) The newly proclaimed Empire was structured into so-called *millets*, which separated subjects not by geographical location, ethnicity, or economic status, but by their religious adherence. This was initially not an organized, universal, or consistent system and instead, the term millet has been retrospectively applied to the practice of awarding autonomy to the individual non-Muslim communities which were collectively known as *dhimmi*, that is the legally protected and recognized, but not necessarily equal, non-Muslims living under the dominion of an Islamic state. While the particular position of Armenians under this practice is discussed in the next chapter, generally, certain affairs of each millet had been administered by their religious leaders. (Braude, 1982, p. 83; Muztar, 1979, p. 65; Payton, 2006, p.13)

The Armenian relationship with the Ottoman state developed within the confines of this practice. Unlike the Orthodox Christian or Jewish millets, the establishment of which has

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<sup>25</sup> For more detailed description of the early Ottoman state, see Kafadar, 1995 or Lindner, 1983

been well documented, the history of the Armenian Patriarchate, and by extension the millet, remains somewhat unclear.<sup>26</sup> Additionally, until the Ottoman conquest of „Western Armenia“ in 1639, Armenians represented a relatively insignificant minority.<sup>27</sup> However, even if their numbers grew, the arrangements regarding the millet had not been significantly changed until the 19th century, and major developments within the Armenian autonomy were limited to the gradual consolidation of the power of Constantinople Patriarchate at the expense of other Armenian hierarchies. Moreover, in response to the dutiful Armenian fulfillment of their fiscal and political responsibilities, the Ottomans did not interfere with the internal structure or organization of the community. Even as separatism and nationalism began to severely disrupt the loyalties of other Christian millets over the 18th century, Armenians, generally speaking, remained comparatively passive, earning the title of *millet-i sadıka*, or the „loyal nation“. (Bardakjian, 1982, pp. 95, 97; Dadrian, 1997, p. 192) However, by the beginning of the 19th century, given the decrepit state of the Empire at that time, the previous informal and heterogenous nature of Ottoman agreements with individual minority communities was no longer viable.

Despite several attempts at military reforms in the late 18th century, it became clear that the Ottomans were significantly lagging behind European powers, primarily in the terms of technical and organizational ability to wage war. (Bloxham, 2005, p. 29; Karpat, 1972, p. 245) Of paramount importance was the emergence of Russia as a chief geopolitical rival, and its practice of justifying its southbound territorial expansion with anti-Ottoman legitimizing ideas. These included claims of Russia representing the true heir to the Byzantine Empire, framing of the Russian expansion as a „civilizing mission“, or the general paternalistic rhetoric towards Orthodox Christians. (Bitis, 2005, p. 507; Bloxham, 2005, p.30; Crews, 2009, p. 80; J.R., 1946, p.59) This proclaimed Russian patronage of Ottoman Christians was put to practice when Russia intervened in the Greek war of independence and imposed the Treaty of Adrianople, under which Russian rights of interference in the region had been reaffirmed, many territories across the Balkans and Caucasus had been separated from the Empire, and the Empire itself was brought almost to the point of collapse and ordered to pay crippling indemnities. (Abdukadyrov, 2015; Bitis, 2005, p. 512; Šedivý, 2011, p. 208) It was

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<sup>26</sup> There seems to be no evidence for establishment of single empirewide patriarchal authority by the Ottomans and instead the Armenian Patriarchate likely developed only gradually over several centuries, expanding upon the nucleus of the Constantinople Armenian vicariate. (Braude, 1982, pp. 81–82)

<sup>27</sup> Western Armenia covered much of the Armenian plateau and included most of the contemporary Armenian population, while „Eastern Armenia“ remained under Persian control and is roughly corresponding to the modern Republic of Armenia. (Payaslian, 2007, p. 106)

in this context of military and political humiliation and social upheaval marked by accelerating disintegration of the loyalty of Balkan Christian subjects that Sublime Porte embarked on the path to long-overdue general reform.

The following wave of reforms, known as the *Tanzimat* era, began in the late 1830s and included a plethora of diverse edicts and policies, such as the abolition of slavery, establishment of universities, reorganization of military, introduction of western-style clothing, or a succession of laws in 1869 regulating the citizenship and reorganizing the judiciary. Regarding the changes to the inter-communal relations, the policy of Ottomanism has been introduced in order to neutralize the rising dhimmi nationalism through instilling a common Ottoman identity that would transcend ethnic or religious lines.<sup>28</sup> (Evered, 2012, p. 3; Kawtharani, 2013, p. 1) Naturally, such a change necessitated sweeping reform of the millet system, which was to be achieved by formal secularisation of the state, accompanied by restricting the authority of millet leaders only to the spiritual and religious matters and erasing their capacity to intervene in the civil and judicial affairs. (Berkes, 1998, pp. 152–154) However, while the Tanzimat reforms did accord Armenians and other non-Muslim minorities with formal legal equality for the first time in Empire's history, in the long run, they failed to resolve the growing intercommunal tensions.<sup>29</sup>

On the contrary, the prospect of equality for dhimmi, even if still only theoretical and largely formal, created deep resentment within the majority Muslim population, leading to a religious backlash, as equality for non-Muslims was widely perceived as a „... *repudiation of fundamental socio-religious traditions deeply enmeshed in the Turkish psyche, and institutionalized throughout the Empire.*” (Dadrian, 1997, p. 20) The general societal opposition to the Tanzimat reforms, compounded by the weakness of the Ottoman state and inability to meaningfully implement much of the reform provisions in the first place, contributed to their failure, particularly in the more remote regions of the Empire, including Anatolia and Western Armenia. There, the reforms had little effect, and Armenians and other Christians continued to experience social inequalities, discrimination, depredations, and indignities that the government, perhaps consciously, failed to address. (Abu Jaber, 1967, p. 222; Movsesian, 2010, pp. 10–11) Even if reforms failed to bring any meaningful

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<sup>28</sup> The policy of Ottomanism did not succeed in this objective and would ultimately be hijacked by the Turkish nationalists within the CUP and relegated to becoming a surrogate tool for the Turkification of the Ottoman state. (Şeker, 2007, pp. 463–464)

<sup>29</sup> Outside of this domain, the reforms were more impactful and successful, culminating with the 1876 adoption of first Ottoman constitution. Nonetheless, even this constitution, which proclaimed equality for non-Muslims and created new parliament, was suspended by the new sultan, Abdul Hamid II less than two years later. (Zürcher, 2004, p. 76; Herzog & Sharif, 2016, p. 13).



improvement in a practical sense, they did nonetheless open up new paths for the Armenian elites to voice and pursue their interests, such as through the so-called „Armenian National Assembly“, established in 1863. This internal reorganization of the Armenian self-governance towards more secularized power-sharing would later prove to be rather impactful, as it enabled the secular, westernized, and nationalist Armenian intellectuals to gain upper hand over the conservative and relatively Ottoman-loyalist clergy and merchant aristocracy. (Hartmann, 2016, p. 221; Řoutil, Košťálová, & Novák, 2017, pp. 59,63)

### **2.1.1. „Armenian Question“**

Amid failed reform efforts and growing national consciousness and separatist sentiments, the so-called „Armenian Question“ first attracted sizeable international attention in the aftermath of yet another defeat of the Ottoman Empire at the hands of Russian. While the 1878 San Stefano treaty was primarily concerned with the independence of Balkan states and Russian territorial expansion into the Caucasus, it also included demands for broad Russian-backed Armenian autonomy within the so-called six vilayets.<sup>30</sup> However, other great powers were alarmed at the extent of potential Russian gains and pressed for a revision of the treaty. For Armenians, the resulting Treaty of Berlin represented mostly a clear defeat, as it provided only unenforceable vague promises of reform. (Bloxham, 2005, p. 45; Verheij, 2012, pp. 88,91–92; Zeidner, 1976, pp. 473–474) Severe deterioration of mutual relations between Anatolian Armenians and the Ottoman State followed. Within the „loyal millet“, nationalism became the norm, together with Russophilia and emerging bitter and contemptuous view of the Turks, perceived as foreign and inherently different from the European-minded Armenians. (Suny, 1993, pp. 23–24) Moreover, the Armenian national rallying point had been gradually shifting towards the Caucasus, as Russia came to control sizeable portions of historic Armenia, and the Catholicos of Russian-controlled Echmiadzin, the formal head of Armenian Apostolic Church, moved to reclaim titular, and de facto, spiritual leadership of the Armenian nation. (Riegg, 2016, p. 348; Werth, 2006, p. 216) For the Ottoman elites meanwhile, the progressive loss of the Christian-inhabited lands meant that future rebellion of Armenians had begun to be seen as a real possibility. The suspicion of the dhimmi came to permeate throughout much of the Muslim society and will be discussed in detail in the following chapter. As a result, Sultan Abdul Hamid II quietly replaced the failed

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<sup>30</sup> The Armenian provinces of Van, Erzurum, Mamuretülaziz, Bitlis, Diyarbekir and Sivas where most of Ottoman Armenians were concentrated, and where they generally represented a plurality, but often not the majority, of population. (Verheij, 2012, p. 88)

policy of Ottomanism with a so-called „politics of unity“ in an effort to restore at least a modicum of social cohesion by accentuating unity among the Muslims via pan-Islamic policy and rhetoric, seeking to mobilize the hitherto disparate and disgruntled Ottoman Muslims into a robust political unit. For the Armenians, this meant that the prospects of reform or autonomy were effectively terminated. (Bloxham, 2005, p. 46; Deringil, 2009, p. 349; Duguid, 1973, p. 40)

In addition to the geopolitical fears, growing socio-economical differences within the Ottoman society also contributed to the suspicion of dhimmis. In towns and cities, the Armenian middle and upper class had been stereotypically composed of cosmopolitan businessmen, successful in commerce and industry.<sup>31</sup> Of paramount impact has also been the activity of the western Christian missionaries, who were prohibited from proselytizing among Muslims. The missionary activity led to significant improvements in the Armenian quality of life, as the converts enlisted in foreign elite schools, benefiting not only the individuals but also communities as a whole. (Bloxham, 2005, p. 43; De Waal, 2015b, p. 24; Řoutil, Košťálová, & Novák, 2017, p. 56) Together, these factors led to the reinforcement of popular Muslim perception of Armenians as devious and scheming traders of nefarious character subverting the Muslim society, a characterization that was in many ways similar to the contemporary antisemitic perceptions of Jews in Europe. (Astourian, 1992, p. 59; De Waal, 2015b, p. 24; Suny, 1993, p. 19) While such stereotypes were born out of the economical successes of Armenian elites in Constantinople and other cities, they were held to be true also in remote Eastern Anatolia. However, there such depiction did not correspond to the reality of violence, extortions, or land usurpation that the Armenian peasantry faced without much governmental interest. (Astourian, 1992, pp. 66) The roots of this situation can be traced to the demographics of the region. While the Ottoman censuses were marred by significant falsification, it seems likely that by the end of the 19th century, well over a million Armenians lived together with several hundred thousand Muslims of various ethnic groups, as well as other Christians or Jews. (Kévorkian, 2006, pp. 268–269)

Most numerous of the non-Armenian groups were the predominately Muslim Kurds, relationship with whom was locally arguably more important than that with Turks.<sup>32</sup> While

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<sup>31</sup> Such stereotype was not entirely unfounded, as Armenian role in the Ottoman economy, and particularly in the trade domain, had been indeed disproportionate to the size of their population. This has been caused by several reasons, one of which has been the exemption of Armenians from military service, ensuring that the community avoided the considerable loss of life that the frequent military defeats brought upon the Muslims. (Astourian, 1992, pp. 65–66; Suny, 1993, pp. 19–20)

<sup>32</sup> Additional tensions were introduced with the gradual arrival of Muslims refugees escaping the Russian conquests in the Caucasus. The arrival of the Caucasian Circassians in particular brought severe disruption, as

officially the Tanzimat reforms freed the region's Armenians of dependency on Kurdish *beys*,<sup>33</sup> in practice many autonomous Kurdish chieftains remained the most powerful local authority, perpetuating an almost feudal system of taxation and abuse of Armenian peasantry. In the cases where Kurdish chieftains were replaced by centrally-appointed government officials, the rivalry had been reinforced further as Kurds found it hard to accept the loss of their long-standing privileges. (Deringil, 2009, p. 348; Kévorkian, 2006, pp. 10–11; Suny, 1993, p. 104) Moreover, Kurds and Armenians had only little in common other than the land they inhabited. Armenian peasants, even if not as affluent as their urban-dwelling compatriots, were on the opposite end of the socioeconomic scale, as Kurds still largely belonged to nomadic pastoralist tribes, and suffered from appalling levels of poverty, child mortality, and miserable public health conditions. (Baibourtian, 2016, p. 23; De Waal, 2015b, p. 45)

While the tense situation in the region and particular developments that stemmed from it are nearly inseparably linked to the broader genocide process and are more closely discussed in the following chapter, some key events ought to be highlighted. First is the establishment of Cossack-inspired irregular *Hamidiye* light cavalry regiments, named after Sultan Abdul Hamid II, created to exploit the chaos and secure Kurdish loyalty. (Deringil, 2009, p. 349, Klein, 2011, p. 2) Secondly, at roughly the same time that *Hamidiye* were being formed, the Armenian secessionists and revolutionary groups, such as the newly-formed Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), were becoming increasingly successful in undermining the moderate leadership of Armenian millet. Moreover, as many of them originated in Russia, the Ottoman beliefs in the role of Armenians as a Russian „fifth column“ were becoming seemingly vindicated, to a degree. The Armenian revolutionaries began organizing *fedayi*, irregular armed groups that were tasked with defending the Armenian communities against the marauding *Hamidiye*, but soon began waging open insurrection against the Ottoman state. (Dasnabedian, 1989, p. 31; Kévorkian, 2006, p. 37; Libaridian, 2011, p. 82; Řoutil, Košťálová, & Novák, 2017, pp. 64–65) Both *Hamidiye* and *fedayi*-inspired units would later play significant roles in the genocide, and the ongoing cycle of armed insurgency and punitive actions within Western Armenia heightened the Ottoman sense of vulnerability and essentially collapsed what was left of the mutual trust between Turks and the Christian minorities.

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the Ottoman government attempted to secure their loyalties by redistributing Armenian land. (Chochiev & Koç, 2006, pp. 98–99; Klein, 2011, p. 165)

<sup>33</sup> While formally the appointed representatives of the Sultan, in effect they were autonomous rulers under hereditary succession. (Ozoglu, 1996, p. 18)

In this context, the so-called Hamidian massacres took place between 1894 and 1895.<sup>34</sup> Stemming from the rebellion of Sasun Armenians against the dual taxation by both Kurdish notables and the Government, the suppression of the uprising transformed into an indiscriminate campaign of destruction across the entirety of eastern Anatolia. While met with international outrage and demands for implementation of reform package agreed years earlier, which the Sultan formally accepted, no reforms were implemented, and by the time the killings subsided in 1895, at least eighty thousand Armenians were murdered, while hundreds of thousands more were left destitute or forced to convert to Islam. (Akçam, 2006a, pp. 52–53; Deringil, 2009, pp. 355–357; Duguid, 1973, pp. 149–151; Hovannisian, 1997, p. 224; Morris & Ze’evi, 2019, pp. 66–67) In the wake of this physical and cultural destruction, the Sultan was convinced that Armenian territorial ambitions were entirely suppressed, and in 1897 declared to the British Ambassador that: „*The Armenian question is finally closed.*“ (Deringil, 2009, p. 369) In line with this sentiment, the situation of Armenians within the Ottoman state remained relatively stagnant over the successive years, constrained within the cycle of mutually reinforcing violent actions by Armenian revolutionaries and Muslim authorities.<sup>35</sup> It was only with the so-called Young Turk revolution that the Armenian Question experienced any real development and regained its impetus and international attention. (Akçam, 2006a, p. 53)

### **2.1.2. Young Turks and CUP**

Despite the efforts to stabilize his reign by openly embracing the Islamist political philosophy, strong oppositional attitudes fermented against the Sultan since his suspension of the Ottoman constitution in 1878, particularly among the young members of Ottoman intellectual and military elites. By 1902, opposition to the Sultan, while formally united under the „Young Turks“ umbrella, split along two distinct conceptions of how to deal with the ongoing national crises and reverse the protracted decline. First was the relatively liberal and multiconfessional movement for genuine reform of the empire and equalization of its citizens,

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<sup>34</sup> While some Armenian historians see direct conjunction between the Hamidian massacres and the Armenian genocide of 1915, others assert that they should be studied as distinct events, despite the obvious parallels. Central argument of this position, shared also by this author, is that there was only little ideological or political continuity between the two atrocities, and that the massacres represented an exemplary violent pogrom, but one which was not immediately antecedent to the broader gradation of genocidal policies. (i.e. Deringil, 2009, p. 368; De Waal, 2015b, p. 27; Suny, 2018, p. 127)

<sup>35</sup> These included the failed ARF-organized 1904 Sasun Uprising or the attempted assassination of the Sultan in 1905, which were both followed by large-scale murderous reprisals. (Bloxham, 2005, p. 57; Ketsemanian, 2017, p. 347)

led primarily by the liberal prince Sabahaddin, of the ruling House of Osman. (Hanioğlu, 2001, p. 8; Özavci, 2012, p. 144; Taglia, 2015, pp. 114–116) The second, and ultimately prevailing, was the current built around the nationally and religiously chauvinistic programme, envisioning the transformation of the Empire into a Turkish and Muslim national state. This „Turkish national idea“ emerged in the aftermath of the French revolution and, via interaction with the disastrous developments of the 19th century, developed thanks to: „*European exiles in Turkey, and Turkish exiles in Europe; European Turcological research, and the new knowledge which it brought of the ancient history and civilization of the Turkish peoples.*“ (Lewis, 1968, p. 2) This nationalist ideological stream came to eventually be dominated by the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), originally founded in Paris in 1895 as a secret nationalist organization, and initially embodied by the exiled opposition leader Ahmet Riza, which fully embraced the nationalist policy in the aftermath of 1902 Young Turk congress. (Kieser, 2018, p. 44; Ünal, 1996, p. 31) Despite the internal division, CUP was successful in consolidating their position over the next several years, including by integrating other, sometimes even more radical, Young Turk organizations, or by cooperating with other forces opposed to the Sultan’s regime, including the Sabahaddin’s Liberals and even the ARF, the inclusion of which enabled he involved parties to claim that their struggle belongs to all Ottoman ethnic groups equally.<sup>36</sup> (Akmeşe, 2005, p. 53; Hanioğlu, 2001, pp. 77, 103; Kieser, 2018, pp. 49–50)

In July of 1908, revolutionary uprisings broke out under the CUP leadership, motivated largely by fears that great power intervention in the Empire was imminent. In the face of a disloyal army and mounting popular pressure, Abdul Hamid accepted the demands for restoration of the 1876 Constitution and announced that parliament would be convened. (Ahmad, 1969, pp. 2–3,20; Hanioğlu, 2001, pp. 273–275) CUP quickly moved in to assume control in the power vacuum, defeating the disorganized liberals in the 1908 elections. (Kayali, 1995, pp. 271–272) Despite the high hopes placed upon the constitutional restoration, it failed to reverse the Ottoman decline or bring stability to the Empire. The new government proved ineffective and disorganized, contributing to a widespread disillusionment that culminated with the failed 1909 counter-coup, which was suppressed and led to Sultan’s deposition in favour of Mehmed V, but which nonetheless severely destabilized the nascent regime. (Kieser, 2018, pp. 70–73; Swenson, 1970, p. 171) The disillusionment applied also to the members of national minorities, and Armenians in particular. While many previously

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<sup>36</sup> Such claims were however not entirely true, as Bulgarian, Greek or Serbian organisations did not participate in this alliance. (Hanioğlu, 2001, p. 243)

illegal organizations had been legalized and transformed into political parties, it soon became clear that the Armenian dreams of territorial autonomy and other reforms, which drove them to join forces with CUP in the first place, would not be materialized. Moreover, the revolution did not bring an end to periodical massacres either, and the Adana massacre of 1909, a disorganized and chaotic rampage committed in aftermath of the aforementioned counter-coup, led to the deaths of at least 15 thousand Armenians.<sup>37</sup> (Akçam, 2006a, pp. 69–70; Güçlü, 2018, p. 264)

Between 1911 and 1913, wars with Italy and the Christian Balkan League led to shocking and devastating defeats for the Ottoman military. In just two years, the Empire lost control of Libya, as well as of most of its remaining territories in the Balkans. (Chadwick, 1999, p. 174; Uyar, 2021, pp. 14,23) Crucially, the devastating and traumatic defeat proved to be the nail in the proverbial coffin of the multiconfessional and multiethnic conception of the Ottoman nation. Even if the state policy of Ottomanism has not been abandoned per se, the multiconfessional conception of Ottomanism „*was replaced with a more Islamic Ottomanism, an ideology from which non-Muslims were excluded. They were no longer regarded as trusted members who could contribute to the task of preserving the Ottoman state.*“ (Ginio, 2005, p. 177) In a more immediate sense, this period also marked the end of any pretense of multiparty democracy.<sup>38</sup> The 1912 election, marred by widespread electoral fraud and violent and brutal electioneering, resulted in a landslide victory of the ruling CUP. (Kayali, 1995, pp. 276–277) The blatant election-rigging led to a successful, but short-lived 1912 coup d'état by the Liberals, which was followed by the 1913 counter-coup, in which several prominent CUP members stormed the Sublime Porte and shot their way into power, resulting in the imposition of military dictatorship, effectively headed by the so-called Three Pashas: Mehmed Talât Pasha, Ismail Enver Pasha, and Ahmed Cemal Pasha. (Hanioglu, 2001, p. 285; Morris & Ze'evi, 2019, pp. 138–139; Walker, 1990, p. 193)

This marked culmination of the gradual embrace of Turkish nationalism by CUP in lieu of Ottomanism or pan-Islamism. Specifically, it was a victory of the conception of the Muslim Turkish nation-state cultivated since the beginning of the 20th century by Ziya

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<sup>37</sup> While the CUP and ARF concluded an agreement that led to trials and courts-martial of the worst perpetrators of violence, resulting in executions of 124 Muslims and seven Armenians, the Grand Vizier placed blame for the massacres the Armenian political committees, while the Ottoman authorities asserted that most of the casualties were actually Muslims. (Güçlü, 2018, pp. 262; 265)

<sup>38</sup> The near-complete sidelining of Parliament meant that any positive developments regarding the formal ethnic representation, such as the 1913 increase of number of Armenian parliamentarians from 14 to 16, could only hardly be understood as an example of any meaningful representation of minority rights. (Walker, 1990, p. 182)

Gökalp, the highly influential leading ideologue of the CUP, who believed that state's strength comes from its homogeneity. (Butt, 2017, p. 138; Grigoriadis, 2013, p. 57; Turner, 1977, p. 5) Gökalp synthesized Turkish nationalism with modernity and Islam and put forward the notion that the decline of the Ottoman Empire could be attributed to the loss of its Turkish character. Therefore, it had to rediscover its own Turkish culture and bring itself closer to its Turkic brethren of the Caucasus and Central Asia.<sup>39</sup> Under his scheme, full integration would be possible for all Muslims living within the Empire, provided that they would embrace the Turkish culture and language. Non-Muslims, however, were deemed to be incompatible with the Turkish culture and as such, their assimilation would not be a priority, and instead, they would be subjected to state discrimination. (Grigoriadis, 2013, p. 58–59; Saatçi, 2002, pp. 557–559) This led to a formulation of a specific strategy of achieving the one-nation Turkish state, plainly articulated by another prominent CUP official, Dr. Mehmet Nâzım. The general assimilation was to be achieved by first subjugating the Muslim minorities, such as Albanians, in order to intimidate the non-Muslims and preclude the Europeans. Then, the other nations would be dealt with, and any resistance to these policies would be met with a violent and destructive response. (Řoutil, Košťálová, & Novák, 2017, pp. 37–38) In short, the turbulent period of the 1910s, marred by the perceived betrayal by many of the non-Turkish minorities led to a drastic shift in the CUP conception of the state's identity: „...by 1912, certainly by 1915, the Young Turks were not particularly benign or dedicated to pluralism. They had become xenophobic integral nationalists for whom the identity and situation of the Armenians were sufficient proof of their treachery and potential threat to the continuity of the empire.“ (Melson quoted in Butt, 2017, pp. 138–139)

The three men who seized power in the 1913 coup, and dominated the CUP party politics even in the three years prior, came to play a central role in the Armenian genocide. Together, the triumvirate of three Pashas assumed near-complete control of the country. First and foremost of the three, Talât Pasha, influential party leader, strategist, and de facto ruler of the Empire seemed to have been the main channel through which the secret decisions of the CUP Central Committee were translated into policy. Crucially, from his position as the Minister of Interior, he had been responsible for many of the genocidal policies and decisions, and as such is widely considered to be the ultimate architect and the main perpetrator of the Armenian genocide. (Akçam, 2006a, p. 165; Kieser, 2018, p. 6; Walker, 1990, p. 191) The second member of the triumvirate had been Enver Pasha, an early CUP member and an iconic

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<sup>39</sup> It should be noted, as pointed out earlier in this chapter, that this idealised, purely Turkish conception of Ottoman State was not particularly historically accurate.

hero of the 1908 revolution, a popular veteran of the wars against Italy and Balkan states, and a leader of the 1913 coup who would become minister of war. Enver also served as an important link in the Ottoman-German relations dating back to his brief stint as military attaché in Berlin, where he became an admirer of German military power, contributing to the entry of the Empire into World War I. Throughout the war, he served as an overall commander of the Ottoman military, and as such, wielded significant power. (Kieser, 2018, p. 88; Shaw & Shaw, 1977, pp. 299–300) Arguably the least powerful of the three men had been Cemal Pasha, serving as minister of navy and commander and governor in Greater Syria. Cemal was known for his strict policies towards the Arab nationalists and Zionists of the region, earning him the epithet of *al-Saffah*, or „the butcher“. His role in the Armenian genocide, however, continues to be disputed. Some accounts argue that he had no active role in developing the policies targeting the Armenians, and some even go as far as to claim that he opposed the central government and CUP and went out of his way to actively attempt to help the Armenians. However, a more widely accepted view is that while he did save some Armenians directly, and might have contributed to the survival of many more through the mild and lackluster implementation of his colleagues' genocidal policy, he was nevertheless fully committed to the disappearance of Armenians from Turkish soil, albeit in his view it was to be achieved through the less immediately violent means of gradual Islamization and assimilation. (Kurt, 2019, pp. 222,235; Zachs, 2012, p. 75)

While the three Pashas were consolidating their near-compete control of the country, the scheme of Armenian reform came to the forefront of international politics for one last time, in no small part due to the efforts of the ARF. The period between 1912 and 1914 saw an intense effort by all of the great powers to resolve the so-called Armenian crisis and secure some sort of reform in the six vilayets. The initial Russian proposals were followed by a series of counter-proposals, obstructions, and discussions, motivated by the fears and predictions of individual powers. (Davison, 1948, pp. 497–498; Gingeras, 2016, p. 156; Walker, 1990, p. 194) Following a protracted diplomatic crisis, in February 1914 compromise solution accepted even by the Ottoman Empire was reached. It was the first agreement to promise genuine, albeit very limited, change in the region. The six vilayets were to be divided into two administrative districts, each of which would be administered by an Ottoman-nominated, but European-approved non-Ottoman inspector-general, who would supervise all aspects of the regional administration or interethnic relations. (Davison, 1948, pp. 504–505; Hovannisian, 1969, pp. 38–39) Ultimately, however, the hopes that the reform package stoked were destroyed by the outbreak of the war. The two inspectors-general had been appointed, but the



Dutch colonial administrator Westenenk was never able to assume his post, while the Norwegian army major Hoff was forced to quit his post within weeks of arriving, without any replacement ever being appointed. (Hovannisian, 1969, p. 39; Kévorkian, 2011, p. 171)

Ottoman decision to join war had been motivated by many of the same developments that also advanced the gradual embrace of Turkish-Muslim nationalism. The impact of the disastrous Balkan Wars and the dormant desire to reclaim the lost territories, economic crisis, and simple flow of events have all been identified as motivations for the Ottoman entrance into the war. As for the decision to join forces with Germany and Central Powers, the desperate desire by the Empire to extricate itself from the devastating international isolation meant that this was by no means inevitable, and some overtures towards an alliance with Entente took place. In the end, the pre-existing ties with Germany and the ever-present fears of Russia prevailed, and the Ottoman leadership concluded that their long-term objectives and the state's survival can be achieved only in the event of the Central Powers' victory.<sup>40</sup> (Aksakal, 2008, pp. 190–191; Gingeras, 2016, pp. 106–109; Rogan, 2016, p. 2) Regardless of what the Ottoman motivations behind joining the unraveling war might have been, it was this decision that immediately preceded the onset of processes that would culminate in the Armenian genocide, and as such, closer examination of any further developments in Ottoman Armenia are reserved for the subsequent chapter.

## 2.2. Cambodia

Unlike in the case of the Armenian genocide, in Cambodia, the immediate roots of the genocidal process are much more intrinsically linked with the beliefs, motivations, and actions of the perpetrators of the genocide. For this reason, the focus of this section of the thesis lies in exploring the emergence and rise of the Khmer Rouge and its genocidal ideology, and to a lesser degree of the Khmer nationalism in general. One crucial component, permeating throughout most of the modern Cambodian history, as well as the Khmer Rouge rhetoric, is the phenomenon of the 9th century Khmer Empire, or *Angkor*, idolization and glorification of which is inherent to the emergence of Khmer nationalism. The empire represented a significant regional power which at times controlled most of mainland Southeast Asia. However, the periods of Angkorian regional domination were infrequent and

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<sup>40</sup> However, in addition to strategic calculations of the Ottoman leadership, the role of personal convictions should also not be overlooked. Most tellingly, the efforts of aggressively pro-german and war-hawkish Enver Pasha, who also enjoyed personal friendship with the Kaiser Wilhelm II, to forge an alliance with Germany, have sometimes been identified as the single most important factor behind the Ottoman entrance into the war. (Aksakal, 2008, pp. 1,190)

relatively short, and by the start of the 15th century, the empire was already in decline.<sup>41</sup> (Briggs, 1951, p.3; Chandler, 2008, p. 35–36; Evans et al., 2007, pp. 14279–14281; Tully, 2005, p. 27; Stark, 2006, p. 156) Thereafter, Cambodia ultimately became a rump client state between the far more powerful Vietnamese and Siamese polities, and was also subject to intense Vietnamese settlement and Vietnamization, particularly in the *Kampuchea Krom* region, which today forms the southernmost region of Vietnam and is overwhelmingly ethnically Viet. (Briggs, 1951, pp. 257–258; Pouvatchy, 1986, pp. 440–441) The origins of the presence of a significant Vietnamese minority in Cambodia can also be traced to this period, and according to some researchers, so can the roots of the anti-Vietnamese strand of Cambodian nationalism and Khmer Rouge ideology.<sup>42</sup>

By the early 1860s, the titular Cambodian ruler at the time, King Norodom, moved to shield what was left of the country from complete annexation by either Vietnam or Siam by transforming Cambodia into a French protectorate. (Muller, 2006, pp. 40–41; Thomson, 1945, pp. 329–331; Tully, 2005, pp. 82–83) Nonetheless, French rule over the isolated new colony had been tenuous and fractured. One way in which France attempted to strengthen control over the new colony was by giving it a clear identity, in the national, territorial, and importantly, historical sense.<sup>43</sup> To this end, the Europeans moved to shape Khmer nationalism around two primary pillars, which would later be reflected in the Khmer Rouge ideology. First was the notion of Cambodia as a fallen nation with a glorious past, that could be restored to its „... *former grandeur through modernization, the restoration of its (now reinvented) traditions and reconstruction of the Angkorean past.*“<sup>44</sup> (Hinton, 2006, p. 456) Secondly, the French narrative also reinforced the pre-existing ethnic and racial cleavages to further stoke the conflict between individual peoples of Indochina and ensure that the emerging Khmer

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<sup>41</sup> There is an ongoing academic debate over which factors in particular are responsible for this decline, but some of the proposed causes include external pressure, internal societal unrest and loss of royal authority, localized climate changes or plague epidemics. (e.g. Briggs, 1951, pp. 258–260, Buckley et al., 2010, pp. 2–5 or Gundersen, 2015, pp. 63–65)

<sup>42</sup> The sizeable 1840 revolt in Cambodia, has been identified as a pre-nationalist manifestation of anti-Vietnamese sentiment and as being motivated by rural Khmer desire to break away from unwanted foreign patronage. (Chandler, 1975, pp. 23–24; Dommen, 2001, p. 5)

<sup>43</sup> It should be noted that at this point, the conception of the Angkor as the high-water mark of the nation, representing a lost, golden-era was not yet present among the Khmer population. Even the Angkor War, in many ways central Cambodian nationalism, was seen by Cambodians more as a site of ritual and pilgrimage, rather than a historical landmark of any unique significance. (Grant, 2009, p. 31; Hinton, 2006, p. 456; Kiernan, 2001, p. 189)

<sup>44</sup> Expectedly, the French constructed this narrative with the legitimization of their colonial rule in mind, as this „civilizing mission“ could take place only under France’s guidance. Additionally, this placed upon the emerging Khmer nationalists what has been called the „burden of the past“, instilling into them the pressing perceived responsibility to restore the territorial and national grandeur of their ancestors, or at the very least prevent any further diminishing of the Cambodian land. (Hinton, 2006, p. 456; Kiernan, 2001, p. 191)

nationalist ire would be focused on the neighboring nations instead of the colonial government.<sup>45</sup> The colonial narratives characterized the Khmer as altruistic and peaceful, superior to the other nations of the region, in particular the „mendacious, dirty, thieving“ Vietnamese. (Edwards, 1996, p. 59; Grant, 2009, p. 31; Hinton, 2006, pp. 456–457) In short, at least four key bundles of nationalist discourses, identifiable also within the Khmer Rouge ideology, „... emerged from the French colonial period and would recur in subsequent Cambodian ethnonationalist rhetoric: a sense of grandeur, decline, the possibility of renewal and threat.“ (Hinton, 2006, p. 457) While more directly framed by the Europeans when compared to the Turkish nationalism, it is nonetheless interesting to note the role that the French influence had in directly or indirectly shaping the underlying roots that would come to shape the genocidal ideologies.

However, by the 1930s, a certain reified notion of Khmer national culture emerged, now incorporating also the ideas of colonial emancipation. While different strands of Khmer nationalism existed, they were for the time being united by the singular goal of Cambodian independence, reflected in the plethora of Khmer-language publications, some of which maintained not only the expected anti-French rhetoric but adhered also to the previously cultivated conceptions of Khmer cultural and racial superiority over the other peoples of Southeast Asia. (Chandler, 1986, p. 83; Edwards, 2007, pp. 213, 216–219) The efforts of Khmer nationalist groups culminated with a brief, but impactful, declaration of Japanese-backed independence in 1945 by king Norodom Sihanouk, which was terminated by the post-war restoration of French sovereignty several months later. (Edwards, 2007, pp. 232–233; Chandler, 1986, pp. 80–81; Grant, 2009, p. 32; Michelin, 2017, pp. 56–57, 236) This reintroduction of colonial authority was both temporary and largely illusory, as by now Cambodian independence had been the goal of all major groups across the Khmer political spectrum. Moreover, by this point the movement escalated also into armed resistance to the French rule, spearheaded by the *Khmer Issarak*, which was originally a loosely organized, Thai-backed, non-communist movement composed of a number of ideologically heterogeneous groups. But by the early 1950s the communist factions, and in particular those influenced by the Ho Chi Minh's *Viet Minh*, became more dominant, and would later play a formative role in the rise of the Khmer Rouge. (Chandler, 2008, pp. 212,221; Kiernan, 1981, p. 168) The delicate process of transition away from the French rule was completed with the Cambodian

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<sup>45</sup> The relative stability of the protectorate was also ensured by more direct overtures toward fanning and sustaining the Khmer nationalism, most notable of which would be the French-mediated 1907 border treaty with Siam, which transferred to Cambodia bulk of what are today its northwestern provinces, including the, by this point heavily-symbolized, Angkor War. (Kiernan, 2001, p. 190; Singh, 1962, p. 23; Strate, 2013, pp. 47–48)

declaration of independence in November 1953, enabled by the rapid deterioration of French military situation in Indochina and following intense pressure from Sihanouk, coupled with the growing threat of Issarak radicals. (Chandler, 2008, p. 227; Seekins, 1990, pp. 25–26; Tully, 2005, p. 121) This ensured that Sihanouk would be perceived as a national hero, free to build up his autocratic regime that survived until 1970.

The French withdrawal from Cambodia is also responsible for the creation of the Khmer Rouge in a much more direct sense. The 1954 Geneva accords marked the end of French presence in the region, as Vietnam was split between Viet Minh in the north and the anti-communist State of Vietnam in the south, and Lao and Cambodian independences were recognized. However, despite the accords being largely a communist victory, the Cambodian revolutionaries were ostracized. (Kiernan, 1981, pp. 174–175; Tully, 2005, pp. 126–127) Under international pressure, and in an effort not to antagonize the now-neutral Sihanouk regime, Viet Minh broke off their support, withdrew their forces, and began to obstruct the Khmer communist insurgency.<sup>46</sup> Many of the Cambodian communists, including some in the pro-Hanoi wing of the Khmer People's Revolutionary Party, or KPRP, perceived such an act as a clear-cut betrayal, which would later be enshrined in the narratives of the Pol Pot regime. The KPRP, now without significant foreign aid, under heavy pressure from the authorities and riddled by Lon Nol's informants,<sup>47</sup> was forced to break up its activities and begun operating in clandestine isolated factions. (Mosyakov, 2017, pp. 46–47) This prevailing chaos within the semi-destroyed and isolated organization presented a perfect environment for the returning members of the so-called „Paris student group“, composed of radical Khmer communists with very little connection to the hard-pressed Party in their homeland, to rise through the ranks and take over the domestic communist movement.

### **2.2.1. Pol Pot and Khmer Rouge**

The Paris student group is a term used as a shorthand for several young Cambodians who received higher education in France, where they became immersed in Marxism and came

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<sup>46</sup> While communist support for a monarchical regime might seem counter-intuitive, Hanoi believed that due to his anti-imperialist and anti-American rhetoric, as well as pre-established legitimacy, Sihanouk was more useful ally than the Cambodian communists. In other words, North Vietnam believed that a continued armed struggle against his government would weaken it and open „... a path to the intrigues of American imperialism against Kampuchea.“ (Mosyakov, 2017, p.3)

<sup>47</sup> Perhaps in part contributing to later CPK's paranoia of Vietnamese spies in their midst, most notable of these informants had been Party leader Sieu Heng, who had Vietnamese-born parents, who between 1955 and 1959 revealed practically all of the KPRP activities to the authorities. (Kiernan, 1981, pp. 174-175; Mosyakov, 2017, pp. 46–47)

under influence of the tightly disciplined and firmly Stalinist French communist party. The group provided a nucleus of future Khmer Rouge leadership, as it included not only the two most important and infamous men of the genocidal regime, Pol Pot and Ieng Sary, but also other radical Khmer communists, such as Hou Yuon, Son Sen, Hu Nim, or Khieu Samphan. It's within the confines of this group that the cornerstones of later Khmer Rouge policy and ideology developed, as shown by the doctoral dissertations written by Hou Yuon and Khieu Samphan, which challenged the view that urbanization and industrialization were necessary precursors of development, and put forward claim that Cambodia had to become completely self-reliant to end the economic dependency on the developed world if it wanted to achieve full independence.<sup>48</sup> (Seekins, 1990, pp. 38–39) Pol Pot, meanwhile, in addition to becoming more deeply influenced by Stalinism and Maoism, abandoned his university studies and was becoming more preoccupied with the racial and historical aspects of the Khmer liberation, publishing an ardently anti-monarchical essay titled „Monarchy or Democracy?“ under the pseudonym of *Khmer daom*, or „original Khmer“, before leaving France for Cambodia several months later. (Chandler, 1992, p. 39; Naidu, 1999, p. 963)

Since returning from France, the group rose through the ranks of the depleted Cambodian communist movement. Pol Pot in particular was remarkably successful, as by 1959 he became a secretary of Phnom Penh city committee of the KPRP and harnessed some influence within the party. (Mosyakov, 2017, p. 48) At the same time, the Paris group set out to draft a new party programme that would diminish the subordination to the Hanoi leadership and form the basis for a new party, to be named Kampuchean Labour Party (KLP), into which the moribund and depleted KPRP would be transformed at the right moment. While the specifics of this event remain unclear due to conflicting reports of the pro- and anti-Vietnamese Khmer communist forces, it seems that the pivotal moment came at a Phnom Penh meeting in September of 1960, where KPRP was officially renamed to KLP, new party statutes were adopted and the radicals centered around Pol Pot seized some of the highest leadership positions. (Chandler, 1983, pp. 288–289; Short, 2005, pp. 121–122,135) The continued successes of the regime in combating the leftist opposition ultimately enabled Pol Pot to seize the party completely. In 1962, secret police arrested the leadership of *Pracheachon*, the legal front for the clandestine KLP, and killed the party secretary Tou

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<sup>48</sup> A turning point in ideological development of the group is traditionally seen in the experience of meeting some of the Viet Minh-aligned Khmer leaders at 1951 youth festival in East Berlin, where Pol Pot and Ieng Sary concluded that the domestic leadership is too subservient to the Vietnamese, and that only a tightly controlled and highly disciplined party ready to fully embrace the guerilla war could achieve the revolution. (Seekins, 1990, pp. 38–39; Short, 2005, p. 61)

Samouth, leaving Pol Pot to assume the position and fully seize control of the party at the 1963 party congress. However, as the increasingly authoritarian Sihanouk regime was expanding the opposition crackdowns, Pol Pot and Ieng Sary and the rest of the movement escaped into the Vietcong encampments in the jungles of the Vietnamese-Cambodian border. (Chandler, 1992, p. 63–64; Mosyakov, 2017, p. 48; Short, 2005, p. 144)

Over the next several years spent in these camps, the KLP underwent a transformative change. Firstly, the sustained efforts to secure complete independence from the influence of Vietnamese communists continued, even as Pol Pot depended on them for shelter and supplies. To this end, the Khmer Rouge leadership began to cultivate a close association with China, a decision influenced in part by the 1965 visit to Beijing amid the ongoing cultural revolution. In this they succeeded, and Communist China would become the most important international patron and ally of the Khmer Rouge for decades to come. (Gough, 1986, p. 22; Kiernan, 1981, p. 178) Moreover, it became clear that Northern Vietnam would not assist the Khmers with any armed struggle against Sihanouk, largely due to the collapse of relations between Washington and Phnom Penh in the aftermath of the US entering the Vietnam War. Put simply, there wasn't any reason for Ho Chi Minh to heed the Pol Pot's pleas and commit to such a risky and distracting action against a de facto ally. This refusal to provide even symbolic support further sidelined the pro-Hanoi wing of KLP and would contribute to the long list of Pol Pot's grievances against Vietnam, which would later be reflected in the widespread anti-Vietnamese paranoia typical of the Khmer Rouge regime. (Chandler, 1992, pp. 70–71; Thion, 1980, pp. 46–47) By October 1966, three key decisions had been made by the members of the KLP Central Committee. These included the secret renaming of the party to the Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK), moving the party headquarters from the Vietnamese-run bases into northeastern Cambodia, and most importantly, the decision to begin preparations for launching armed struggle in the rural areas, marking an explicit rejection of the Vietnamese pleas for restraint. Recruiting many of the fleeing survivors of the failed 1967 peasant revolt, CPK began preparing a tightly-controlled insurgent campaign. Plans for this uprising had been completed by December of the following year, with the rebellion set to start in the northwest, before spreading to the rest of the country in several phases. (Kubota, 2013, p. 49; Short, 2005, pp. 161–162,173) However, just as important as the growing rift between Khmer and Vietnamese communists had been the second crucial development of this phase of CPK history, that is the emergence of a distinctly Cambodian interpretation of Marxist thought.

In no small part due to the budding alliance with China, many of the CPK's central tenets had been in part inspired by the Maoist school of thought. The central, and ultimately the most fateful, aspect of the Pol Pot's ideology had been the identification of lower-middle peasants as the „semi-proletariat“ of the countryside, while the poor and landless peasants represented the core element of the Cambodian working class and the lifeblood of revolution. While at odds with many of the central aspects of the classical Marxist theory, to CPK the emphasis on peasant support did not seem problematic. Perhaps due to the thorough lack of leaders with an industrial or working-class background, the party never succeeded in penetrating the nascent Cambodian proletariat or in creating pro-communist workers organizations, and as such remained dependent on the support of the rural population. As a result, CPK embraced explicitly anti-worker rhetoric, claiming that the factories had been infiltrated and that the workers were transformed into enemy agents, and from 1965 onward leading systematically refused to let workers join the party. (Short, 2005, p. 148–149) While peasantry-idolizing primitivism was perhaps the defining trait of the Khmer Rouge ideology, it was not the only indigenous feature that the group would adopt. In some ways mirroring the notions of imminent threat of foreign subjugation and the need for restoration of Turkish or Ottoman past glory adopted by CUP in the Armenian case, the CPK ideology was also heavily shaped by xenophobia and „messianic nationalism“, rooted in the Khmer nationalist orthodoxy, which manifested in the fears of imminent Vietnamese subjugation and harkening back to the nationalist mirage of the past glory of Angkor, which only the Khmer Rouge were purportedly able to restore. In addition to the idolization of the peasantry and racist narratives, other indigenous features, some stemming back to the formative Paris years of the group's leadership, included also the opposition to commerce and cities in favour of autarky and self-reliance in all fields and aspects of society, communalism, or distrust of the family structures, all of which would eventually have disastrous effects when implemented, as is discussed in the following chapter. (Jones, 2017, p. 466; Kiernan, 2001, pp. 193–194; Kiernan, 2006, p. 188)

### **2.2.2. Civil War**

With relative autonomy from direct Vietnamese control secured and unifying indigenous ideology developed, the CPK moved to launch the uprising in January of 1968. However, despite some early successes, the insurgency failed to generate sustainable momentum. It seemed that the scorched-earth tactics of the government troops, deployed after the appointment of right-wing conservative general Lon Nol first as minister of defense, and

later as prime minister, would be successful in crushing the rebellion. Moreover, Sihanouk continued to be regarded as a legitimate ruler by the Cambodian peasantry, for whom the communist cause was not yet extraordinarily attractive. The insurgents were pushed back, sustained heavy losses, and did not have the slightest hope of victory. Pol Pot had been forced to reach a compromise with Hanoi to maintain his authority within the party leadership and secure at least some aid in the struggle against the government. (Chindawongse, 1991, pp. 139–141; Mosyakov, 2017, p. 54; Short, 2005, pp. 174–175) However, with an escalation of the Vietnam war, Sihanouk's efforts to balance between the left-wing and right-wing opposition at home were becoming increasingly hard to maintain, and the King's semi tolerance of Vietnamese communists led to growing discontent by Lon Nol-led rightists, which ultimately culminated in, likely American-encouraged or possibly directly supported, deposition of Sihanouk in March 1970. King fled into exile in Beijing, where following talks with Chinese and Vietnamese leaders, he denounced his overthrow as illegal, dissolved the Lon Nol government, and proclaimed the National United Front of Kampuchea (FUNK), an umbrella organization nominally headed by Sihanouk that united the royalist opposition to the new government and the Khmer Rouge communists, granting the royal legitimacy to the faltering insurgency in the north-east of the country. (Leifer, 1975, pp. 532–534; Morris, 1999, p. 49; Smith, 1996, pp. 322–323,328)

This made the CPK's task of gaining popular support significantly easier. Following Sihanouk's appeal for joint struggle and creation of a united front against the urban-based and urban-dominated reactionary right-wing regime, the support for Khmer Rouge by the hitherto apolitical, but deeply royalist, peasantry increased dramatically. Peasant unrest exploded across Cambodia and the Lon Nol military became plagued by defections. The number of the troops nominally commanded by the Royal United National Government of Kampuchea (GRUNK) grew from 4,000 in 1970 to 125,000 the following year. (Chindawongse, 1991, p. 142) Moreover, in reaction to the Lon Nol's coup, North Vietnam moved to endorse the CPK uprising, provide it with military aid, and eventually become directly involved in the insurgency. The importance of the Vietnamese military assistance cannot be understated, as it was the well-equipped North Vietnamese troops that overwhelmed the Khmer National Armed Forces (FANK) and swept government forces from the northeastern quarter of the country, before turning the newly won territories over to the emboldened CPK insurgents. (Chindawongse, 1991, p. 142; Mosyakov, 2017, pp. 54–55)

Another crucial factor, and one that would continue to be relevant even after the CPK seizure of power, is the impact of the direct American intervention in the Cambodian conflict,



particularly the bombing campaign, initiated in 1969. While clandestine and limited in scale at first, it soon expanded into an extensive campaign of indiscriminate carpet bombing against wide swathes of the Cambodian territory, accompanied by a ramp-up of military aid and the limited land incursion of American and South Vietnamese forces. (Clapson, 2019, pp. 158–159; Drivas, 2011, pp. 138; 149–151; Kiernan, 1989, p. 4) The destruction that saturation bombing brought upon the Cambodian peasants was devastating both in terms of direct civilian casualties and the effect it had on the agricultural base of a largely rural nation. By the time the campaign stopped in 1973, the acreage cultivated for rice decreased to one-sixth of the amount at the start of the conflict, leading to rampant malnutrition only barely kept in check by food aid from international organizations. Together, between 50 and 150 thousand civilians likely died as a result of the campaign, although the estimates range from the low figure of 11 thousand to the high of 600 thousand. (Jones, 2017, p. 464; Kiernan, 1989, p. 32; Kirk, 1974, pp. 97–98) This led to the collapse of rural society and contributed to the increasing societal polarization, and led to Cambodian peasantry embracing an insurgency that previously had only little support. Moreover, as is elaborated in the following chapter, the CPK would later use the economic and military destabilization of Cambodia as an excuse to implement some of its early policies. (Etcheson, 1984, p. 97; Kiernan, 2005, p.16; Owen & Kiernan, 2006, p. 63)

With their continued successes against the debilitated FANK, the increasingly powerful CPK had been growing confident that they are indeed capable of deposing the Lon Nol regime on their own, without either the Vietnamese or non-communist Cambodian assistance.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, Pol Pot's suspicions of North Vietnamese designs for the creation of the Indochinese Communist Federation under Hanoi's leadership also contributed to the renewed deterioration of the relationship between the two communist movements. The China-aligned CPK was becoming more and more forceful, hostile, and mistrustful towards the North Vietnamese troops fighting by their side, prohibiting the local population in the newly liberated regions from coming into contact with the Vietnamese, and at times openly attacking their allies. (Deac, 2000, p. 216; Mosyakov, 2017, pp. 56–57) The opportunity for CPK to

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<sup>49</sup> It should be noted that while large swathes of the new rebel recruits were either conscripted, or motivated to join by loyalty to Sihanouk, the influence of royalist, as well as pro-Hanoi factions within the rebellion had by this point been effectively vanquished. CPK commanded the most important posts within GRUNK, and as early as 1971, the Pol Pot leadership began reducing power of its united front partners through creating new channels for peasant recruitment outside of FUNK structures, deploying the Sihanouk and Hanoi loyalist forces into high-casualty areas, or appointing CPK cadres as leaders of village committees in the areas seized from Lol Not. Moreover, the continuous stream of Pol Pot's propaganda was effective in drawing cadres from the poorest strata of peasantry, turning many of the new recruits into ardent and committed CPK supporters. (Chindawongse, 1991, pp. 142–144)

finalize their divorce from Hanoi came with the conclusion of the Paris Peace Agreement in January 1973, under which the Vietnamese once again fully withdrew from Cambodia. To CPK this „betrayal“ demonstrated that all of their suspicions of the Vietnamese were correct and marked the final termination of any cooperation between the two Parties. Unlike in 1954, however, the Khmer Rouge were now a powerful and capable fighting force, which assumed complete control of their own affairs and ignored the Vietnamese pleas negotiations with the Lon Nol regime.<sup>50</sup> (Shawcross, 1979, p. 281; Mosyakov, 2017, p. 58) 1973 also saw a rapid deterioration of the security situation of the Phnom Penh government, largely due to the August termination of the US bombing campaign due to the extreme controversy it generated, effectively sealing the fate of hard-pressed FANK, which by now controlled only the capital and several isolated urban enclaves. (Etcheson, 1984, p. 118; Kastenber, 2020, p. 242; Kirk, 1974, pp. 90,97)

By 1975, the CPK was on the edge of achieving complete control over Cambodia, and with Pol Pot's domination of the insurgency, the FUNK/GRUNK had been reduced to nothing but formal diplomatic tools. FANK was by this point effectively surrounded in Phnom Penh, together with more than three million civilians, a large majority of whom were displaced refugees. With all supply lines cut off, the besieged garrison had been doomed to destruction. (Chindawongse, 1991, p. 144; Kiernan, 2005, p. 16; Tan, 1979, p. 4) On April 17, 1975, following several days of fierce urban combat, the city fell to the CPK. Following the complete disintegration of the remnants of FANK, Lon Nol and many officers escaped to Thailand. Those soldiers that remained were disarmed and marched to the Olympic Stadium, where they were later executed, a fate they shared with many other representatives of the old regime. (Kiernan, 2005, pp. 31,34–35; Shawcross, 1979, p. 365; Sutsakhan, 1980, pp. 169–170) With the fall of Phnom Penh, the Khmer Rouge's seizure of Cambodia was finalized. Possibly inspired by the example of the French revolution, upon defeating Lon Nol regime, CPK proclaimed what has since been termed „Year Zero“ to mark the the end of the old Cambodia, and beginning of the new *Kampuchea*.<sup>51</sup> (Ers, 2011, p. 155)

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<sup>50</sup> By April of the same year, Hanoi was forced to admit that they had no control over the Cambodian affairs and that Pol Pot was „...waging his own war, independent of Hanoi.“ (Mosyakov, 2017, p. 58)

<sup>51</sup> While formally, Cambodia was not renamed to „Democratic Kampuchea“ until 1976, Khmer Rouge utilized the name since their early days and it has since become synonymous with the regime as a whole.

### 3. Genocide Process

#### 3.1. Classification

The first stage of the genocide process is the classification which, as outlined in the first chapter, has several key characteristics. In short, members of a society are divided into clearly defined groups based on some ethnic, racial, or societal differences, with one such category constituting the „majority“ or „dominant“ group, which is also usually responsible for the imposition of such a classification.

#### *Armenia*

Based on the second chapter, it's apparent that internal partition and classification represented a core trait of Ottoman society. In the context of this thesis, the primary means of segmentation had been the previously mentioned so-called millet, or „nation“, system: „*The millet system played one of the key roles in the process that made the success of the Young Turks' policies inevitable and significant.*“ (Kasymov, 2013, p. 9) Naturally, it was not the only means by which the Ottoman society was divided, even if it was one of principal importance. Unlike in the western world, where the economic classes became one of the great societal dividers throughout the 19th century, in the Ottoman society, they remained relatively underdeveloped, leading some researchers to go as far as to describe it as „classless“ in this sense. Instead, the society was organized into four social groups, „the men of the sword, the men of the pen, the men of agriculture and the men of commerce and trade“, which were later expanded to also include religious leaders or judiciary. (Çaha & Karaman, 2004, pp. 58; 63; Tuğ, 2014, p. 4) Related was the overarching division between the governing, cosmopolitan Ottoman aristocracy and bureaucracy, and the governed subjects of the broader society. Crucial in both of these classifications, however, had been the condition of religion, and by extension belonging to a millet. Explicitly or implicitly, for most of the Empire's history, being a Muslim was a requirement for reaching the highest echelons of the social system. (Göçek, 1993, p. 513; Li, 2017, p. 92)

Originating in the Islamic legal approach to the treatment of dhimmi living as subjects of an Islamic state, the broad premise of what would come to be called the millet system was that the dhimmis were granted some form of protection or autonomy in exchange for acceptance of legal and social subordination vis-a-vis the *umma*, or the dominant Muslim community. (Movsesian, 2010, pp. 2–3; Şeker, 2005, p. 60) This is in line with the previously mentioned defining traits of the classification stage, that is the imposition by a

dominant group, as well as the use of criteria rooted in ethnic or religious differences. Moreover, the fact that such a classification predated actual genocide by centuries does not preclude its understanding as a mark of this stage, as it's been recognized that such a division does not necessarily signify the intent to eradicate those classes demarcated from the mainstream society, even if it ultimately enables it. Afterall, this is reflected also in the foundational function of the millets, that is a provision of some degree of stability in a highly volatile and diverse society through offering some space for alternative, non-territorial autonomy structures to most of the dhimmi communities, even if they were to be clearly defined and kept separate. In particular, it was the perpetuation of the idea of „separateness“ between Muslims and non-Muslims by clearly identifying the dominant population where the millet system ultimately succeeded the most.<sup>52</sup> (Abu Jaber, 1967, p. 222; Barkey, 2005, p. 15; Şeker, 2005, p. 60)

Up until the reforms of the 19th century,<sup>53</sup> the millet system had not been uniform or standardized as the degree of autonomy granted to each group greatly differed and instead represented a loose and flexible practice based on ad-hoc agreements between Ottomans and the groups. (Barkey, 2005, pp. 15–16; Dundar, 2014, pp. 4–5; Tas, 2014, pp. 499–504) Generally speaking, the individual millets were formally granted autonomy in the financial, judicial, and cultural affairs, and were treated like corporate bodies with separate internal structures and hierarchies, including in the domains of collection of the communal taxes by the religious leaders, provision of education, or administration of religious affairs such as liturgy or church services and processions. Notably, to some degree, the autonomy included also legal jurisdiction, as under certain conditions the dhimmi were allowed to adjudicate legal disputes among members of their community. (Şeker, 2005, p. 60; Van den Boogert, 2012, pp. 31–32) It should be noted, however, that there seems to be some credence to the claims that de facto, this autonomy was not always necessarily fulfilled as the Ottoman government was not beyond intervening or controlling the millet's internal affairs even in areas where they had been formally autonomous, with some researchers going as far as to assert that in Ottoman practice, the autonomous or semi-autonomous non-Muslim legal

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<sup>52</sup> The exclusionary nature of millets is confirmed even by the approach that the Ottoman authorities adopted *vis-a-vis* dealing with the dhimmi issues: „... *it would seem that the Ottoman Empire treated its subject millets as though they were foreign nations. Such a view is supported by the fact that the affairs of the millets were dealt with through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs*“ (Abu Jaber, 1967, p. 216)

<sup>53</sup> Roderic H. Davison describes the 1860s millet reformation in greater detail, but in the broadest sense, the principal act of the Sublime Porte in this area had been the placement of the the millets „... *under organic laws which diminished the power of the clergy and increased lay influence correspondingly.*“ (Davison, 1963, p. 114) In the Armenian case, this meant the creation and empowerment of the Armenian National Assembly, as mentioned in the previous chapter.

entities simply did not exist and were subject to the whims of Ottoman authorities. (Abu Jaber, 1967, p. 214; Kasymov, 2013, p. 9; Kenanoglu, 2011, p. 19; Tas, 2014, p. 501) Moreover, the formal autonomy of millets was accompanied by a number of discriminatory policies.

Millets had been headed by the spiritual heads of the community, or *millet başı*, who in the Armenian case was the Armenian patriarch based in Constantinople, responsible to the government for the fulfillment of the duties of the millet. However, by the beginning of the 19th century, the role of religious leaders diminished, and with the dramatic reorganization and formalization of the hitherto unofficial millet practice, the status of dhimmi changed as well. Moreover, as a consequence of the Tanzimat reforms, and the emergence of nationalism within the Ottoman Empire coupled with the efforts to sideline ecclesiastical leadership, the millets began to be reflective of the ethnic origin, rather than religious affiliation.<sup>54</sup> However, this separation was not complete, as individuals could still in theory pass between millets by religious conversion, even if such an action was perceived extremely negatively by the millets. (Çaha & Karaman, 2004, pp. 64–65; Braude, 1982, pp. 81–82) Even as specific policies governing the relationship between the millets and central government underwent seismic transformations as part of the Tanzimat reforms, the fundamental nature of the millet system in regards to the division of Ottoman society into ethnoreligious classes remained unchanged. On the contrary, even as citizens of the Empire were made formally equal, each passing census became more overtly political and classificatory than the previous one, signaling an unequivocal embrace of the classificatory aspect of the millet practice by the Ottoman government. (Dundar, 2014, pp. 13–14) Arguably, by entrenching the previously somewhat informal mode of governance and classification, in conjunction with the broader contextual developments described in the second chapter, these reforms contributed to the transformation of the existing societal segmentation into more rigid, antagonistic ethnic cleavages: *„Notions of differentiation that were widespread in the Ottoman Empire prior to the rise of the CUP paved the way to the ... ultimate execution of genocidal policies against the Armenians. ... The millet system provided the Young Turks regime with institutional tools for the initiation of genocidal policies against non-Muslim minorities.“* (Kasymov, 2013, p. 9)

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<sup>54</sup> This can be seen also by the number of millets. Until 1831, there were only three millets, while by 1914 there were seventeen separate millets, largely as a result of fracturization of the Orthodox christian millet along ethnic lines. (Abu Jaber, 1967, p. 214)

## *Kampuchea*

Notable differences can be observed between the two genocides already in the classification stage. As became apparent in the previous chapter, while ethnicity or nationality-based divisions and tensions within Cambodian society did exist historically, and long preceded the genocide, they significantly differed from the millet system as it existed in the later stages of the Ottoman Empire; i.e. they did not represent a formalized, official and pervasive classification of citizens on the basis of ethnoreligious community identification. Moreover, while ethnicity or religion is by now well-recognized to have played a crucial role in determining some of the Khmer Rouge's victims,<sup>55</sup> it was not the singular factor. Instead, the arbitrary system of citizen categorization, based upon the particular CPK notions of social class, is much more readily indicating the classification stage, as it was both imposed by the genocidaires and also played a central role in designating the future genocide victims. It should be noted, however, that the racial or ethnic considerations likely played some role also in the development of this system, as some of the terms usually associated with the system first appear in reference to Cham people living in zones under Khmer Rouge control, particularly those of the Northern Zone in 1973–74, where Chams were sometimes called *moultanh phnoe*, or „depositee base people“. Similarly, in one internal 1973 document, „Islamic Khmers“ are alleged to not have any members of the „labouring class“ in their ranks. (Kiernan, 1988, p. 9; Kiernan, 2005, p. 259) This reflects the relevance of this system of classification also for the later stages of genocide, as even where the victims were explicitly targeted for their ethnicity, the rhetoric publicly used in the implementation of such policies often stemmed from this categorization,<sup>56</sup> in addition to the explicit use of the terminology in the internal CPK resources. In other words, class came to be identified in national and then racial terms: „... *virtually every Vietnamese, Chinese (at least those Chinese who had been living in Cambodia), and Cham was categorized as ‚bourgeois‘.*“ (Weitz, 2003, p. 161)

The most notorious manifestation of this system is the division into *brâcheachon chas* or *brâcheachon moulâdthan*, meaning „old people“ and „base people“, and the *brâcheachon tmey*, meaning „new people“, who were sometimes also called either „the 1975 people“ or „the April 17 group“, in reference to the fall of Phnom Penh. (Carney, 1989, pp. 82–83; Chigas & Mosyakov, n.d; Hinton, 2000, pp. 170; Hinton, 2005, p. 9; Hinton, 2008, p. 83; Owens, 2014, p. 413) While it remains unclear what the proportion of these two categories

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<sup>55</sup> E.g. Kiernan, 2005 or Hiebert, 2017

<sup>56</sup> I.e. the identification of non-Khmer minorities such as the Vietnamese and Cham as particularly prone to class treachery within the context of CPK-imposed system of classification. (Owens, 2014, p. 414)

had been, per the Khmer Rouge estimates in late 1975, the Cambodian population at this date consisted of „70 percent old and 30 percent new workers and peasants.“ (CPK Center quoted in Kiernan, 2005, p. 164) Generally speaking, the „new people“ had been those Cambodians who either lived or took refuge in the cities during the civil war, meaning that they were alleged to have directly or indirectly supported the Lon Nol regime. The vast majority of the people in this group had been further perceived by CPK as coming from suspect class or political backgrounds and/or corrupted by imperialist, capitalist, or counter-revolutionary influences. While this mostly included the three million civilians that inhabited the capital at the time of its capture, the category also encompassed citizens of other cities, as well as people otherwise affiliated with the previous regime. (Chigas & Mosyakov, n.d.; Hiebert, 2017, pp. 69–70; Hinton, 2000, pp. 170;189) The „old people“, conversely, were the CPK cadres and those Cambodians who lived in areas under the Khmer Rouge control since 1970 and prior to the fall of the Khmer Republic, and were seen as uncontaminated by foreign influence and more politically reliable due to their general belonging to the poor or lower-middle-class peasantry. This alone, however, was not enough for one to be classified as such, as even those of rural origin who chose to flee the Khmer Rouge advances were still included under the „new people“ umbrella. (Chigas & Mosyakov, n.d; Kiernan, 2005, p. 164; Owens, 2014, p. 413)

In addition to this overarching classification, other categories existed and were being introduced throughout the regime, on both local and national levels. Generally speaking, the successive reclassifications were primarily aimed at expanding the pool of those people excluded from the dominant, „pure“ Khmer Rouge society. One such example would be the new and widely used statuses introduced in July of 1975,<sup>57</sup> which included *neak phnoe*, *neak triem*, and *neak pen sith*, or „depositees“, „candidates“ and „full rights people“. The depositee status denoted not only the urban-dwelling new people but now included also those „old people“ who were demoted to the lowest class due to having „bad biographies“, an euphemism for relatives among the new people or the executed, while the „full rights“ people were those „old people“ with „good politics“ and no relatives or other connections to the previous regime. The „candidate“ status reflected that while not as reliable as the highest class, the individual was nonetheless not seen as suspect as those with familiar ties to the new people. (Carney, 1989, p. 84; Hiebert, 2017, p. 75; Hinton, 1998, p. 365; Kiernan, 2005, pp.

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<sup>57</sup> While the genesis behind these categories remains somewhat clear, and they could have dated all the way back to 1973, they were probably formally decided only in May 1975, following the seizure of Phnom Penh. (Carney, 1989, p. 84; Kiernan, 2005, pp. 56–57)

176;184) The somewhat erratic use of this classification makes estimating the rough ratio of these categories impossible, but according to some estimates, the „full rights“ must have constituted only a small portion of the total population, possibly less than 15 percent. (Jackson, 1989b, p. 52) While this classification remained in use throughout the CPK stay in power, by 1977, another expanded reclassification was introduced as the three groups were further subdivided into No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3 sub-categories. „No. 1 Full Rights“ people, for example, had no relatives on the Lon Nol side and many children who served the Khmer Rouge, while „No. 3 Full Rights“ people were equivalent to the previous candidate status. „No. 1 Candidates“ had some relatives amongst the New People, but also some who joined CPK, while No. 2 and No.3 Candidates had none and so on. Additionally, localized variants of the general classification system existed, such as the one alleged to have been used in Tram Kak, which divided the „full rights“ people not into numerical categories but rather into „party people“, „candidate party members“ and „ordinary base people“. (Kiernan, 2005, pp. 185–186)

Moreover, the membership in these categories was not permanent, meaning that the system had been somewhat fluid as it was possible to be demoted to the lower classes, and even full rights citizens could be freely reclassified as candidates or depositees, while candidates, but not depositees, could be promoted to full rights. This is in line with the CPK's peculiar notion of „class“, which they believed to be the manifestation of an essentialist „organist purity“ that could be observed and changed through an individual's actions. (Carney, 1989, p. 84; Kiernan, 2005, p. 191; Owens, 2014, p. 413) This is in stark comparison to the inherently more rigid and less arbitrary millet system. Therefore there aren't many similarities to be observed between the Classification stages of Armenian and Cambodian genocides, and instead, the differences prevail, whether in terms of temporal distance from the culmination of the genocide – decades, if not centuries in the Armenian case, but only years in Cambodia; or the nature of the system itself – rigid and definite in Armenia, but fluid and arbitrary in Cambodia. The only area where there seems to be some similarity is the criteria for inclusion in a certain class, as ethnicity played a role in one's categorization in both systems, even if it was not an explicit and generally not the primary criterion under Khmer Rouge.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> I.e. by ensuring that Cham people would not be placed into the „full rights“ class. (Kiernan, 2005, p. 279; Kiernan, 2021, p. 12)



### 3.2. Symbolization

The second stage, symbolization, is primarily concerned with reinforcing and deepening the societal cleavages introduced in the previous stage. This is done by according the non-dominant groups with symbols that epitomize and signal their nonbelonging to the dominant group, or conversely, preventing them from utilizing symbols associated with the dominant group. Such symbols can be physical, but they might also include, often derogatory, language.

#### *Armenia*

Taking into account the entrenched ethnoreligiously-based classification that the millet system represented, the Symbolization stage of the Armenian genocide can also be traced to the earliest days of the Empire, and can perhaps also be seen as being largely „natural“ and not necessarily malignant on its own. In line with Stanton’s argument that the symbolization is to some degree prevalent and natural across most human societies, the non-belonging of the religious minorities in Ottoman Empire to the Muslim, and later explicitly Turkish, dominated society had been most fundamentally symbolized by the language they spoke and temples they attended. While these can hardly be seen as the manifestation of divisive ethnic politics forced upon Armenians by the dominant group, some more directly and deliberately divisive symbols accentuating and emphasizing the societal differences can be identified. Most obviously, this includes the language inherently associated with the millet system, particularly the ancient Islamic term of *dhimmi*, referring to the non-Muslim populations living under the protection of Islamic dominion, explicitly both defining the dominant group, and also highlighting and delineating the distinct „them“ – which included also the Armenians. (Al-Qattan, 1999, p. 429; Braude, 2014, pp. 3–4) The other, somewhat more derogatory, terms tapping into the divisive aspect of the millet system had been the *kâfir* or *gâvur*, meaning „infidel“, used in reference to the non-Muslims of the Empire in general, but more particularly to the Christian minorities. While not necessarily always used as an insult, as it has been employed also by the Ottoman state in an official capacity, i.e. within the *defter* tax registries, the terms had nonetheless been often used as heavily emotionally charged ethnoreligious slurs, with clear pejorative connotations. This understanding of the term seems to be more prevalent and is reinforced when the futile efforts of the Ottoman state to defuse the religious tensions by banning its use during the Tanzimat period are considered. (Davison, 1954, p. 855; Detrez, 2013, p. 44; Movsesian, 2010, p. 12)

Additionally, more visible manifestations of millet-based symbolizations can also be identified. For much of Ottoman history, the primary means by which the Ottoman Empire publicly highlighted the differences and ensured clear distinction between individual millets had been the state-mandated sumptuary laws, which governed the clothing that ethnoreligious groups or societal classes were allowed, or rather mandated, to wear. Generally speaking, the centerpiece of sumptuary laws had been the regulation of shape and colour of the headgear and shoes, which continued to evolve over the centuries. In Armenians case, this had been black in the 16th and red in the 18th and 19th centuries. (Lind-Sinanian, 2013, p. 31; Tutar, 2014, p. 28) In places where obeying this dress code was not possible, such as the public baths, non-Muslims were obliged to wear distinguishing signs on cords around their necks so that they might not be mistaken for Muslims. (Braude & Lewis, 1982, pp. 5–6) Nonetheless, the divisive clothing laws had eventually been formally abolished as part of the Tanzimat secularization and modernization drive and were replaced with the European-inspired dress reforms, which mandated Ottoman citizens, first in army and bureaucracy, to adopt western-style clothes, such as frock-coats, trousers or black leather boots. Symbol of these efforts had been the *fez* hat introduced as a replacement of the old Muslim and non-Muslim headgear. (Tutar, 2014, pp. 31–32)

However, the role of clothes in ethnoreligious symbolization continued despite the efforts to diminish the internal differences of Ottoman society. Echoing the stern rejection of Tanzimat reforms by the majority Muslim Turkish population described in the previous chapter, the dress laws had not been universally accepted either. While the Armenians and other Christian minorities, particularly those belonging to upper classes of society wishing to show-off their relative wealth,<sup>59</sup> generally adopted Western-style clothes willingly and enthusiastically, the somewhat forceful adoption of European fashion and consumer goods sparked a severe cultural resistance and backlash among many Turkish Muslims concerned about the perceived erasure of visible distinctions of attire among the religious communities, which in turn they saw as representing undermining the particular and superior social place of Muslims in general. The opposition to the plain *fez* had been reflective of the growing nationalism, religious fanaticism, as well as opposition to the European influence in the Empire. (Quataert, 1997, pp. 413–414; Lewington, 2020) Therefore, while not as clear-cut as the sultanic clothing laws, rejection of the Tanzimat-introduced apparel by the Muslim

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<sup>59</sup> The general socio-economic differences between Muslim and non-Muslim can certainly be by themselves understood as a symbol contributing to reinforcing existing societal differences, but are not elaborated here as they had already been discussed in the previous chapter, and should not be understood as a trace of symbolization stage for the similar reasons that the religion or language should not.

Turkish population, and open embrace by the Christian minorities, can also be seen as partly symbolizing the ethnoreligious division of society for part of 19th century. Moreover, much of this dichotomy had been limited primarily to the urban dwellers, and in the remote areas of rural eastern Anatolia where much of the genocide ultimately took place, traditional folk clothing continued to survive among Muslims and non-Muslims alike and serve as a visual symbol of a millet even after the Tanzimat reforms, as Armenians continued to dress „in the Armenian manner“ even into the 20th century. (Poghosyan, 2001, p. 192) As such, despite no longer being imposed by a central authority, traditional clothing certainly continued to play an important symbolization role even as the genocide unfolded.

### ***Kampuchea***

In Cambodia, too, traditional garments became a tool of divisive symbolization, albeit in a different capacity. In particular, this is true of the *krama*, a checkered, multi-purpose cotton scarf that had been traditionally widespread in the Cambodian countryside, and has always been a part of the village landscape, life, and culture. The Khmer Rouge, however, coopted the *krama* as a symbol of their revolutionary, rural-based ideals and ethos. More specifically, it had been sometime before 1975 transformed into a component of the Khmer Rouge uniform, which in its complete form consisted of not only a red-and-white *krama*, wrapped around the neck, but also of black pajamas, so-called „Mao cap“, and *sbek cherng kan lan*, or sandals made from rubber tires. (Hawkesworth, 1985, p. 73; Rinith, 2019; Ly, 2020, pp. 81;84) Initially and throughout the civil war, therefore, this uniform had been a clear symbol of differentiation between those that did join the Khmer Rouge rebellion and those that did not; or in other words the „old“ and „new“ people, as they came to be called.<sup>60</sup> However, considering the introduction of the uniform as mandatory clothing imposed upon the entirety of the Cambodian population, described in the next stage, the red-and-white *krama* is more often understood as a rather general symbol of the Khmer Rouge regime as a whole. Thereafter, it was the deviations from the standardized Khmer attire that began to symbolize the non-belonging to the core of the new Cambodian society. Much of these alleged deviations took on racialized context, as not adhering to the strict rules of the Khmer Rouge was alleged to have been non-Khmer, or non-Cambodian, and alleged to have reflected

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<sup>60</sup> Moreover, even following the takeover by CPK and the mandatory imposition of this uniform on everyone living in the country, when it transformed from marker of (non-)belonging to the Khmer Rouge and instead became a more general symbol of the regime as a whole, it seemingly continued to play a limited symbolic value in this regard as well. By some accounts, the infamous tire sandals in particular seemed to have distinguished CPK cadres from the other societal classes in some places, as it was only the Khmer Rouge who was allowed to wear them. (Rinith, 2019)

a foreign influence. This is particularly pronounced in relation to the Vietnamese and Cham minorities, which began to face severe persecution in the final years of the regime, described in the later section of this chapter. Similarly to the case of Armenia, the symbolization also applied to the individual attire, as Chams could also be identified by their unique clothing or hairstyles. (Weitz, 2003, p. 161) As one Cham refugee recalls the Khmer Rouge accused them of „... *wearing our hair long like Vietnamese, and being under Vietnamese influence.*” (Kiernan, 1988, p. 15) On a related note, the emerging paranoia vis-a-vis the prospect of Vietnamese influence led also to the arguably most notorious example of symbolization in the entire genocide, that is the blue-and-white kramas, and the role that they played during the so-called Eastern Zone Massacres of 1978.

With the rapid and definitive deterioration of the relationship between Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese communists, the moderate Vietnam-aligned CPK cadres in the Eastern zone were continued to be seen as possibly disloyal, or at the very least suspect, by Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge leadership. This perception applied also to much of the broader population of the Zone, and is well summarized by their stigmatization as *kbal yuon khluon khmaer*, or „Khmer bodies with Vietnamese minds“, a characterization that they shared with those Khmer living in Vietnam proper. (Heder, 1997, p. 150; Kiernan, 2005, pp. 3;406) This, together with Pol Pot’s long-standing desire to complete the internal purge of the Khmer Rouge, prompted invasion of the zone and evacuations and deportations of both the cadres and regular base people to the other parts of the country, where thousands had been killed upon arrival. While these purges and massacres are indicative of the later stages of genocide, and as such will be more closely discussed in the appropriate section, the use of blue scarves to mark the politically-suspect evacuees and deportees from the Eastern zone is nonetheless perhaps the most evident and notorious example of symbolization stage of the entire genocide.<sup>61</sup> Based on survivor accounts, it has been recognized that the Eastern zone deportees had been given and forced to wear a blue krama during their „evacuation“ to easily distinguish them from the locals in the area they arrived to, who were explicitly prohibited from wearing the colour, marking the deportees for future execution. While some authors question whether this truly was the rationale driving the distribution of blue krama to the evacuees, as opposed to other factors such as mere local availability of the scarves during the

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<sup>61</sup> Despite taking place years after the initiation of genocide process, and concurrently or after other stages had been entered, this is in line with the previously discussed observation that genocide stages can overlap, and earlier stages can continue to evolve and permeate throughout the entire genocide process. Moreover, Stanton explicitly identifies the blue kramas of Cambodian genocide as an example of a symbolization stage. (Stanton, 1987)

transport, there is no disagreement in that ultimately, once the killings started, the excessive wearing of blue-coloured krama as well as certain other articles of clothing by the evacuees was indeed used by the local cadres to easily identify and separate the new arrivals for immediate execution. (Atkinson, 2013, pp. 5–6; Heder, 1997, pp. 148–150; Kiernan, 2005, pp. 405–411; Stanton, 1987) As such, it indeed constitutes a clear example of the symbolization stage, the initial reasoning for the scarves distribution or the inherent impreciseness of this method of identification notwithstanding.

Finally, and most broadly, symbolization within the Cambodian genocide can be identified also in the wide array of certain individual traits perceived as suspect by the Khmer Rouge, or those that were understood to have implicitly signaling belonging of an individual to a „hostile“ counter-revolutionary class, or „new people“ in the Khmer Rouge classification. For example, one of the ways by which „new people“ had been identified was some level of education. By extension, it is often repeated that the „new people“ tried to conceal their group identity by erasing the signs of education under the previous regime as they did not dare to speak French and other foreign languages, or avoided reading novels. Most notoriously, however, the Khmer Rouge had been claimed to have persecuted and even killed people wearing glasses, as spectacles had been the most visible symbol stereotypically associated with education, or signaled that their wearer belonged to the despised middle class by the virtue of being able to afford them.<sup>62</sup> (Chigas & Mosyakov, n.d) As the CPK rule solidified, many of such traits continued to be watched out for by the cadres at the local level, as they could easily be interpreted as symbols indicating „regressive consciousness“ and belonging to the non-desirable class. Use of foreign words suggested imperialist leanings, soft hands or a lack of knowledge about agricultural work suggested that one was educated and avoided manual labor, glasses suggested vanity and education, and so on. Conversely, „progressive consciousness“ signaling a belonging to the „correct“ class had been symbolized by opposite qualities, including familiarity with farming, peasant accent, or lack of formal education. (Hinton, 2005, p. 221)

In sum, when examining the two symbolization stages, it becomes apparent that the nature of respective classifications that formed the basis for the genocide process unsurprisingly deeply influenced the nature of symbolization stages as well. The arbitrary restrictions, rules, or privileges aside, the millet system of the Armenian case had essentially

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<sup>62</sup> While the persecution of glass-wearers is sometimes dismissed as an exaggeration or a fable, it is nonetheless recognized as reflecting a broader symbolic value of education in general, as intellectuals and those with education indeed had been targeted and killed at a local level. (e.g. Becker, 1998, p. 170)

been synonymous with the arguably natural division of the Ottoman society into distinct ethnic groups. As such, even if certain forms of limited dominant group-imposed symbolization can be identified, introducing arbitrary divisive symbols in the immediate anticipation of genocide was simply not necessary in a society where unifying identity did not take root, as evidenced by the failure of Ottomanism,<sup>63</sup> as discussed earlier in this thesis. In the case of Cambodia, despite drawing upon pre-existing societal cleavages, amplified by external developments, the arbitrary classification system was not nearly as deep-rooted, and as such the symbolization can be said to have played a much more visible role in the Cambodian genocide, even if sometimes implicit or not universally introduced. Moreover, the increasingly erratic and unpredictable nature of the Khmer Rouges' classification and choice in targeted groups mean that more explicit and imminent forms of symbolization had to be utilized, sometimes even as the genocide already unfolded, most notoriously the blue scarves for citizens of the Eastern Zone.

### **3.3. Discrimination**

The discrimination stage represents an effort by the dominant group to further entrench the existing cleavages by stripping the non-dominant groups of their political, societal, or cultural rights of privileges and to legitimize the victimization of weaker groups, with the implicit goal of expanding the power of the stronger groups at their expense.

#### *Armenia*

Much like the classification and symbolization stages, the discrimination stage of the Armenian genocide can also be said to have emerged centuries before the actual culmination of the genocide process, given that discriminatory policies and rules had inherently pervaded the millet system.<sup>64</sup> However, as previously discussed, the millet practice was relatively fluid, and its implementation diverged not only at various times, but also across communities. Eighteen different legal systems had been identified under the practice, but a much greater number of different customary practices existed across the Empire at various times. (Tas, 2014, p. 597) However, some persistent general discriminatory policies and traits existed.

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<sup>63</sup> This failure to develop a common Ottoman identity, or indeed even an integrated Ottoman society, has been attributed not only to the shortcomings on the part of Ottoman leadership or the external developments of the time, but in large part also to the deeply-rooted millet system. (e.g. Payton, 2006, p. 14)

<sup>64</sup> It is necessary to reiterate that the millet practice also comprised of a number of privileges and policies which would prove to be beneficial to the dhimmi communities. Some of these had already been mentioned in the previous chapter, such as the exemption from military service. For the purposes of this thesis, however, those policies with clear discriminatory intent and effect are most relevant.

These included, among others, barring of non-Muslims from army or high government service, the introduction of additional taxation burdens on dhimmi, most notably the heavy poll *jizya* tax, or limitations on the right to repair or build new places of worship. Non-Muslims were not allowed to ride horses or bear arms, and as mentioned earlier in this chapter, the clothes they were allowed to wear were limited as well. Further rules applied to religious conversion, as Muslims were allowed and encouraged to convert Christians, but not the other way. Similarly discriminatory had been also the rules in the legal domain, as non-Muslim testimonies were not accepted in certain courts, and certainly not in any suit involving a Muslim. The same restriction did not however apply in reverse, as Muslims were allowed to testify against non-Muslims. (Abu Jaber, 1967, p. 219; Braude & Lewis, 1982, pp. 5–6; Movsesian, 2010, pp. 7–8;) In short, dhimmis had been obliged to „... *adopt an attitude of quiescence and submission. As the Quranic verse suggests, humiliation was central to the dhimma, a fact both sides understood.*“ (Movsesian, 2010, pp. 7–8)

As already discussed, the Tanzimat reforms brought only little real change in the Ottoman practice. Despite the formal proclamation of equality of all Ottoman subjects and 1869 recognition of non-Muslims as citizens of the empire, and indeed reduction in the autonomy and functionality of the millet systems, elements of the system remained in place including in the areas of army and government service, where disabilities were removed in theory with the 1839 and 1856 reform decrees, but not in practice. Other areas where previous limitations were kept in place included separate educational systems, as well as separate civil codes and the juridical domain broadly, where the courts and statutes exclusive to each community persisted. (Abu Jaber, 1967, p. 219; Barkey & Gavrilis, 2015, pp. 27–28) Furthermore, acts of discrimination against Armenians had been historically multi-faceted, and many that were not explicitly rooted in the arrangements of the millet practice persisted as well. To Armenians, this had been most prevalent in regards to the remote, rural, and poor populations of Eastern Anatolia, particularly in the questions of land ownership and use: „... *in many regions of the Ottoman Empire, common practice or usage and illegal or forcible expropriations prevented them from buying or from keeping stateowned lands ... or some of the lands possessed in mortmain ... decades after the promulgation of the Land Code of 1858.*“ (Astourian, 1992, p. 60)

Of paramount importance for the Anatolian Armenians had also been the increasingly malign relationship with the other ethnoreligious group in the region. As discussed, this included the marauding Kurdish notables, who imposed practices such as intimidation and extortion of local merchants long after the state formally accorded Armenians with formal

equality. Importantly, the Kurdish tribals used coercion and brute force to collect payments from the Armenians, which when combined with the already oppressive and unjust official taxation led to dual taxation and contributed to significant social and political problems for the Armenian population in the region.<sup>65</sup> (Butt, 2017, p. 130; Özbek, 2012, pp. 777; 782–783) Moreover, throughout the 19th century, the arrival of Muslim refugees escaping the Russian conquests, Caucasian Circassians in particular, contributed to further discrimination as the Ottoman government attempted to secure their loyalties by redistributing Armenian land. (Chochiev & Koç, 2006, pp. 98–99; Klein, 2011, p. 165) The discrimination against Armenians continued also in the later stages of the genocide process. In the aftermath of previously discussed „Hamidian massacres“, the government not only failed to provide restitution or compensation for the wave of violence, extortions, or land usurpation that accompanied it, but at times directly encouraged these acts, or at the very least, allowed the Kurdish tribes to seize and pillage the Armenian lands. The question of settling the 1890s land usurpations, in particular, is also illustrative of the continuation of discriminatory policies by the Young Turks following the 1908 revolution, as the CUP failed to settle the disputes, despite repeated promises to deal with the matter. (Astourian, 1992, pp. 66–67; Şeker, 2007, p. 468)

### ***Kampuchea***

While in the case of the Ottoman Empire, a clear set of delineated discriminatory policies and attitudes impacting exclusively the targeted group can be identified, this is not true for Cambodia. There, if understood as stripping of political or other rights and privileges, and expanding the power of perpetrator group, discrimination can be said to have applied to the entirety of Cambodian population, including to a degree to the genocidaires themselves, in line with the radical and permeating ideological motivations aiming to completely overhaul the Cambodian society, discussed in the previous chapter. Some of these broad policies were arguably typical of revolutionary, and communist in particular, imposition of a totalitarian regime and included the abolition of private property, widespread nationalization, restriction of access to any political office only to a select few, and so on. Some of the oppressive policies more uniquely linked to the Khmer Rouge regime over the course of its existence

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<sup>65</sup> For more detailed overview of the discriminatory Ottoman taxation practices in relation to the Armenians of Eastern Anatolia throughout the late 19th century, and the failure, or unwillingness, of successive Ottoman governments to achieve meaningful reform, see *The Politics of Taxation* by Özbek, N. (2012)



included abolition of currency and markets,<sup>66</sup> or the previously mentioned regime-mandated dress code, extensive and ubiquitous policy of forced labor, disruptions of the previous family or religious structures and loyalties, or severe constriction of the individual private life. (Berman, 1996, p. 832; Hawkesworth, 1985, p. 73; Jackson, 1989b, pp. 52–53; Prasso, 2001, p. 1) The encroachment of the regime into the last area, in particular, had been particularly severe. Parents were no longer allowed authority over their children, extramarital sexual relations had been prohibited, and rules were put in place that allowed marriage only between people of the same social category, and even then had to be specifically approved. In certain aspects, when compared even to the traditional society of pre-1975 society, the position of particularly urban women worsened as well. In addition to the notorious reports of forced marriages with Khmer Rouge soldiers, a practice which likely had also been motivated by other considerations as well, as it seems to have been most prevalent among the targeted population groups, they lost the recently-gained freedom of choice in courtship and some other social advances of the previous several decades. (Jacobs, 2020; Vickery, 1984, pp. 187–190)

What makes many of these policies relevant to the genocide process, and reflective of the discrimination stage in particular, as opposed to being just general and expected traits of a totalitarian oppressive regime, however, is that many of them had been applied within the context of the Khmer Rouge classification system and as such largely impacted primarily the future victims of the regime, belonging to the „lower“ classes.<sup>67</sup> While rights of the „full rights“ included for example also the right to hold political office, vote in elections, or to become chiefs of cooperatives and join any organization, including the army, the rights of the „depositees“ had been wiped out completely, including the right to food, enabling the later extermination by starvation. The same can be said about the use of forced labor, quality of accommodation, or general strictness of enforcement of those rules that applied even to the upper classes. (Jackson, 1989b, pp. 52–53; Tyner & Rice, 2015, p. 6) Additionally, certain forms of discrimination had also either targeted ethnic and religious minorities explicitly, or at the very least affected them disproportionately when compared to the more general population. While formally, most of this discrimination stemmed from the overrepresentation of the ethnoreligious minorities in the newly introduced „new people“ class, and as such was shared

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<sup>66</sup> For detailed discussion of the motivations behind this decision, and how it contributed to the overall macro-economic failure of the regime, see: *„Currency is a Most Poisonous Tool“: State Capitalism, Nonmarket Socialism, and the Elimination of Money during the Cambodian Genocide.* (Tyner, 2020)

<sup>67</sup> Seemingly with few notable exceptions, such as the moral code as it related to the sexual abuse, which by some accounts had been applied even more strictly to cadres than to the new people. (Vickery, 1984, p. 187)

also with those ethnic Khmer branded with this label, some policies targeting the minorities more specifically did exist. These had been related to the „Khmerization“ of Cambodia, which impacted all non-Khmer minorities, but were particularly targeted against the Vietnamese and Cham ethnic communities. While ultimately, the means to attain this goal took on more drastic measures, and included also expulsion or extermination, initially they had been largely limited to discrimination related to the aforementioned imposition of uniformity across the entire Cambodian population, which was identified as early as mid-1972 in some areas. For example, in the case of the Chams in particular, the regime prohibited many of the religion-related customs and practices, and enforced physical uniformity by prohibiting females from using their traditional headdresses, seizing prayer garments, and requiring them to cut their hair. Additionally, Chams had been forbidden to use the Cham-style names and were instead forced to use Khmer-style names. (Kiernan, 1988, p. 9; Osman, 2007, pp. 15–17).

### **3.4. Dehumanization**

During the dehumanization stage, the perpetrator group denies the humanity of the targeted groups. This might include their equation with animals or diseases, widespread propaganda efforts, or normalization of hate speech. It continues also through the later stages of genocide, as eventual acts of violence result in further dehumanization of the victims and serve to enable the intensification of the genocide process.

#### ***Armenia***

As mentioned in the „symbolization“ section of this chapter, Armenians and other Christians in the Ottoman Empire had been accorded exclusionary, and at times derogatory, terms long before the genocidal process entered its violent phase. However, the widespread normalization of dehumanizing language and more directly pejorative hate speech had been closely connected to the worsening intercommunal relations within the Ottoman society. This is after all reflected also in the prevalent use of the aforementioned anti-Christian slurs such as *kâfir* or *gâvur*, or the widely-used and clearly pejorative and more explicitly dehumanizing *rayah*, translated as „cattle“ or „flock“, throughout the 19th century. (Dadrian, 2010, p. 138; Gunter, 2011, p. 2) Despite their explicit prohibition at the peak of the tanzimat era in 1856, the anti-Christian slurs continued to remain in widespread use, and in fact, their formal prohibition irked many Turkish Muslims: „*Now we can't call a gâvur a gâvur.*“ (Bostom, 2008, p. 74; Movsesian, 2010, p. 12) Moreover, by the time of the 1894 Sasun uprising and the subsequent Hamidian massacres, the term *gâvur* and other anti-Christian slurs had fully

returned, and would be widely used until the end of the Empire, and indeed continue to survive in Turkish to this day. (Salt, 2013, p. 75; Vovchenko, 2016, p. 75) However, in addition to the normalization of derogatory terms for dhimmi, which had in some form permeated throughout the Ottoman history, with the external and internal developments of the second half of the 19th century described in the previous chapter, more explicitly dehumanizing language had become the norm.

Much of this had been connected to the bigoted and prejudiced stereotypes that had become deeply entrenched in the Ottoman society by that point, as described in the previous chapter. While socioeconomic differences had previously existed in the Empire, when combined with the perceived loss of standing of the dominant Muslim population throughout the Tanzimat period, the supposed advantageous economic position of the Christians, and Armenians in particular, led to increasingly hostile manifestations of anti-Armenian sentiment with clear dehumanizing undertones. Armenians were perceived to have been devious, scheming merchants of twisted character, whose goal was to harm and subvert the Muslim society, mirroring in some ways the contemporary perception of Jews in Europe. (Astourian, 1992, p. 59; De Waal, 2015b, p. 24; Suny, 1993, p. 19) The presumed „avaricious greed“ of the Armenian character had been supposedly summed up by a number of popular sayings such as one recorded in Cilicia at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries: „*Two Greeks equal an Armenian, and an Armenian equals two devils.*“ or „*One Greek cons two Jews, and one Armenian cons two Greeks.*“ (Astourian, 1992, p. 65; Kalidjian, 2001, p. 122)

Crucially, as discussed in the previous chapter, in light of the ever-present fears of the seemingly endless tide of Ottoman decline, Armenians were perceived by many as yet another subversive and disloyal millet in the vein of Balkan Christians, conspiring with the foreign powers to destroy the Empire from within. Such prejudiced views were not held only by the disadvantaged Muslims in the peripheries, but instead, they had been shared also by the higher strata of the Muslim society. Perhaps most tellingly, this included the ruling sultan Abdul Hamid II, who believed that Armenians were excessively wealthy and said that „... *the Armenians are a degenerate community ... Always servile.*“ (Akçam, 2006a, p. 32) and who lamented that „*By taking away Greece and Rumania, Europe has cut off the feet of the Turkish state. The loss of Bulgaria, Serbia and Egypt has deprived us of our hands, and now by means of this Armenian agitation, they want to get at our most vital places and tear out our very guts. This would be the beginning of totally annihilating us, and we must fight against it with all the strength we possess.*“ (Morrock, 2014, p. 127)

In the final years of the Ottoman Empire, this hateful discourse towards Armenians and Christians generally intensified, even as later stages of the genocide had already been underway. In large part, this could be attributed also to the emergence and rise to power of the CUP, and the more widespread embrace of Turkish nationalism in the years before the Great War, examined in the previous chapter. Indeed, most cogent examples of explicit or implicit dehumanization of non-Muslims in this period come from notable members of the CUP, such as Sheikh Abd-ul-Haq, an influential „progressive“ Young Turk, writing in August 1912 that „ ... a Christian is regarded by us as a blind man lost to all sense of human dignity ... [Christian] can only be the meanest expression of human degradation: to speak to him would be a humiliation for our intelligence ...“ (Abd-ul-Haq in Bostom, 2008, p. 74) Another strain of dehumanizing language described Anatolia’s Christians as cancer within the body of the Empire. For instance, Kuşçubaşı Eşref, another CUP notable who would later play a central role in the Genocide, called non-Muslims „internal tumors“ that needed „to be cleaned out“. (Akçam, 2012, pp. 29;68)

Importantly, in line with the argument that dehumanization not only precedes the onset of genocidal violence, but also serves to further and sustain it, the dehumanization of Armenians was not limited to rhetoric and propaganda campaigns and continued even after the violent phases of the process had been entered. In addition to the inherently dehumanizing effect of ethnic cleansings, deportations, or mass killings, to which Armenians would ultimately be exposed to and which represents a crucial factor also in other cases of genocide,<sup>68</sup> the particular role of sexual violence ought to be recognized, as it was extremely widespread during the later stages of the genocide, and indeed was officially sanctioned. Even if sexual violence is a common „othering“ tactic and accompanies many instances of genocide, the sheer scale and systematized nature of the sexual abuse, and the context and exact execution of the violence against Armenian women render the sexual abuse aspects of the Armenian genocide a somewhat particular phenomenon when compared to other cases of mass violence.<sup>69</sup> (Akçam, 2012, pp. 312–313; Bjørnlund, 2016, pp. 41–42) Importantly, rape, sexual abuse, and forced prostitution of Armenian women were calculated to dehumanize the Armenians, and strip them of any sense of power, control, and alter their self-identity by subjecting them to animal-like treatment. Moreover, dehumanization and humiliation through sexualized mutilation were also widespread, being inflicted on males and females alike.

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<sup>68</sup> For more detailed discussion on the importance of dehumanization for sustaining the genocide process, i.e. by dehumanizing not only the victims, but also the perpetrators, see Kelman, 1973 or Charny, 1982.

<sup>69</sup> For a more detailed discussion on the systematic sexual abuse during the Armenian genocide, see Bjørnlund, 2016 and Nabti, 2016

(Bjørnlund, 2016, p. 18; Harrelson, 2010, p. 178) As one writer on the subject argues: „*For the perpetrators, the inferior status of the Armenians remained closely linked with rape, ... The dehumanization of the Armenians was furthered by the fact that so many of the rapes were perpetrated in public, indeed in many instances in front of family members.*“ (Derderian, 2005, p. 8)

### ***Kampuchea***

The dehumanization of Armenians had certainly been severe, and especially in the years immediately prior the culmination of the genocide grew more venomous and explicitly dehumanizing, but was still nonetheless somewhat limited in scale, and for a large part remained somewhat implicit and constrained to the domain of normalized hate speech, as opposed to being reflected in a coordinated state propaganda campaign or narratives. For Khmer Rouge, by contrast, dehumanizing discourse represented a ubiquitous tool of paramount importance. This is apparent especially in relation to the initial „new people“, dehumanization of whom had been almost immediate. (Chandler, 1992, p. 103) The general attitude of the Khmer Rouge towards those classified as belonging to the lowest strata of society is most clearly indicated by the omnipresent refrain of *Tuk min chomnenh yok chen min khat*, or „To keep you is no gain, to kill you is no loss.“, constantly repeated to the regime’s victims. It’s this widely-evoked slogan that has, rightly, come to symbolize a complete disregard and pervasive indifference of life itself that underscored the regime’s ideology.<sup>70</sup> (Hinton, 2005, p. 86; Tyner, 2017, p. 137)

This attitude had been reflected in the plethora of characteristic and blatantly dehumanizing Khmer Rouge euphemisms and aphorisms, contained in slogans, songs, magazines, or official party documents. For example, one such document, attributed to Pol Pot, dated December 20, 1976, largely concerned with dealing with alleged traitors within the CPK and preceding a series of internal purges, describes the suspected traitors as „sickness“, „illness“ or „parasites“ within the Party, that need to be „smashed“ or „swept aside“ as soon as possible else they „rot the nation from within“: „*If we wait any longer, the microbes can do real damage.*“ (Pol Pot in Chandler, Kiernan & Boua, 1988, pp. 183–185) Kang Kek Iew, known by his nom de guerre Comrade Duch, meanwhile, referred to internal enemies as „weevils“ and likened them to „worms“ or „germs“ that come from the CIA and attack healthy, revolutionary people. (Chandler, 1999, p. 44) Such dehumanizing imagery was not

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<sup>70</sup> For detailed discussion on the importance of all-pervading indifference, and the dehumanization that enabled it, during the Cambodian genocide, see chapter „Manufacturing Indifference“ in *From Rice Fields to Killing Fields* (Tyner, 2017)

limited only to the real or perceived internal enemies, but rather was applied to all the other groups targeted by the regime as well. Buddhist monks, for example, had been routinely called „bloodsuckers“, „parasites“ and „intestinal worms“ who corrupted society and impeded class struggle. (Hinton, 2005, p. 128) Other language of dehumanization was less explicit, but still not-so-subtle, such as one slogan that warned that „The winnowing basket separates the wheat from the chaff“, an only veiled reference to weeding out of the undesirable elements, including any perceived enemies including real or alleged foreign agents, Lon Nol loyalists, capitalists, or anyone else classified as a „new person“. In general, much of the dehumanizing propaganda can be attributed also to the party publications and magazines, such as *Tung Padewat*, the „Revolutionary Flag“, or *Yuvachun Nung Yuvunarie Padewt*, the „Boys and Girls of the Revolution“, both of which had been published from 1974 (Chigas & Mosyakov, 2010; Tyner, 2017, p. 136)

The persistent dehumanization was not limited to official propaganda or statements, and permeated also throughout the everyday discourse and interaction between party cadres and the „new people“. One „new“ person recalls being told that it would be better if her mother dies than a cow as: „*The cows are good. They help us a lot and do not eat rice. They are much better than you pigs.*“ (Hinton, 2005, p. 86) The victims of the Khmer Rouge were addressed by the vulgar and unabashedly dehumanizing pronoun *vea*, meaning „it“ or „thing“, normally reserved for inanimate objects and animals. Similarly dehumanizing modes of discourse applied also to the ethnic minority victims of the regime, including the Vietnamese who were frequently referred to by the pejorative *yuon*, or „savage“. (Hinton, 2005, p. 191; Hiebert, 2008b, p. 22) Similar to Armenia, the dehumanization in the later stages of the genocide took on increasingly more severe and violent forms. Arguably, it reached its nadir within the confines of the Khmer Rouge prison system, particularly the so-called S-21 complex at Tuol Sleng established in early 1976, which will be examined closer later in this chapter. There, the prisoners were dehumanized from the moment they arrived. In addition to dehumanization through violence or torture, they had been subjected to dehumanizing and degrading practices nested in the hierarchical system of the prison, which included bending down before the guards or not being allowed to look at their faces. (Chandler, 1999, pp. 148–149; Hinton, 2005, pp. 191–192) Tellingly, the Khmer Rouge conception of their enemies as utterly subhuman has been articulated by one such prisoner, a former senior party cadre Hu Nim, as he was tortured into proclaiming, in his extracted confession: „*I am not a human being. I am an animal.*“ (Hu Nim in Chandler, Kiernan & Boua, 1988, p. 239)

In addition to the dehumanizing aspect of the discriminatory policies discussed in the preceding stage, or the semi-random acts of violence or killings that followed, the dehumanizing treatment of the regime's victims included also other forms of mistreatment with severe dehumanizing effect. For instance, like water buffalo, „new people“ were sometimes required to pull a plow or cart, and might be whipped if they failed to work hard enough. (Hinton, 2005, p. 86) Moreover, speaking more broadly, complete dehumanization and erasure of most traces of individuality, whether through communal dining or suppression of family bonds and imposition of uniform dress style, permeated throughout the entire Khmer Rouge regime, and indeed had been identified as one of the regime's central ideological goals, and as such impacted the „new people“ and „old people“ alike. Per Quinn, the Khmer Rouge believed that it is necessary to imbue „... *the philosophy that a human being's sole function in society is as an interchangeable part of a large collective entity.*“ (Quinn, 1989, p. 194) This represents perhaps the starkest difference when comparing the two cases of genocide, one which was to be reflected in subsequent stages as well. While during the Armenian genocide, the targeted ethnoreligious minorities had been the primary targets and victims of dehumanization, under the Khmer Rouge dehumanization permeated throughout all strata of society and in some shape impacted not only specifically victimized groups, but also the genocidaires and the general population as well.

Notably, however, sexual violence does not seem to have been a systematic and purposefully dehumanizing factor throughout the Cambodian genocide, or at least not to the same degree as it was in the Armenian case. Traditionally, the regime's official policy of prohibition on sexual violence and extra-marital sexual relations is noted in this regard, and by some accounts, the moral code related to the sexual abuse had been strictly applied: „... *guards who as part of their work might torture women prisoners would themselves be executed if they engaged in off-duty sexual abuse.*“ (Vickery, 1984, p. 187) More recent research, however, suggests that sexual crimes continued to represent a „daily reality“ for many women despite the strict policy of the central government, largely due to impunity, as perpetrators could simply „destroy the evidence“ by killing their victims, and as a result, the official policy might have incentivized some perpetrators to kill their victims, especially if they became pregnant. Therefore, for fear of reprisal or death, no victims or witnesses dared to make a complaint of sexual violence, and there are only a few recorded cases of punishment for perpetrators. Importantly, it appears that ethnic minority women seemed to have been singled out for some forms of sexual violence, like rape and rape before execution. (Braaf, 2014, pp. 53–54; Kasumi, 2008, p. 29; de Langis & Studzinsky, 2012, p. 1)

Nonetheless, it appears that especially in comparison with the Armenian genocide, sexual abuse under Khmer Rouge did not represent a systematic, centrally encouraged and sanctioned, means of dehumanizing the victimized group.

### **3.5. Organization**

In the organization stage, military or paramilitary groups that are ultimately responsible for carrying out the genocide are established or reformed, sometimes in tandem with broader administrative or institutional reorganization facilitating the mass-scale genocidal policies.

#### ***Armenia***

If the organization stage of genocide is conceptualized in terms of the emergence of irregular state-organized groups directly responsible for the later implementation of genocidal policies, several such organizations can be identified. Üngör recognizes four broad categories of the Ottoman paramilitaries at the start of the World War I, which include the *asîret alayları*, the tribal cavalry led by predominantly Kurdish tribal leaders that evolved from the Hamidiye cavalry; *gönüllüler*, or volunteers, made up of Muslims from outside the Ottoman Empire; *çete*, or „bands“, who were a hodgepodge of local non-military guerillas subject to the command of individual Young Turk leaders; and finally, *Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa*, the „Special Organization“, initially an intelligence service that sought to foment insurrection in enemy territory and conduct other forms of irregular warfare, which would however eventually absorb the other groups as well. (Üngör, 2016, pp. 15–16) For this thesis and this section, in particular, the latter is the most relevant, as it would come to play a central role in organizing and conducting the genocide. Originating from the aftermath of the 1913 coup and the subsequent imposition of CUP dictatorship, the Special Organization can be traced to the efforts of doctors Mehmed Nâzım and Bahaeddin Shakir, who began merging the hitherto relatively disunited paramilitaries, loyal to factions around the CUP leaders Talât Pasha and primarily Enver Pasha, into a single organization. The precise foundation date of the organization is not clear, but it seems that by August 1914, Enver, by now a war minister, organized his paramilitary supporters into a formal organization structure, termed the Special Organization, which was effectively a secret service with a broad range of responsibilities, directly responsible to Enver, and paid out of secret War Ministry funds. (Üngör, 2016, pp. 15–16; Zürcher, 1984, p. 59) Its activities covered a wide spectrum of both clandestine and overt tasks, reflecting its disparate nature, which included all tasks not suited for conventional



military forces. In general, these included recruitment, training, and supervision of armed groups tasked with conducting asymmetric warfare, as well as small-scale intelligence activity dealing with internal and external threats to Ottoman interests. This was to be done through spreading propaganda promoting pan-Islamic and pan-Turkish ideals, subversion, and guerilla activities behind enemy lines, such as a failed bid to start an anti-British revolt in Egypt or general counterespionage operations. (Jongerden, 2012, p. 67; Safi, 2012, p. 89; Zürcher, 1984, pp. 83–84) Most relevant to this thesis, however, would be their ultimate role in perpetrating the Armenian genocide by becoming the „instrument of indiscriminate mass murder“ in the hands of the ruling CUP, even if this had not been the intent behind its original foundation. (Bloxham, 2003, p. 152)

While the Special Organization had been established only in 1913 at the earliest, the origins of the units that came under its command, and by extension the onset of the organization stage of the Armenian genocide can be traced to decades earlier. Specifically, the tribal cavalry paramilitaries involved in the genocide directly descended from the *Hamidiye Hafif Süvari Alayları*, or the Hamidiye Light Cavalry Regiments, briefly mentioned in the previous chapter, the establishment of which can therefore be said to be the earliest identifiable manifestation of this stage.<sup>71</sup> Created in 1891 by Sultan Abdul Hamid II, after whom they were named, the Hamidiye were irregular, Cossack-inspired cavalry units, raised from the tribal militias of the Kurdish beys that controlled eastern Anatolia throughout the 19th century. Officially, the Hamidiye was formed to „*protect the country against foreign assaults and aggression*“ and to further the „*just aim of increasing and multiplying the general strength of the Ottoman forces.*“ (Klein, 2011, p. 20) Many writers concur, however, that additional motivations played a role, which included the desire to introduce central power into regions where the Ottoman state had only very little authority, and which had been instead governed by essentially independent Kurdish chieftains, or to subjugate these nomadic and autonomous Kurdish tribes and to exploit the chaotic situation of the region, described in the previous chapter, by pitting the local groups against each other. (Deringil, 2009, pp. 348–349; Klein, 2012, p. 23)

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<sup>71</sup> It should be noted that establishment of Hamidiye should not yet be understood as an example of outright genocidal intent, even if it was indeed directly connected to the broader Armenian issue: „... while the state did not aim to annihilate the Armenian population of the eastern provinces, the Hamidiye was certainly put together with the so-called Armenian conspiracy in mind. Most of the regiments were in areas where there were substantial Armenian populations, and perhaps more significantly, around points where Armenian revolutionaries were active ...“ (Klein, 2012, p. 152)

Most relevantly to the subject of this thesis, one of the central factors behind the establishment of these units had been the considerations regarding the Armenians of the region. More specifically, this meant the ever-present fears of „Armenian conspiracy“, consisting of the budding Armenian revolutionary activity and insurgencies, and the increasingly prevalent belief that Armenians represented a fifth column in the Ottoman heartland that seek to undermine and separate from the Empire, much like the Balkan Christians did. In other words, the creation of Hamidiye had been essentially an attempt to „... *kill two birds with one stone - to cow the Armenian population and to secure the loyalty of the Kurds. In a manner of speaking, the Armenians were to be the bait for Kurdish obedience and loyalty.*“ (Deringil, 2009, p. 349) This aspect of the militia’s *raison d’etre* would be further reinforced in the following years, as the Armenian revolutionary activities intensified. However, as some authors argued, and as Armenian insurgents themselves claimed and contemporary observers noted, it was precisely the heavy-handed activities of the Hamidiye that contributed to this by further antagonizing the Armenian population and aggravating the revolutionary activity that the organization was originally established to combat. Ultimately, following their 1909 reorganization first into the „Tribal Light Cavalry“ and then „Reserve Cavalry“ regiments, the Hamidiye would come to play a significant role during the Armenian Genocide via direct participation in the massacres of the Armenians. (Duguid, 1973, p. 153; Klein, 2012, pp. 152; 170–171)

### ***Kampuchea***

Much like in the case of the Ottoman Empire, under Khmer Rouge too a clandestine organization participating in the genocide and amending the other, regular or irregular forces of the regime, can be identified. Mirroring the Special Organization of the Ottomans, in Cambodia, this was the secret police put in charge of the internal security apparatus, known as „the Special Branch“ but more commonly called *Santebal*, a Khmer term that both means „keeper of the peace“ and is also a contraction of the Khmer words *santesokh*, or „security“, and *nokorbal*, „police“. (Kiernan, 2005, p. 158; Tyner, Kimsroy, Fu, Wang & Ye, 2016, p. 270) In another way similar to its Ottoman counterpart, it's also impossible to precisely identify when, why, or even by whom the Santebal was formally established, as no documentary evidence survives, in part due to the organization only rarely being referred by name in official statements. Similar, predecessor units certainly existed within the Khmer Rouge in some form already during the civil war, and the immediate forebear operated in the so-called Sector 25 north of the Cambodian capital, which formed the bulk of the „Special

Zone“ surrounding Phnom Penh, from 1973 to 1975. By the end of 1975, what is now known as Santebal coalesced under the command of former school teacher Kang Kek Iew, or Comrade Duch, who renamed its headquarters „S-21“, and who would remain in charge of Khmer Rouge internal security until the end of the regime. (Chandler, 1999, pp. 4;17; Kiernan, 2005, p. 315)

It should be noted, that unlike its equivalents in other communist and non-communist states, such as the East German Stasi, or the British MI5, the Santebal deployed no clandestine agents overseas and had no policymaking office. Instead, its functions came to be carried out almost entirely at the Tuol Sleng complex, to which S-21 relocated in June of 1976, and where up to 17 thousand detainees perished. Officially, the code name S-21 began to appear on Khmer Rouge documents in September 1975, and the facility would fully take on a security service role hitherto spread across several units in and around Phnom Penh in May or June of 1976. The „S-21“ and „Santebal“ are sometimes used interchangeably, even if the organization’s area of operations continued to cover the entirety of Khmer Rouge-controlled territory, and in addition to the most well-known S-21 was in charge of operating also the other interrogation and execution centers across the country (Chandler, 1999, pp. 4;15; Kiernan, 2005, pp. 315–316; Osborne, 2007, p. 1) These „prison-torture-execution“ centers existed at regional, district, and commune levels, and by some estimates more than 150 such facilities, built upon the S-21 model, existed, sometimes located in converted Buddhist temples. (Locard, 2005, p. 134; O’Kane, 1993, p. 743)

Ultimately, despite the organization becoming arguably the most notorious representative of the organized state terror under the Khmer Rouge, Santebal had not been responsibly for those aspects of the genocidal policy of the regime that indiscriminately impacted the more general populations, but rather it targeted and executed groups and individuals more directly. Specifically, this primarily meant orchestrating the mass-scale internal party purges: „*The nerve center of the purge apparatus was the Santebal*“ (Kiernan, 2005, p. 314) Consequently, the vast majority of detainees and victims at the organization’s central facility, the S-21, were not the „new“ people or other targeted groups, but rather those Khmer Rouge cadres and soldiers, or their relatives, who committed, or were alleged to have committed, offenses against the state. (Tyner, Kimsroy, Fu, Wang & Ye, 2016, pp. 270–271) Therefore, as the majority of victims of the Cambodian Genocide did not come from those ranks, when compared to the paramount role that the Special Organization played in the Armenian genocide, Santebal had been somewhat less central to the Cambodian genocide,

and it had by far not been the sole instrument through which the genocidal policies would be carried out

As such, examining the broader institutional framework that permitted the regime to implement the genocidal practices is necessary. Specifically, this means the organization of the regime as it emerged in the months that followed the 1975 victory in the civil war. Up until the fall of Phnom Penh, the organizational structures of the Khmer Rouge had been plagued by a lack of real unity. For example, returning to the example of the armed forces, despite the existence of a formally united military front, the armed forces of Democratic Kampuchea were, in reality, six separate armies, reflecting the division of the country into Northern, Northeastern, Eastern, Southwestern, Northwestern, and the aforementioned Special zones, leaders of which had been party secretaries appointed by the party leadership, who were expected to operate semi-autonomously. In effect, however, the zone secretaries were essentially operating as warlords, with absolute-martial-law powers within their territory. As such, significant considerable variation existed across zones, reflecting differences in leadership, resources, and external factors. (Becker, 1998, pp. 181–182; Chandler, 2008, pp. 258–259) It was not until July of 1975, three months after their victory, that Pol Pot united the disparate armed forces into a united national army, named Revolutionary Army of Kampuchea (RAK) and numbering little over 72 thousand men under the command of Son Sen, which would ultimately be responsible for many of the violent deaths attributed to the regime. Zone secretaries accepted this diffusion of their powers and relinquished most of their troops as requested, although roughly one-third of the soldiers were integrated into the new force only nominally, and continued to be posted in their home zones. (Becker, 1998, p. 182; Klementis & Czirják, 2016, p. 216; Locard, 2005, p. 125)

However, closely responding to the nature and purpose of the organization stage of genocide, despite the RAK representing formal armed forces of a state, in many ways the army was closer to the paramilitary and militia groups. Specifically, and crucially for further progression of the Cambodian genocide, this applied to the recruitment and training practices as well,<sup>72</sup> and particularly the tendency to recruit from segments of society that are more susceptible to radical and violence-centered ideological indoctrination. Somewhat predictably, this included the predominantly illiterate and poor people drawn from the rural populations that formed the backbone of the Khmer Rouge's support during the Civil War. In Pol Pot's own words, they were the „... *completely illiterate people who did not have even the slightest*

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<sup>72</sup> For more detailed examination of the Khmer Rouge cadre selection, recruitment, and training practices, see Procknow's *Khmer Rouge: Recruitment and Selection & Training and Development*. (2009)

*idea of cities, automobiles and parliaments, but who dared to fight under the guidance of the party.*“ (Pol Pot quoted in Procknow, 2009, p. 6) Of particular note, however, is also the practice of turning to the recruitment of child soldiers. Khmer Rouge cadres, responsible for local recruitment efforts, solicited the youngest members of the poor classes. With some of them beginning their military careers at the age of 10, the children turned cadres aged between 12 and 15 are often included among the most brutal troops of the regime,<sup>73</sup> carrying out the most extreme orders of their superiors, and at times identifying their own families as the enemy. (Klementis & Czirják, 2016, pp. 216–217; Procknow, 2009, pp. 5–6)

The restructuralization and reorganization of the country were not limited to the armed forces, however, and other administrative aspects were also altered. Principally, these were centered on uniting the country through the creation of one national bureaucracy and streamlining the administration to coordinate all political, agricultural, and industrial activities that fully implementing the party ideology would necessitate. One of the major steps was further weakening the power of the individual zone secretaries. Most visibly, in addition to restricting their role in the military matters, this included also severe redrawing of the zone boundaries. The Southwest Zone was divided into two zones, the old Special Zone was entirely dissolved, and the previous North Zone was eventually abolished and reorganized as the Central Zone. As a result, complex geographic administration emerged, in which the country was governed via the hierarchy of zones, regions, districts, cooperatives, and villages. (Becker, 1998, pp. 181–184; Kiernan, 2005, pp. 88–89; Sirik, 2015, p. 7) As such, when compared to the Armenian genocide, it becomes apparent that not only had the variety and size of forces directly involved in the genocide been larger, but the organization that preceded the Cambodian genocide was more extensive and part of a more general revolutionary restructuralization that impacted the larger society as well.

### **3.6. Polarization**

During the polarization stage, the pre-existing or newly introduced societal divisions are firmly entrenched through propaganda campaigns or other means of driving wedge between the groups, and moderate or centrist figures are eliminated to avoid possible obstacles in the implementation of the genocidal policies.

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<sup>73</sup> Providing a connection to the aforementioned activities of Santebal, children also served in the notorious Division 703 which was responsible for guarding the Tuol Sleng complex, and was responsible for numberless killings and tortures. Tuy Kin, for example, a former „red female combatant“ drafted at the age 14, would later be sentenced for the involvement in the killing of 300 prisoners. (Klementis & Czirják, 2016, p. 218)

## *Armenia*

With the organizational infrastructure that would eventually enable the genocide being firmly in place by late 1914, the polarization stage of the genocidal process is closely connected to the period surrounding the Ottoman entry into World War I in October 1914. Initially, this meant principally the first of the identified manifestations of this stage, i.e. finalizing the alienation of the targeted population, principally via reinforcement of the notions of Ottoman Armenians as the fifth column of the Russian Empire. For some, this threat was vindicated as at the time of the Ottoman decision to enter the war, the Ottoman Empire was indeed faced with the insurgency of Armenian fedayi and other forces of the Armenian national liberation movement. Furthermore, such fears had also been fueled by the marked shift in Russian policy on the eve of the war from relative indifference or mild hostility towards the Armenians, to an effort to attract them to the cause of the Entente, such as by promises made by Tsar Nicholas to the Armenian catholicos regarding postwar arrangements in the region and promising „a most brilliant future“. Crucially, in September of 1914, the Russian Caucasus viceroy Vorontsov-Dashkov negotiated with prominent Russian Armenians the organization of volunteer battalions of Armenians, some of them former Ottoman subjects. Indeed, these volunteers were supposed to provide an example and act as a stimulus to Ottoman Armenians to take up arms, mirroring the efforts being undertaken by the Ottoman Special Organization among the Caucasian Muslims of the Russian Empire. (Bloxham, 2003, pp. 160–161; Hovannisian, 1968, p. 157; Suny, 2015, pp. 230–231)

On closer examination, however, it becomes apparent that despite the extremely strained relationship between Armenians and the Ottoman state, and the overtures made by the Russian state towards the Armenians, as of 1914 the fears of organized, coordinated, and sizeable national Armenian fifth column in the Ottoman heartland simply weren't true. Most tellingly, this is reflected in the resolution of the 1914 Armenian congress at Erzurum, where even the ARF, despite their commitment to future independent Armenia, maintained that Ottoman Armenians should not break their loyalty to the Ottoman Empire and had an obligation to defend it in the case of war. While refusing the CUP requests to incite Russian Armenians to intervene on the Ottoman side in exchange for promises of autonomy, the ARF had professed its neutrality and remained committed to having Ottoman Armenians join the Empire's army, and formally resolved that the Armenians on both sides of the border should fight for the countries of their citizenships. In addition to ARF, the other Armenian political parties, as well as the Church, urged loyal participation in the defense of the Empire. (Kaligian, 2014, p. 209; Suny, 2015, pp. 222–223) Ultimately, however, the Armenian

promises of loyalty weren't enough to dissipate the Ottoman fears. Instead, the decision not to actively incite Armenian insurgency in Russia, coupled with the later creation of Armenian volunteer battalions, came to be regarded by the Ottomans as proof that „... *Armenian-Russian links solidified into detailed plans, and agreements were drawn up aiming at the detachment of Armenia from the Ottoman Empire.*“ (Erickson, 2008, p. 151) As such, from that point, the first months of the war had been marked by the increasingly paranoid assertions of imminent Armenian insurgency.<sup>74</sup>

It was in this climate that the Ottomans further contributed to the societal polarization by reframing the conflict in explicitly religious terms through the November 1914 proclamation of *jihad*, often translated and understood as „holy war“.<sup>75</sup> This declaration was aimed at mobilizing the Muslim subjects of the Empire, and it was not the first time in history that the Ottoman Empire utilized it in this manner. Unlike the earlier declarations, however, the exacerbated tensions within the Ottoman society meant that the declaration, and the propaganda that surrounded it, significantly contributed to societal polarisation via intense religious incitement, implicit exclusion of the Christians from the Ottoman national struggle, and securing of the loyalty of those who ultimately participated in the Armenian genocide, such as the Kurdish tribal forces. In the Ottoman propaganda and public discourse, the war had been exalted as a just and holy war, fought not only for defending the honor and borders of the empire but also for the very existence and preservation of Islam, leading to the emergence of general anti-Christian chauvinism. (Akin, 2011, pp. 192–193; Aksakal, 2011, pp. 185–187; Bloxham, 2003, p. 157; Dangoor, 2017, p. 82; Suny, 2015, p. 238) Relatedly, the Ottoman radicalization „... *seems to have occurred in large part in response to the Turks' rapidly deteriorating military situation.*“ (Butt, 2017, p. 152) Nowhere else is this more apparent than in the case of Ottoman defeat at Sarikamish, the aftermath of which is arguably the most telling exemplification of the distrust and anti-Armenian discourse held by the Ottoman leaders at that time. At Sarikamish, the Ottomans suffered a devastating defeat following a failed attempt to invade Russian territory and seize the initiative in the Caucasus, with the Third Army responsible for the operation being reduced from 118 thousand fighting men in December 1914 to little over 12 thousand by January of 1915 by a successful counter-

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<sup>74</sup> Even at this stage, such perceptions had already impacted the treatment of Armenians near the frontline, as German diplomats to the Empire noted: „*It is a matter of fact that Turkish officers do not see eye to eye with the Armenians and reproach them with being friendly to Russia and helping Russian troops to get into Turkish territory.*“ (Schwarz quoted in Suny, 2015, p. 237)

<sup>75</sup> For more thorough and sensitive discussion of the Ottoman understanding and use of the concept, see '*Holy War Made in Germany?*' *Ottoman Origins of the 1914 Jihad* (Aksakal, 2011)

attack by the Russian military and Armenian volunteers, in what has been described a „self-inflicted Ottoman defeat“. (Fawaz, 2014, p. 43; Uyar, 2021, p. 103)

Much of the blame for this devastating defeat could be placed on the by-now Minister of War Enver Pasha, who took personal command of the Ottoman army in the East and was responsible for planning the Sarikamish operation, which he ordered despite the opposition from the German as well as Ottoman strategists. Failure to keep adequate operation reserves, faulty estimates of the reaction or size of enveloped Russian forces, risky and overly ambitious choice of operational goals, the choice to conduct the attack in terrain unsuitable for offensive operations, and finally the Enver's refusal to order retreat even after it became apparent that the battle has been lost have all been identified as the leadership failures that led to the utter defeat of Ottoman forces. (Erickson, 2001, pp. 55;61; Suny, 2015, pp. 240–242; Üngör, 2011, p. 59; Uyar, 2021, p. 97) But rather than accepting his failures, Enver Pasha chose to seek a scapegoat for the worst military defeat in Ottoman history, and the presence of Armenian volunteers in the battle turned the already suspect minority into a convenient target of blame, playing into the fears of Muslim civilians compounded by the activities of fedayi and the violent advance of Russian armies. In recorded personal discussions, Enver bitterly blamed the Armenians for the fiasco and proposed their deportation to somewhere they would not cause trouble, while Talât openly alleged that Armenians stabbed the army in the back. The rest of the CUP leadership reached a similar consensus, blaming the supposed Armenian treachery for the defeat. (Balakian, 2004, p. 178; Üngör, 2016, pp. 18–19; Řoutil, Košťálová, & Novák, 2017, pp. 116–117) Intensifying the pre-existing mistrust of Armenians as possible agents of the Russian Empire, Enver and his closest allies „... framed the story of the battle in their own way, and the prevailing view placed Armenian treachery at the center of the narrative.“ (Suny, 2015, p. 243)

However, in addition to the intensification of polarising propaganda, the second major manifestation of the polarization stage, that is the removal of moderate figures to enable the implementation of genocidal policies, is also clearly identifiable. The internal purges had not been a new phenomenon, and the CUP had already been responsible for a series of broad-ranging and systematic purges of both the military and the civilian bureaucracy already in the first years of their regime. (Uyar, 2021, p. 6) As such, it is perhaps not surprising that when the genocide entered its final phases, the internal opposition to genocidal policies had been, often ruthlessly, removed so as not to constrict their implementation. Perhaps most notoriously, this included the Mehmet Celal Bey who in his position as governor of Aleppo defied deportation orders, for which he was removed from his post in June 1915 and



transferred to Konya. After continuing to resist the orders and voicing protests and demands for the deportees' well-being, he was removed from this post as well. (Akçam, 2006a, pp. 211–212; Donef, 2010, p. 4; Gerçek, 2015, p. 10) Others who refused to carry out the deportation orders were punished much more severely. This includes the two *kaymakams*, or „mayors“, of the Dyarbekir Vilayet, who had been ambushed and assassinated under orders by the vilayet governor Mehmed Reshid Bey.<sup>76</sup> These were the Sabit Bey of Befliri, and the Hüseyin Nesimi Bey of Lice, who was murdered following his refusal to follow Reshid's orders to persecute and murder the Armenians. Almost sardonically, the blame for his murder had been placed on a „notorious Armenian brigand.“ (Kieser, 2011, p. 142; Üngör, 2011, pp. 78–79) However, while the aforementioned examples are perhaps the most widely known, it appears that particularly at the lower levels of the administrative hierarchy an extensive dissent was prevalent.<sup>77</sup> According to some authors, most of the officials in western regions resisted implementing the deportation, while elsewhere some governors and commanders even went as far as to call for an arrest of the superiors they received such orders from. Ultimately, however, this usually only postponed, rather than canceled, the genocide as the dissident administrators were easily removed. Normally, the moderate officials had been dismissed or imprisoned and replaced with a hard-liner.<sup>78</sup> (Gerçek, 2015; Mann, 2005, pp. 159–160) As such, a clear pattern of comprehensive and consistent effort to deepen polarization and root out any opposition to the genocidal policies can be identified even throughout the later stages of the Genocide.

### ***Kampuchea***

Reflective of the blending of individual stages of genocide, identifying a clear-cut beginning of the polarization phase of the Cambodian genocide is somewhat more complicated than in Armenia, particularly vis-a-vis the social alienation of the targeted groups. Here, the societal polarization and exclusion of specific groups had been intrinsically linked to the introduction of the political classes, discriminatory policies, and dehumanizing rhetoric already described earlier in this chapter, and as such can be said to have manifested

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<sup>76</sup> Removal of troublesome subordinates had been the principal reason for Reshid's appointment in the first place. His predecessor, Hamid Bey, was recalled from the position precisely because of his relatively tolerant policy towards the Armenians, which ran contrary to the wishes of the CUP. (Kieser, 2011, p. 136; Üngör, 2011, p. 61)

<sup>77</sup> American ambassador Morgenthau, for example, was convinced the effective authority of the CUP throughout the empire at this time was „exceedingly tenuous“ (Morgenthau, 1919, p. 227)

<sup>78</sup> It seems that moderate governors survived in office only in Marash and isolated Mosul, but even there „... powers of moderates were more to stall than to prevent, for these cities were also murderously cleansed of Armenians.“ (Mann, 2005, p. 160)

through the intensification of pre-existing practices, e.g. with the ramping up of anti-Vietnamese propaganda in the months surrounding the 1975 seizure of power by CPK. Perhaps more fittingly, and uniquely to the Cambodian case when compared to that of the Armenian genocide, polarization stage of Cambodian genocide can be seen to have manifested in the efforts of the regime to cement the societal divides by developing a proper „political consciousness“, including via instilling the attitudes towards the ethnic minorities or lower political classes. This was to be done through structural indoctrination, termed *karchreap*, or „seepage“, by which the masses would gradually absorb party ideology and be transformed into passionate revolutionaries. (Hinton, 2005, p. 51)

For this purpose, a number of indoctrination and re-education centers had been established, which varied greatly in their specific nature. In some of these camps, the poor and undereducated had been taught to be dispassionate and resolute to become reliable Khmer Rouge cadres. In others, a reeducation program had been instituted for highly qualified intellectuals and other „new people“ to convert and indoctrinate them to the new regime in order to make use of their talents in the future. The extensive indoctrination formed the basis also for the education of children, as even the otherwise laudable goal of removing illiteracy was understood as merely a tool for better dissemination of the Party propaganda and part of an overall strategy to „build socialism and revolutionary consciousness.“<sup>79</sup> (Chigas & Mosyakov, 2010; Procknow, 2009, pp. 15–18; Vickery, 1984, p. 109) Perhaps most tellingly, the indoctrinatory and polarizing nature of these (re)education centers is summarized by one survivor account: „[We] had very long indoctrination sessions. The soldiers taught us about *Angkar*<sup>80</sup> and the wrongs of capitalism. .... We were going to be *Angkar*'s helpers in the war against evil. ... During these sessions we had to accuse each other, even our friends, of doing bad things.“ (Chork, 1997, p. 124) More directly relating to the genocide, the widespread indoctrination had a particular effect on the party cadres, specifically through the ideological model of detachment, known as *dach khat*, which was central to the political education under Khmer Rouge. Connoting „an intellectual and emotional separation that enables one to act in a dispassionate and determined manner“, former Khmer Rouge cadres recalled that it was precisely this aspect of the indoctrination they received that enabled some of the willingness to kill central to the genocide: „They sent us to be indoctrinated with their ideology, saying

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<sup>79</sup> For more thorough discussion on the education in general, as well as the specific indoctrinatory and ideological aspects of it in particular, see *Khmer Rouge: Recruitment and Selection & Training and Development* (Procknow, 2009) and *Literacy and Education under the Khmer Rouge* (Chigas & Mosyakov, 2010)

<sup>80</sup> *Angkar*, or „Organization“, being the CPK's preferred way of referring to itself until 1977. (O'Kane, 1993, p. 736)

*that whatever we did, we had to always be dispassionate and resolute.*“, including through reinforcing the internal societal polarization: „... *they taught us to cut off our feeling for the enemy, even if it was our parents ... we had to become resolute (dach khat) and kill whoever was at fault. Even if someone had been our friend before, we couldn't recognize them once they had become an enemy.*“ (Hinton, 2005, pp. 262–263) In short, fostering distrust, paranoia and polarization by having its citizens spy on each other was one of the regimes important tools and goals, encouraged by the slogan „*You must know how to trace one another. Report everything to Angkar!*“ (Dy, 2007, p. 45)

While the presence of extensive, deep-rooted, and state-sponsored indoctrination campaign marks a stark difference between the Armenian and Cambodian genocides, some similarity can be found in the second significant manifestation of the polarization stage, i.e. in the internal purges within the ranks of the perpetrator group. As discussed earlier in the thesis, the Khmer Rouge employed direct or indirect purges as early as the beginning of the civil war, but it was only after 1975 that these actions spiraled into coordinated and extensive removal of dissidents, moderates, and recalcitrants within the party. In the party documents, the purges of 1975–76 had been justified as a necessary step to destroy the internal enemies who intended to „smash the leadership and to fight to destroy our revolution.“<sup>81</sup> Among the first, and most notable, senior party officials to be purged had been the popular senior cadre Hou Yuon. While the particularities of his disappearance and death have not been conclusively established, it seems likely that he was murdered in August 1975 following his sacking from the Khmer Rouge cabinet. What is clear, however, is that his opposition to several CPK policies, including his public impassionate and popular rejection of collectivization, evacuation of the cities, turning of pagodas into stables, or the end of wage labour, had all been long seen as counter-revolutionary and undesirable by Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge center. (Becker, 1998, p. 202; Goldstein & Hiebert, 2016, p. 160; Kiernan, 2005, p. 61)

While the case of Hou Yuon represents the archetypal removal of a comparatively moderate figure that hindered the implementation of more radical policies, he is by far not the example of this form of polarization under the Khmer Rouge regime. On the contrary, when compared to the Armenian genocide, internal purges had not been limited to isolated cases but instead represented a central hallmark of Democratic Kampuchea. Throughout 1975 and 1976, countless people within the army and the party deemed to have been traitorous,

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<sup>81</sup> *Report of Activities of the Party Centre According to the General Political Tasks of 1976 in Pol Pot Plans the Future* (Chandler, Kiernan & Boua, 1988, p. 189)

implicated in extracted confessions, or belonging to the wrong class had been expelled or executed. In addition to many others, this notably included also three senior Party figures: Ney Saran, the secretary of the Northeastern Zone, Keo Meas, a veteran revolutionary, and Non Suon, the secretary of agriculture. Indeed, since taking power, the Party has grown increasingly paranoid and increasingly obsessed with the ever-present perceived threat of „hidden“ enemies lurking within and undermining the revolution from the inside. (Chandler, 1983, p. 288; Chandler, 1999, p. 54; Goldstein & Hiebert, 2016, pp. 160–161) For example, one Party study session in 1976 ordered the Party members to remain vigilant against: *„the life-and-death enemy who comprises the various exploiting classes... which hide themselves in our revolutionary ranks, in the army, and in the ranks of our Party.“* (Party Center in Chandler, Kiernan, & Boua, 1988, pp. 169–170)

### **3.7. Preparation**

In the preparation stage, the immediate steps necessary for the commencement of final stages are being taken. The decision to resort to extermination might be reached, detailed plans can be drawn up, and specific preparatory steps necessary for the facilitation of the further phases can be taken.

#### ***Armenia***

In the immediate aftermath of the disastrous battle of Sarikamish, a number of developments can be retrospectively identified as signaling the immediate onset of the Armenian genocide. In particular, this includes a series of threshold developments between February and April of 1915. The naval attacks upon the Dardanelles and the Russian move towards Van that followed the Ottoman defeat in the Caucasus instilled into the CUP leaders a sense of panic and reinforced the pre-existing fears of the catastrophic impact that Armenian disloyalty in the Anatolian heartland of the Empire might have. This „wishful suspicion“ led to a series of meetings of the Central Committee of the CUP in Istanbul in this period, where the army was given more autonomy and ordered by Talât Pasha to turn to the „Third Army for the application of measures aimed at Armenian actions.“ More importantly, the Special Organization was removed from the authority of the War Ministry and Army and placed directly under the jurisdiction of the CUP, reorganized, expanded, and placed under the command of Dr. Bahaeddin Şakir, who was tasked with focusing on the country's real and perceived internal enemies. (Akçam, 2012, p. 183; Akçam, 2019, p. 7; Kévorkian, 2011, p. 197; Üngör, 2011, p. 61)

Şakir's earlier efforts included spending several months in Erzerum and on the Caucasian front, and resulted in a report focused on the „domestic enemies“ who were „preparing to attack the Ottoman army from the rear.“ (Akçam, 2012, p. 183; Kévorkian, 2011, p. 244) Crucially, it seems likely that it was at these meetings that the CUP leaders familiarized themselves with the contents of this report, and more importantly, took the actual decision to resort to the deportations, and as such ultimately also the extermination, of the Ottoman Armenians, probably at least in part due to Şakir's demands for measures to be taken to eliminate the „Armenian menace.“ (Akçam, 2012, p. 183; Kévorkian, 2011, p. 244) While no single document confirming the timing of this decision exists, based on subsequent telegrams sent by the CUP leadership, as well as other internal documents and subsequent developments, including the previously mentioned replacement of moderate officials, it had been previously asserted that the deportation decision was made sometime between late March and early April of 1915. (Akçam, 2006b, p. 139; Kévorkian, 2008; Kévorkian, 2011, pp. 244–247; Suny, 2015, pp. 247–248) More recently, however, Taner Akçam concluded that such a decision had been reached on March 3 1915 at the latest.<sup>82</sup> (Akçam, 2019, pp. 22–23) In addition to the decision to embrace hardline anti-Armenian policies being taken sometimes during these several months in the aftermath of the battle of Sarikamish and preceding the uprising at Van, discussed in the next section, more visible and unambiguous manifestations of the preparation stage can also be easily identified. Specifically, this is the February 1915 decision to disarm the Armenians within the Ottoman Army.

Since the Young Turk revolution of 1908, Armenians and other Christians of the Empire had been subject to the same conscription laws that Muslims were. As such, dozens of thousands of Armenians were conscripted into the Ottoman army when the mobilization was declared following the war's outbreak. While many young men in the western part of the empire were either able to pay the *bedel* exemption tax or enrolled as officers thanks to their education, Armenians of the poorer eastern provinces weren't able to evade conscription, and vilayets such as Van and Bitlis, with dense Armenian populations, provided soldiers in large numbers. While there is no doubt that Christian soldiers were from the outset suspected of disloyalty, and as such were disproportionately assigned to the *amele taburları* labor battalions, this was not a systematic rule,

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<sup>82</sup> Most convincingly, this is evidenced by the two letters sent by the aforementioned head of Special Organization Dr. Şakir to the Unionist plenipotentiary Cemal Bey in March and April of the same year, in which Şakir writes that: „The Committee, which cannot forget [the country's] bitter and unhappy history and whose cup runneth over with the unrelenting desire for revenge, has decided to annihilate all of Armenians living within Turkey, not to allow a single one to remain, and has given the government broad authority in this regard.“ and „... the Committee has decided to now annihilate and fundamentally extirpate the various forces with which it has contended for years, henceforth taking efforts to pursue the path, and will unfortunately be forced to take brutal measures in this regard.“ (Akçam, 2019, p. 9)

and a fair number of Armenians served in combat units and on the front lines. (Kévorkian, 2011, p. 240; Zürcher, 2002, pp. 190–191) However, as the official declarations that Armenians were not only deserting, but also joining the Russian military en masse became prevalent by this point, and with the decision being reached about the deportations, on 25 February 1915, Enver Pasha decreed that without exception, Armenian soldiers and officers who were still serving at the frontlines were to be disarmed and transferred to the labour battalions. Reflecting the prevalent paranoia at this time, on the same day, Enver also proceeded to accuse the Armenian patriarchate of transmitting military secrets and locations to the Russians. (Akçam, 2012, p. 159; Suny, 2015, p. 244; Zürcher, 2002, p. 192) While perhaps motivated by genuine fears of perceived Armenian treachery, as Kévorkian points out, it was also designed „... *in a certain sense, to substantiate the charge that the Armenians were traitors ... It also offered, perhaps, a welcome opportunity to hold the “traitors” accountable for a military disaster for which all observers agreed Enver personally was to blame.*“ (Kévorkian, 2011, p. 241)

### ***Kampuchea***

If understood as a phase of the genocide in which policies or actions that lay the immediate groundwork for the subsequent implementation of genocidal policy become apparent, then this stage of the Cambodian genocide can be most readily identified in the decision to evacuate the urban populations of Phnom Penh, as well as other cities, to the rural cooperatives following the April 1975 CPK victory. At the time, Khmer Rouge provided some tactical reasons that seemingly justified the drastic decision to send between two and three million people to the countryside. Initially, it was justified by the need to protect the citizens from the alleged threat of a renewal of the American bombing campaign, described in the previous chapter. Later, Khmer Rouge leadership argued that the evacuations were necessary also due to imminent food shortages caused by the upsurge of the urban inhabitants due to rural refugees, or the threat of infiltration and subversion by the remnants of the Lon Nol army, CIA agents, or other counter-revolutionary actors. Some authors, meanwhile, suggested that the Khmer Rouge simply lacked experience in administering cities during the war, and that in the conditions brought by the collapse of republican government and the sense of emergency they generated, the decision to evacuate the cities and towns was „probably rational“. (Jackson, 1989a, p. 9; McIntyre, 1996, pp. 731–732; Tyner, Curtis, Kimsroy, & Chhay, 2018, p. 166) On closer examination, however, it becomes apparent that the evacuation was not a snap decision made under the weight of exceptional circumstances, but rather was a pre-planned and coherent policy choice. Not only has the decision to

evacuate Phnom Penh and the remaining provincial towns hitherto under republican rule, such as Battambang, been formally made months earlier, at a February 1975 meeting of the central committee of the CPK, but the party planned the capital evacuation long before the official sanctioning.<sup>83</sup> Indeed, reinforcing the notion that individual stages of the Cambodian genocide had been tenuous and largely concurrent, evacuations of urban populations to the rural cooperatives were long-standing part of the party's practice for several years before the fall of the capital, including after they seized Kompong Cham in 1973 or Oudong a year later. (McIntyre, 1996, pp. 733–734; Tyner, Henkin, Sirik, & Kimsroy, 2014, p. 1876; Tyner, Curtis, Kimsroy, & Chhay, 2018, p. 166)

Nonetheless, while various forms of communes and cooperatives were established early in the civil war, with the first „cooperative groups“ emerging as early as 1971, it was only in the aftermath of their 1975 victory that the CPK intensified its efforts and resorted to mass-scale relocation of the urban populations to the rural cooperatives, collectives, and labor camps. Indeed, the countryside facilities had been recognized to have played a central role in establishing and maintaining the Khmer Rouge regime in the sense of providing a practical tool for close control of the population, but also in enabling the wide-ranging ideological transformation of the Cambodian society.<sup>84</sup> (Kiernan, 2005, p. 83,167; Tyner & Cromley, 2018, pp. 1–2; 5) Moreover, in addition to enabling the Khmer Rouge to efficiently implement its policies, the immediate impact of the evacuations themselves should not be overlooked either. Despite the central role that emptying the cities played in Khmer Rouge ideology, it was apparent that only a little planning went into their specific details, particularly regarding the well-being of the deportees. There was only scant coordination and the chaos, brutality, and violence that accompanied it led to a substantial, albeit not accurately known, death toll.<sup>85</sup> While officially estimated to have been between two and three thousand by Khmer Rouge, this is almost certainly an understatement, and by some estimates, tens of

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<sup>83</sup> As confirmed by one CPK deputy secretary: „If we had captured Phnom Penh in 1974 there would also have been an evacuation. This had been a long-standing plan;“ (Kiernan, 2005, p. 80)

<sup>84</sup> Recognizing the ideological, and practical, importance of the forced evacuations and the „cooperative movement“ for the regime, one CPK account noted that: „After the liberation of the entire country, the cooperative movement has been mightily and ceaselessly strenghtened and expanded ... 99.9% of the Kampuchean people have been obliged to live in the countryside so as to be able to participate in the movement to increase production to sustain themselves and contribute to defending and building the country ... our production cooperatives are also responsible for harmoniously and orderly managing the education and building of the more than two million people who have just been liberated from the rule of the contemptible traitors.“ (Revolutionary Youth, 1975, pp. 3–4)

<sup>85</sup> „People were beaten and shot; and little, if any, food, water or other accommodations were provided. Under these conditions, some evacuees either committed suicide or died from a combination of exhaustion, malnutrition and/or disease. Meanwhile, Khmer Republic officials were assembled or identified, including at checkpoints, arrested, some led away and others killed on the spot.“ (ECCC, 2014, p. 463)

thousands of deaths can be directly attributed to the evacuation of Phnom Penh alone. (ECCC, 2014, pp. 457–459; Kiernan, 2005, pp. 48–49; Tyner, Henkin, Sirik, & Kimsroy, 2014, p. 1875)

### **3.8. Persecution**

Persecution more severe than the earlier discriminatory measures, but yet short of systematic, mass-scale extermination, occurs in this stage. Principally, localized and targeted killings might take place, but other persecutory policies aiming to impede the quality of life of targeted groups may be implemented as well.

#### *Armenia*

Following some initial preparatory steps, such as the disarmament and concentration of Armenian males in the labor battalions or the reorganization and expansion of the Special Organization, as well as the decision to resort to the systematic removal of Armenians being reached at this point, the persecution stage of the Armenian genocide can be most readily identified as the period preceding the formal implementation of these decisions that involved severe and violent, but not yet comprehensive and systematic, actions taken against Armenians. Regarded by some authors as the symbolic or formal beginning of the Armenian genocide,<sup>86</sup> the deportation of Armenian intellectuals on 24 April 1915 is the perhaps most striking of these actions. Ordered by the Talât Pasha, now Minister of the Interior, earlier in the same day, it has been called a „decapitation strike“, under which prominent leaders were specifically selected for swift excision from their communities to deprive the Armenian population of leadership and a chance for organized resistance. (Adalian, 2013, p. 121; Astourian, 1990, p. 113; Bloxham, 2005, p. 70) In the first wave on the night of 24–25 April, or „Red Sunday“, 235 to 270 Armenian leaders of Constantinople, including politicians, clergymen, journalists, or teachers and physicians,<sup>87</sup> were arrested and deported to holding centers in the interior, followed by several more hundred in the subsequent waves, with some estimates bringing the number of Armenians arrested in this city alone to 2 345. With very few exceptions, most of these prisoners were tortured, and eventually murdered or otherwise perished during their subsequent relocations within the Empire. Such operations, however, were not limited only to the capital and Armenian cultural leaders had been rounded up also

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<sup>86</sup> Additionally, April 24 is observed as Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day in Armenia and the Armenian diaspora communities

<sup>87</sup> For detailed account of the first wave of the Constantinople arrests, as well as names of the deportees, see , *Armenian Golgotha: A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide, 1915–1918* (Balakian, 2009)



in other cities, towns, and villages in the subsequent days and weeks. (Balakian, 2004, pp. 211–212; Bloxham, 2011, p. 270; Latino, 2018, p. 204; Řoutil, Košťálová, & Novák, 2017, pp. 126–128; Üngör, 2016, p. 19) Ultimately, „... *thousands of Armenian cultural leaders were killed, and the core of Armenia’s intellectual life was destroyed.*“ (Balakian, 2004, p. 211) In addition to the deportations, arrests, and executions of the Armenian leadership, several other crucial decisions had been made on or around April 24, including series of cables that ordered the dissolution of Armenian political organizations, closure of Armenian newspapers, prohibition of travel for „suspicious“ Armenians, and conducting of a wide-ranging search for weapons to ensure confiscation of all weapons in the hands of non-Muslim communities, and Armenians in particular.<sup>88</sup> (Akçam, 2012, pp. 185–187; Kévorkian, 2011, p. 259; Suny, 2015, p. 273)

Concurrently to these highly visible, organized, and pre-planned measures, this stage of the Armenian genocide has also been marked by less systematic examples of violence or killings of Armenians. In addition to the localized massacres of Armenian and other non-Muslim civilian populations by the Ottoman troops that plagued the Caucasian front since the beginning of the war, most relevant to this stage of genocide, and indeed more unambiguously reflective of genocidal intent, had been the disposal of Armenian soldiers that were disarmed and relegated to the labor battalions earlier in the year, which preceded the systematic deportations.<sup>89</sup> Described by one historian as „sitting ducks“, the Armenians serving in the units were already separated, disarmed, and marked as unreliable and seen as traitors and enemy agents, a perception which was further heightened with the fears of them deserting and joining the advancing Russians.<sup>90</sup> Kept under armed guard, and subject to extreme weather conditions, backbreaking work, undernourishment, and general mistreatment at the hands of their guards, with the escalation of anti-Armenian attitudes throughout the spring of 1915, and

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<sup>88</sup> The clear goal of disarming exclusively the non-Muslim, and implicitly specifically Armenian, communities had been made also in official communication between the War and Interior ministries in early July 1915: „*The order concerning the collection of ammunition and explosive material is only to be implemented in regard to the non-Muslim communities and those members of the Muslim population who are are considered extraordinarily malicious or seditious; as it seems appropriate to leave other weapons in the hands of the remaining Muslims against a document signed by them, and a writt en communication has been sent to the army units in this regard.*“ (Ottoman War Ministry in Akçam, 2012, p. 188)

<sup>89</sup> However, despite clearly being organized to some degree, it also seems likely that these killings were, at least initially, not a result of a single comprehensive policy. Caucasus front commander Vehip Pasha, for example was „outraged“ when he found out that 2,000 Armenians labourers under his command were massacred and instigated court martial proceedings against those responsible. (Zürcher, 2002, p. 193)

<sup>90</sup> Such perceptions were stoked also by the false or exaggerated claims by Ottoman leadership, and one communiqué sent by Enver Pasha on 20 April 1915 warned that increasingly numerous bands of Armenian and Greek deserters, primarily drawn from labor battallions, are roaming across Anatolia and posing a threat to Ottoman forces and villagers. (Akçam, 2012, pp. 164–166)

especially since the deportations of the general population started, men of these battalions were the first victims of organized killings. The timing and methods of such killings seem to have different from place to place, and had been the work of both regular troops and gendarmes, who are described as taking groups of fifty to a hundred Armenians to secluded spots where they were then bayoneted or shot, as well as the Kurdish tribes who preferred laying in wait and then ambushing the troops on the road. Ultimately, tens of thousands of Armenian, as well as Greek, fighting-age males had been disposed in this manner between 1915 and 1916. (Akin, 2011, p. 52; Balakian, 2004, pp. 184–185; Hassiotis, 1992, pp. 136–137; Suny, 2015, pp. 248–249; Zürcher, 2002, p. 193)

Moreover, in addition to the targeted persecution of Armenian leadership, and killings of Armenian soldiers, the mass-scale and largely indiscriminate killing of civilian populations can also be identified even in the period preceding the onset of systematic deportations and mass-murder, particularly in the context of so-called „defense of Van“ between late April and early May of 1915. Under the reign of the Van Vilayet governor Djevdet Bey, the Armenians of the region had been subject to intense persecution, including localized killings of male Armenians justified by their alleged possession of illegal weapons, rapes, and numerous lesser humiliations. Indeed, according to some, Djevdet deliberately instigated the revolts by enforcing intolerable living conditions to provoke an Armenian reaction. Whatever the underlying cause, Armenians of Van city rose in open revolt on April 20 following the killing of two Armenian men by Ottoman patrol, and the heavily outnumbered Armenian garrison successfully defended the besieged city against Djevdet’s forces until a Russian relief force pressured the Ottoman forces to retreat on May 16. (Butt, 2017, p. 156; Erickson, 2001, p. 99) However, rather than the siege itself, more important in the context of this chapter are the actions of Ottoman forces in the surrounding areas. Reportedly, sometime during the siege, the Governor issued a general order calling for exterminatory measures against Armenians and any Muslims who helped them: „*The Armenians must be exterminated. If any Moslem protects a Christian, first, his house shall be burned, then the Christian killed before his eyes, and then his [the Muslim’s] family and himself.*“ (Shirinian, 2015, p. 211) In the aftermath of this order which resulted in an indiscriminate punitive campaign during which Armenians had been murdered and their villages systematically plundered and burned down, by the time Russians arrived and seized control of a larger part of the vilayet, 55 thousand Armenian civilians, or roughly half of the vilayet’s Armenian population, had been murdered. (Balakian, 2004, p. 207; Kévorkian, 2011, p. 333) Nonetheless, despite the extensive loss of life that the killings such as those in the Van Vilayet brought, up until late May 1915 it is not yet possible

to speak of a single systematic crystallized policy of empire-wide killing and death-by-attrition, as the anti-Armenian operations, albeit increasingly radical and destructive, largely continued to be carried out reactively, and in the eyes of the CUP, pre-emptively and pro-actively, rather than as a part of some larger exterminatory strategy. (Bloxham, 2003, p. 143)

### *Kampuchea*

Once again reflecting the fact that when compared to the Armenian genocide, the number and diversity of victimized groups under Khmer Rouge had been larger,<sup>91</sup> the signs of the Persecution stage of Cambodian genocide are rather diverse as well, and differ among the groups as well as in their spatiotemporal setting. Nonetheless, some examples of the various forms of severe or violent persecution short or organized extermination can be identified, particularly concerning those groups which ended up becoming primary victims of the regime also in the extermination stage, i.e. the Cham Muslims, ethnic Vietnamese, and the plethora of other groups included under the new people label. In general, it can be said that this stage covers principally the period between the seizure of Phnom Penh and the escalation of violence between 1976 and 1977, mostly in relation to the treatment of the „new people“ in general. In their case, such persecution manifested primarily through increasingly harsh treatment and worsening living conditions that they had been exposed to. Specifically, even before a famine and rice shortages – largely attributable to the Khmer Rouge policies – impacted Cambodia from 1976 onward, unlike the upper classes the new people had been subject to strict food rationing, which while varied across the different zones, was almost ubiquitously insufficient.<sup>92</sup> Additionally to their undernourishment, within the collectives and labour camps they had been deported to, the lower classes were treated with contempt and given the most demanding tasks. In addition to planting and harvesting rice, this included also labouring under grueling, harsh, and outright dangerous conditions, building poorly engineered canals, dams, and other irrigation infrastructure. As this workforce was progressively weakened and reduced through attrition and killings, the workload increased as demands for rice produced or the amount of soil dug up for the canals grew. (Bultmann, 2012, p. 43; Hiebert, 2017, p. 73; Himel, 2007, pp. 6,9; Marchak, 2003, p. 233)

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<sup>91</sup> This is of course not to say that only the Armenians had been targeted and subject to killings and removal under the Ottoman Empire, and Greeks and Assyrians have been victims of extermination as well. (e.g. Řoutil, Košťálová, & Novák, 2017 or Shirinian, 2017)

<sup>92</sup> As the issues of food rationing and general Khmer Rouge agricultural policies, especially in connection to the 1976-1977 food shortages, are also intrinsically linked to the Extermination stage of the genocide, they are described in more detail in the following section.

Moreover, as mentioned in the previous section of this chapter, „new people“ had been targeted for killings from the immediate onset of Khmer Rouge victory, as thousands of army officers, bureaucrats or landowners, and other members of the group perished in semi-random killings before or during the urban evacuations. The pattern of ostensibly punitive violence, albeit with varying intensity and temporal variation, continued even in the countryside. (Clayton, 1998, p. 2; Hiebert, 2017, pp. 70,76; Marchak, 2003, p. 233) This had been true particularly on the collective farms, where supervision was performed by very young peasant boys, whose indoctrination had been described in the polarization stage, who usually held „... *an absolute power which could lead to random executions for the merest show of insubordination.*“ (Kiljunen quoted in Marchak, 2003, p. 233) In brief, and rather tellingly, the nature of persecution that „new people“, and deportees, in particular, faced in the period preceding their direct or indirect disposal had been summed by Stephen Heder: „[They] *were last on distribution lists, first on execution lists, and had no political rights.*“ (Heder quoted in Kiernan, 1988, p. 32)

However, as explained earlier, in addition to suffering the general oppression associated with their classification, certain groups had also been targeted more thoroughly and specifically. The Buddhist monks, for example, in addition to the persecution suffered due to their social class, had also suffered the indignation and humiliation of being forcibly defrocked and ejected from their monastic orders, before their ultimate execution. (Harris, 2013, pp. 80–88) Most notoriously, however, the persecution applied to ethnic minorities such as Cham Muslims or the ethnic Vietnamese. Focusing first on the Cham Muslims, it seems likely that decision to begin targeting them specifically, impose upon them conditions harmful to their survival, and „break up“ this group was made in early 1974. However, despite some localized rebellions and reprisals, up until 1975 the Chams were not only not systematically persecuted by the CPK, but many of them actually played an active part in the Khmer Rouge movement, and it was not until 1975 that the actual elimination of Cham life began in earnest.<sup>93</sup> (Kiernan, 1988, pp. 9–11; Kissi, 2003, p. 314) Following the subsequent shift of focus from the external to internal enemies, the Cham began to be persecuted more extensively, and indeed, ultimately „[Khmer Rouge’s] *fiercest extermination campaign was*

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<sup>93</sup> The nature of relative general cohabitation is best summarised by one Cham survivor: „*From 1970 to 1975 life was normal. There was no persecution yet. People believed in the Khmer Rouge then. U.S. bombs fell on my village in 1971, burning it to the ground and killing several people. Some of the Cham villagers joined the Khmer Rouge as soldiers.... In 1974 suffering was imposed in some places, like Trea Village. But it was not yet severe, only when Buddhism and Islam were abolished at the end of 1975.*“ (Toun Ibrahim quoted in Kiernan, 1988, pp. 10–11)

*directed at the ethnic Cham Muslim minority.*“ (Kiernan, 2003a, p. 30) Some notable, albeit rather general, similarities can be observed between the persecution stages of the Armenian genocide and in relation to the Cham Muslims. Seemingly, by some accounts, the Cham Muslims soldiers serving in the Khmer Rouge units had been disarmed and dismissed, much like the Armenian troops in the Ottoman military were. Echoing the decapitation strikes against Armenian leadership that preceded the genocide, in Cham communities as well community leaders had been targeted first, and subjected to blanket arrests or executions, as had been the case with the Krauchhmar village in mid-June 1975 where thirteen Islamic dignitaries were executed, allegedly for „leading prayers instead of attending a CPK meeting“. Finally, in some ways resembling the events that transpired during and after the Siege of Van in 1915, any acts of rebellion or refusal to adhere to Khmer Rouge policies were met by disproportionate and brutal reprisal.<sup>94</sup> (Hinton, 2005, pp. 206–207; Kiernan, 2005, pp. 263–264; Kissi, 2003, p. 314) Additionally, Chams were becoming increasingly and disproportionately affected by those Khmer Rouge policies enforcing homogeneity and uniformity. Most notoriously, this includes the rules mandating forced communal eating, where *haram* foods such as pork would be served, and as such represented significant religious persecution for Chams. While previously, such restrictions were enforced only loosely and with limited consequences, by 1975 and 1976, Chams had been forced to comply, often under threat of being killed for any infractions of such regulations. (Kiernan, 1988, pp. 19,25; Scupin, 1995, pp. 321–322)

Perhaps even more so than Chams, the Vietnamese had also been singled out for persecution more intense than that of the other „new people“. Most obviously, this had been the forced expulsion of most members of the Vietnamese minority in the country. On May 20, 1975, Khmer Rouge leaders convened a special meeting, attended by hundreds of regional and local officials in Phnom Penh to discuss a policy to expel all ethnic Vietnamese. The decision to move forward with this policy was likely the result of enduring desire to rid the country of the „politically poisonous“ Vietnamese minority believed to be loyal to the foreign power, the assumption that Vietnam would be focused on consolidating their power in the South, and perhaps even in preparation for the initiation of border conflicts with Vietnam. As a result, the party labeled all Vietnamese as „foreign nationals“, ignoring that most of them were Cambodia-born, and often had supported the CPK. Between June and September 1975,

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<sup>94</sup> At one island in the Mekong River, the villagers staged a protest demonstration only to be fired at by Khmer Rouge troops: „*The Chams then took up swords and knives and slaughtered half a dozen troops. The retaliating armed forces massacred many and pillaged their homes. They evacuated the island, and razed the village, and then turned to a neighboring village, massacring 70 percent of its inhabitants.*“ (Kiernan, 2004a, p. 246)

an estimated 150,000 ethnic Vietnamese, nearly the entire Cambodian population, had been expelled to a newly reunified Vietnam. (Berman, 1996, pp. 833–834; Kissi, 2006, p. 128; Thun & Keo, 2021, p. 8) While the obvious parallels between the situation of Armenians and Vietnamese are apparent, and indeed the expulsion had been accompanied by some amount of killing, it is more fitting to label the 1975 expulsion of Vietnamese as belonging to the „Persecution“ stage rather than „Extermination“, as it has not yet manifested the sort of exterminatory and systematic destruction that the Armenian deportations represented, but rather was closer to the phenomena of non-exterminatory „ethnic cleansing“.

### 3.9. Extermination

In this stage, the „intent to destroy“ is fully manifested, as victimized groups are systematically exterminated in an organized manner by both direct and indirect, as well as murderous and nonlethal, means. These can include massacres and executions, murder by attrition, as well as a number of forms of cultural genocide.

#### *Armenia*

The siege of Van, and the aftermath of the Ottoman defeat there, have certainly played an important role in contributing to the transition of the genocide into the extermination phase, but it is also reflective of the broader considerations and attitude of the CUP at this stage.<sup>95</sup> Indeed, while it seems likely that the actual decision for the ultimate annihilation of the Armenians came about even before the Van episode concluded, for the CUP it was nonetheless the final affront that led to a transformation of this decision into systematic action, and certainly was served as the main reason used by the government, and later by the denialist historians, to justify the exterminatory actions. (Akçam, 2006a, p. 200; Bloxham, 2003, pp. 188–189) On May 26, 1915, only three days after Russian troops entered Van, Enver sent a note to Talât explaining that it had been verbally decided to send the Armenians of the east to remote places in the south, and ensure that they make up not more than one-tenth of the local population. Talât followed up with a series of notes, expressing the belief that the deportations could eliminate the Armenian problem „in a manner that is

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<sup>95</sup> This is best summarised by Bloxham: „Once the strategic city of Van had been 'liberated', the distinction between innocent and 'guilty' Armenians was rendered meaningless both ideologically and practically in CUP eyes ... the feared prospect of Armenians joining with Entente forces, could be forestalled if the Armenian population was once and for all physically removed. ... For the CUP the Van rising was a realization of a prophecy of Armenian treachery, but because of the repressive and often murderous nature of CUP policy up to that time, the prophecy became self-fulfilling.“ (Bloxham, 2003, pp. 188–189)

comprehensive and absolute“ and calling the measure to relocate Armenians southward to Mosul and Deir ez-Zor „necessary for the foundational interests of the State.“ (Akçam, 2012, p. 132; Butler, 2011, p. 153; Suny, 2015, p. 284) On the same day, Talât also proposed the „Temporary Law of Deportation“, or so-called *Tehcir* Law, promulgated the next day, which provided legal backing for the systematic deportation of Armenians, giving the army extraordinary powers to use force and to transfer and settle individuals or entire villages and towns into another location whenever they suspected anyone of treason or espionage.<sup>96</sup> On June 21, Talât commanded the deportation of „all Armenians without exception“ from the eastern vilayets. Over the subsequent weeks and months, the scope of deportations continued to be gradually expanded within Anatolia, and by the autumn it reached Thrace. (Akçam, 2006a, p. 200; Akçam, 2012, p. 134; Bloxham, 2003, p. 182; Dündar, 2011, p. 283; Řoutil, Košťálová, & Novák, 2017, pp. 131–132; Suny, 2015, p. 284)

Per Řoutil, Košťálová, & Novák, the actual elimination of Armenians that followed, i.e. the extermination stage of this genocide, can be divided into two distinct phases. In the first phase, lasting until December 1915, most of the Armenian males had been murdered, while the rest of the population had been deported from their homelands. In the second phase that concluded in December 1916, the concentration camps were created in the deportation destinations and the surviving deportees were systematically liquidated. (Řoutil, Košťálová, & Novák, 2017, pp. 118) Regarding the former phase, the killings of males transpired in two general ways, both of which were already hinted at in the previous chapter. Firstly, the bulk of fighting-age Armenian men wound up in the Labour Battalions, where tens of thousands of Armenian soldiers and conscripts had been gradually massacred. Secondly, men were also a majority of those arrested and later killed, under real or false accusations of treachery, subversion, or of illegally holding weapons or explosives. The executed men, such as those killed during Siege of Van, and other such massacres, were often neither in a position of leadership nor politically active, but were rather removed to render the Armenian communities defenseless in the face of impending deportations. In those cases where men lived long enough to be deported, they were often separated from the women and the children within the first hours or days of the marches and summarily executed in plain sight of their families. (Kévorkian, 2011, p. 480; Řoutil, Košťálová, & Novák, 2017, pp. 132–135) As one female survivor from Diyarberkir recalls: „*The deporter gendarmes separated the men from*

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<sup>96</sup> While Armenians were not explicitly mentioned in the document, there is little doubt as to against whom it was targeted. Moreover, it had apparently been provisionally titled „*Regulation for the settlement of Armenians relocated to other places because of war conditions and emergency political requirements*“ (Butler, 2011, p. 153)

*the women and binding them to each other, they carried all of us to an unknown direction. After three days journey, they killed one by one the man deportees of whom only a few were saved.*“ (Chilinguirian quoted in Balakian, 2004, p. 229)

As for the deportations themselves, they differed significantly in their course, methods, and in the willingness of local authorities to carry out the genocidal policies.<sup>97</sup> Nonetheless, the general pattern more or less persisted throughout the Empire, and several recurrent steps had been identified. The Armenians were forced out of their homes, after which the adult and teenage males were separated from the deportation caravans, only to be almost immediately killed. Survivors were then robbed and marched for weeks towards Aleppo, the dispatching center to the desolate Syrian and Mesopotamian deserts, which were to be their final destinations. Along the road, the women, children, and elderly were being beaten by the gendarmes, who were ostensibly responsible for their protection, and attacked and massacred not only by the Special Organization, but sometimes also by Muslim locals, and by bands of marauding Kurds, who were allowed to plunder, kidnap, and murder the vulnerable deportees. (Astourian, 1990, p. 5; Řoutil, Košťálová, & Novák, 2017, pp. 132–135; Shirinian, 2017, p. 13) It was during these death marches where much of the sexual violence, examined earlier in this chapter took place: „*Sexual violence was quite simply the norm on the death marches.*“ (Bjørnlund, 2016, p. 18) The columns were wholly decimated as many Armenians perished due to attrition and the gruesome mistreatment they received, as some were forced to walk as far as 1,000 kilometers through mountainous terrain in the summer heat, without access to food or water.<sup>98</sup> Those who could not keep up were killed on the spot, and many more were systematically murdered by the units of the Special Organization. By some accounts, only ten to twenty percent of the Armenians deported in the initial phase reached their destination, and in some cases, they were eliminated almost entirely. Most telling is the example of Erzurum,<sup>99</sup> where 40 thousand Armenians had been deported to Deir ez-Zor, but probably less than 200 reached their destination. (Bloxham, 2003, p. 181; Kévorkian, 2011, p. 808; Kévorkian, 2014, pp. 92–93; Shirinian, 2017, p. 13; Üngör, 2012, p. 53)

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<sup>97</sup> For comprehensive and detailed geographical accounts of the deportations see Řoutil, Košťálová, & Novák, 2017 or Kévorkian, 2011

<sup>98</sup> For detailed discussion of forced starvation as a tool of Armenian genocide, see *Starvation and Its Political Use in the Armenian Genocide* (Shirinian, 2017)

<sup>99</sup> „*In the orgies of murder, rape, mutilation, kidnap and theft that accompanied the Erzurum deportations from the beginning of June, the desire of the radicals for massacre was also fulfilled as irregulars and Kurdish and other Muslim tribesmen, alongside some units of the army, descended on the deportees at strategic points.*“ (Bloxham, 2003, pp. 180–181)



The second phase of the extermination stage of the genocide began with the arrival of the deportees to the desert. While initially, the first arrivals in mid-1915 had been accommodated in Aleppo and the surrounding camps, from mid-November the convoys were instead redirected towards Mosul and into the dozens of concentration camps hastily set up in Syria and Upper Mesopotamia, most infamously those at Deir ez-Zor and Ras al-Ayn.<sup>100</sup> Following the perilous and deadly journey, the Armenians were deliberately physically weakened not only by lack of shelter, exposure to elements, violence, and being given starvation rations, if any, but also by repeated transfers between various camps, a strategy meant to also assist spreading of diseases. (Kévorkian, 2011, p. 625.; Kévorkian, 2014, p. 97; Mouradian, 2018, p. 150; Shirinian, 2017, p. 21; Walker, 1990, p. 226) The conditions in the camps had been reflected in testimony by one representative of an American company in Aleppo: *„One cannot really talk of ‘camps’. The greater part of this miserable people, brutally expelled from their home and land, ... are living in the open air, herded together like cattle, without any protection against heat or cold, almost without clothes, and given very irregular and entirely inadequate food ... weakened by utmost deprivation and endless marches, treated appallingly and exposed to cruel torture and permanent fear of death.“* (Bernau quoted in Walker, 1990, p. 227)

It had been estimated that throughout autumn and winter 1915-1916, more than 300,000 thousand deportees perished on the routes of Syria and Mesopotamia or in the concentration camps. However, despite the appalling conditions and killings they faced, by early 1916, nearly 500,000 deportees were still alive, scattered across the various camps in the region.<sup>101</sup> The number of surviving Armenians, and the degree to which they managed to adapt to their new environment, had not been expected by the genocidaires. As such, and probably also partly due to Talât Pasha’s fears post-war return of the deportees, a decision was made in February 1916 to begin active extermination of the survivors, replacing the previous strategy of extermination by attrition. Subsequently, the majority of the surviving Armenians had been finally massacred, burned alive, or drowned in two waves of the liquidations, first in Ras al-Ayn in March, and then in Deir ez-Zor in August. It is estimated that by the end of 1916, only about 15,000 Armenians had been alive in Deir ez-Zor and the surrounding areas, out of the 300,000 that arrived there over the preceding months. (Kévorkian, 2011, pp. 808; Kévorkian, 2014, p. 107; Kieser, 2018, pp. 261–262,265;

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<sup>100</sup> While often referred to as „camps“ these holding tracts had only very little actual infrastructure, and were instead only hastily set-up and primitive open-air concentration areas. (Walker, 1990, p. 205)

<sup>101</sup> Many Armenian lives were, atleast temporarily, saved also thanks to the efforts of loosely organized Aleppo based Armenian-led resistance network. (Mouradian, 2018, p. 154; Kieser, 2018, p. 264)

Mouradian, 2018, p. 155; Řoutil, Košťálová, & Novák, 2017, pp. 222–224) While it's impossible to precisely determine the number of Armenians that had been ultimately murdered, most contemporaries and later historians estimated that out of the pre-war Armenian population of 1,5 to 2,2 million, roughly 1 million Armenians died in the genocide, although the estimates generally range from the 800,000 to 1,5 million.<sup>102</sup> (Astourian, 1990, p. 114; Balakian, 2004, p. 179; Bloxham 2003, p. 141; Morris & Ze'evi, 2019, p. 1; Řoutil, Košťálová, & Novák, 2017, p. 341; Suny, 2015, p. 330;) However, the Armenian genocide must not be understood only in terms of the immediate death toll. Instead, at least briefly, the cultural aspect of the erasure of Armenian identity ought to be examined as well.

Indeed, what is today termed „Cultural genocide“ had played an important role within the broader context of the physical extermination of Armenian nation. While much could, and has been, written about the destruction of physical Armenian cultural heritage such as churches,<sup>103</sup> the term is most closely associated with the phenomena of „hidden“, „lost“ or „crypto“ Armenians, called today rather euphemistically *kılıç artığı*, or „leftovers in the sword“ in Turkey. Broadly understood, those are the Ottoman Armenians and their descendants, who were forcibly Islamized and/or Turkified during the genocide. This happened in several ways, such as through „voluntary“ mass conversions in those places where they formed less than 5 to 10 percent of the population, as there conversion to Islam in order to evade deportation was permitted. Elsewhere, forced conversions and abductions took place, especially during the deportations, as the deportee convoys were visited by gendarmes or raided by Kurds and Circassians, and „prettiest girls“ were abducted and selected women and girls were routinely converted, taken into harems, and married off to Muslim husbands. (Akçam, 2012, pp. 290–291; Balakian, 2013, p. 71; Kurt, 2016; Sarafian, 2010, pp. 211–212) Moreover, the Armenian cultural identity had also been erased by the widespread transfer and assimilation of children. In some cases, boys had been disseminated by the gendarmes to the local Muslim families, while elsewhere children were sold by their parents out of desperation. The effort to assimilate the Armenian women and children was however not haphazard, and in cases where they were not killed outright, the Ottoman authorities whole-heartedly supported it, e.g. by organizing orphanages in various regions for the purpose of assimilating Armenian

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<sup>102</sup> Figures in this general range had been cited also by some Ottoman officials, as for example Talât Pasha himself estimated that over one million Ottoman Armenians „disappeared“ between 1914 and 1917, while the postwar Grand Vizier Damat Ferid Pasha publicly cited the number of Armenian citizens that died as result of Ottoman state policy to be 800,000, a figure later repeated by the founder of modern Turkish republic Mustafa Kemal. (Bijak & Lubman, 106, p. 30; Dadrian & Akçam, 2011, pp. 47,104)

<sup>103</sup> i.e. *The Destruction of the Armenian Church during the Genocide* (Payaslian, 2006)

children. (Balakian, 2013, p. 71; Watenpaugh, 2013, pp. 291–294) In the end, it is estimated that via various means „... *between 5 and 10 percent of Ottoman Armenians were converted and absorbed into Muslim households during the genocide—somewhere between 100,000 and 200,000 people.*“ (Balakian, 2013, p. 71)<sup>104</sup>

### ***Kampuchea***

Similarly to the Armenian genocide, the extermination stage Cambodian genocide also consisted of both the direct mass-scale killings, as well as „genocide by attrition“. While, the precise timing or nature of extermination varied across the regions and differed between the various targeted groups, in general, it can be said that in both of its forms the genocide entered this phase in the aftermath of the drastic worsening of the food situation across Cambodia in late 1976 and 1977, directly caused by the regime’s policies: „*responsibility for basic famine causation can be laid squarely at the doorstep of the Khmer Rouge regime ... policies enacted by an small group of prominent leaders in Phnom Penh triggered, maintained and deepened famine conditions throughout the country for the duration of the Khmer Rouge period.*“ (Defalco, 2014, p. 82) These included, for example, the imposition of communal eating and the banning of private subsistence gardens or private cooking. Principal in this regard, however, had been the August 1976 „Four Year Plan“ of economic restructuring, and particularly the „three tons per hectare“ goal for rice production. The plan, an „ideologically driven exercise in utopian agrarian socialism“ and „slapdash, naive and uniformed technical document“, would prove to have fatal consequences. The export of rice was to become virtually the sole source of national revenue, placing an enormous strain on the production of the country's main food staple. The necessary goal of rice produced, i.e. the three tons per hectare, called for a massive increase in rice production in a country where even before the destruction of civil war average yield per hectare was roughly one ton. Despite the manifest impossibility of this goal, CPK did not intend to rely on any modern farm technology or agricultural infrastructure investments. Instead, it apparently believed this target could be attained through „revolutionary willpower“ and ordered military-style agricultural „offensives“ throughout the country, which involved a nationwide system of forced labour. (Defalco, 2014, pp. 53,55–56; Hiebert, 2017, p. 72; Mehmet, 1997, p. 679)

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<sup>104</sup> Reflecting the success of this cultural destruction, many of those „hidden Armenians“ had never recovered their previous identities and remained in Turkey. While difficult to estimate due to the costs of revealing Armenian ancestry in public continuing to remain potentially high, as of 2013, up to 2 million contemporary Turks may have had at least one Armenian grandparent, while by other estimates up to 5 million have some Armenian ancestry. (Danielyan, 2011; Watenpaugh, 2013, p. 291)

Such policies inevitably failed to produce the desired results. Indeed, it seems that as a result of heavy-handed collectivization, undernourishment, and lack of farming training for those new people assigned to grow the rice, or the general poor growing conditions, the rice production had actually effectively decreased. As a result, cooperatives found it impossible to meet their production goals. For many local chiefs, however, not fulfilling their quotas was not an option for fear of repercussions. As such, inflated yields were reported. Cooperatives were then taxed based upon these falsified yields, making up the missing rice levies by reducing the rice rations. (Bashi, 2008, pp. 15–16; Hiebert, 2017, pp. 72–73; Mehmet, 1997, p. 679) Moreover, despite the worsening starvation, the standing policy of relying on rice export for income remained, and ships loaded with rice departed for China nearly every day. In 1976 alone, 150,000 tons of rice had been exported to China. Furthermore, much of the rice grown in the countryside was brought to Phnom Penh in order to feed the government workers, military, and other party cadres. (Bashi, 2008, p. 16; Kiernan, 2005, p. 219; Tyner, Henkin & Sirik, 2014, p. 1882) Crucial for the understanding of the exterminatory nature of the Four-Year plan is the impact it had on the new people. While previously, in some zones, the deportees were allowed to barter for better food and received adequate rations, by 1976 it became clear that the new people and ethnic minorities were subject to a deliberate escalation of food deprivation via substandard food rations as part of a larger project of genocidal destruction. Moreover, with the cooperative chiefs prioritizing meeting their quotas over feeding the people, the average ration was far less than even the insufficient rations proposed in the official documents. For example, in one cooperative in the Southwest, rations were reduced to rice gruel, and from 1976 onwards two to three hundred people died every year, largely due to exhaustion from the hard work and insufficient rations. (Hiebert, 2017, pp. 72–73; Kiernan, 2005, p. 177; Tyner & Rice, 2015, p. 7)

Conclusively affirming the exterminatory intent that ultimately underpinned these policies is also the reaction of Khmer Rouge to their consequences, and the decision to continue with their implementation even after their failure. Indeed, some authors assert that rather than unrealistic experiments based upon false assumptions, these policies must be understood as „ *rational administrative decisions calculated and executed with full knowledge of the consequences.*“ (Tyner & Rice, 2015, p. 8) The Party leadership became aware that the Four-Year Plan was causing mass starvation as early as 1976. Despite this, the government continued to expropriate and export mass quantities of rice even with a clear knowledge that this rice was coming at the expense of civilians. In short, it appears that at the very least, once learning about the mass-starvation of civilians under their authority, the Khmer Rouge leaders

chose to prioritize the revolutionary goals over the survival of the civilian population. (Bashi, 2008, pp. 35–36; DeFalco, 2011, pp. 151–152; DeFalco, 2014, p. 84; Tyner & Rice, 2015, pp. 8–9) In addition to the deaths through „genocide by attrition“, i.e. starvation, disease, or exhaustion, the famine of 1976 onward is also closely connected also to the other form of extermination during the Cambodian genocide, that is direct executions or massacres.

Rather than recognizing the shortcomings of the Four-Year Plan and the underpinning ideological motivations, the CPK instead chose to blame its failures on the „shortcomings“ in its implementation. In practice, this meant that internal enemies must have been at fault, including not only those already defined as „outside of the revolution“, but also many newfound enemies within the party.<sup>105</sup> Local officials who dared to admit that starvation was occurring in their areas had been purged, while "traitorous and inept" low-level cadres were being blamed for undermining the food production system. For example, in October 1977, the CPK Propaganda magazine *Tung Padevat* blamed “bad class elements” for administering cooperatives "without rice to eat" while Radio Phnom Penh announced that the „purification“ of armed forces, the Party as well as „the masses of the People“ is necessary. As a result, throughout 1977 a massive wave of purges, along with an intensification of the attack on the „new people“, occurred. The number of victims in the country increased dramatically, and cadres at all levels were being arrested and executed, starting with the Northern Zone and by mid-1977 spreading further, with some areas being purged twice. (Chandler, 1999, p. 69; Hiebert, 2017, p. 83; Kiernan, 1986, pp. 10,17; O’Kane, 1993, p. 736; Tyner & Rice, 2015, p. 8) It was this wave of purges that the infamous killing fields, in which tens of thousands perished and were buried, are most closely associated with. Perhaps best illustrating the sheer scale, intensity, and lethality of this wave of executions is the S-21 facility, mentioned earlier. Initially, the prisoners executed there were buried en masse in the surrounding vicinity. However, as the 1977 purges ramped up, and the S-21 transformed from an institution responsible for documenting real or alleged crimes into a site of indiscriminate mass murder targeting the *khmaingbonkopsirongphtaiknong*, or the „hidden enemies burrowing from within“, the makeshift killing fields within Phnom Penh quickly became overcrowded, and new sites had to be selected for mass executions and burial. In 1975, less than 200 people were held by Santebal. But in 1977, when many government officers and all geographic zones were purged, at least 6,300 people entered the prison. By 1978 about 92% of prisoners had been executed within two months of their detainment, compared to roughly half in 1976.

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<sup>105</sup> As summarised rather fittingly by Chandler: „*The purges constituted a classic case of scapegoating by the Party Center, whose programs could fail only if they had been betrayed.*“ (Chandler, 1999, p. 65)

Ultimately, out of 20,000 people interned at the facility, only 179 are believed to have survived. (Chandler, 1999, p. 36; Keo & Yin, 2011, pp. 4–5; Tyner, Kimsroy, Fu, Wang & Ye, 2016, pp. 272,276–277)

Finally, in addition to genocide by attrition and systematic executions in the security centers, organized mass-scale massacres had also formed part of the modus operandi of the final year of the regime. Most infamously, this included the so-called Eastern Zone massacres. These stemmed from the CPK-initiated escalation of the border conflicts with neighboring Vietnam into „an endless border war“ in spring of 1977, which was likely motivated by both the triumphalism that prevailed among the Khmer Rouge leadership in the aftermath of the seemingly successful purges, as well as the growing paranoia in the aftermath of recently-concluded Vietnam war.<sup>106</sup> (Kiernan, 2021, p. 6; Leighton, 1978, p. 450; Morris, 1999, p. 98) The massacres themselves were a result of the ongoing hostilities with Vietnam, which stoked the pre-existing suspicion of the Vietnam-trained Eastern Zone cadres, the aforementioned perception of the Zone’s civilians more broadly as „Khmer bodies with Vietnamese minds“, and finally the apparent refusal of the Eastern Zone party Secretary So Phim to carry out the purges that were ongoing elsewhere. (Kiernan, 2005, pp. 278–279; O’Kane, 1993, p. 736;) In May 1978, the people of the Zone, „infested by pro-Vietnamese virus“, had been subject to an onslaught by the Southwestern troops. Unable to withstand the attack, So Phim committed suicide, while many of the Eastern Zone cadres escaped to Vietnam, where they began assembling a Vietnamese-backed „liberation army“ which would ultimately topple the Khmer Rouge government. What followed the attack was a „massive and indiscriminate purge of party, army and people alike“ and „by far the most violent event of the entire DK period.“ Thousands of cadres and civilians were massacred outright while others, as discussed in relation to the blue scarves used to distinguish them, were forcibly removed to other zones for interrogation, torture, and ultimately execution. Ultimately, by conservative estimates over 100,000 easterners were killed in 1978, although the real figure was probably closer to 250,000 dead in the last six months of 1978 alone. (Hinton 1996, pp. 824–826; Kiernan, 2005, pp. 400,404–405; Morris, 1999, p. 107; O’Kane, 1993, p. 736)

Directly connected to the Eastern Zone Massacres had also been the country-wide extermination of the few thousand Vietnamese, their spouses, mixed-race children, and ethnic Khmer born in Vietnam that still remained in Cambodia, as well as those Khmer who spoke Vietnamese or had Vietnamese friends. Under the pretense of state security, those with

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<sup>106</sup> Such fears were reiterated by Khieu Samphan in 1978: „*The number one enemy is not U.S. imperialism, but Vietnam, ready to swallow up Cambodia.*“ (Samphan quoted in Pouvatchy, 1986, p. 447)

Vietnamese ethnicity are reported to have been killed on the spot, and by December 1977, the killing of ethnic Vietnamese was tasked to regional authorities. In reports submitted to senior CPK leaders, these local officials reported their successes using terms such as „sweeping cleanly away“ the Vietnamese enemies, and the orders to track down, search and eliminate the „yuon“ continued to be issued up until the last days of the Khmer Rouge government. Ultimately, around twenty thousand Vietnamese, or „around ninety-nine percent“<sup>107</sup> of those remaining in the country, were killed in this concerted exterminatory effort between 1977 and 1978. (Berman, 1996, p. 834; Kiernan, 2005, pp. 424–425; Kiernan, 2021, p. 2; Thun & Keo, 2021, pp. 10–11) Crucially, as reflected in the urgings of Radio Phnom Penh calling Cambodians to „exterminate the 50 million Vietnamese“,<sup>107</sup> this campaign was not restricted to the Cambodian borders and Khmer Rouge conducted many cross-border raids into Vietnam during which they murdered as many as 30,000 Vietnamese civilians. Ultimately, one such massacre at Ba Chú in April 1978, in which several thousand civilians perished, led the Vietnamese government to initiate a full-scale invasion and overthrow the Khmer Rouge regime by late 1978. (Kiernan, 2021, pp. 6–7; Lincoln & Lincoln, 2015, pp. 202–203; Rummel, 2011, p. 191) Escalation of persecution into systematic extermination was, however, not limited to the Vietnamese and applied to all of the ethnic minorities targeted by the regime as well.

As declared by Khmer Rouge: „*There are to be no Chams or Chinese or Vietnamese. Everybody is to join the same, single, Khmer nationality. . . . [There is] only one religion—Khmer religion.*“ (Kiernan, 2005, p. 269) In addition to the invigorated measures related to the suppression of „non-Khmerness“ discussed in the previous section, from mid-1978 the campaign of racial extermination applied also to Chams. This had been reflected in one „Document No. 163“, allegedly produced by the Khmer Rouge leadership sometime in 1978, which according to testimonies claimed that: „*we will not spare the Chams, because if spared they will resist ..... So we undertake a policy of discarding them now. They were hand in hand with the Vietnamese, so they must all be killed off.*“ (Ya Mat quoted in Kiernan, 1988, p. 23) While the document itself seems to not have survived, the measures towards forced assimilation, in addition to myriad attacks against the lives and basic rights of Chams, leave very little doubt that genocidal offenses were being committed against the group. While the „disproportionate impact“ of Khmer Rouge policies can be said to clearly represent attempted

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<sup>107</sup> „*So far, we have attained our target: 30 Vietnamese killed for every fallen Kampuchean.... So we could sacrifice two million Kampucheans in order to exterminate the 50 million Vietnamese and we shall still be six million.*“ (Radio Phnom Penh quoted in Abuza, 1995, p. 435)

Cultural Genocide, from 1978 mass-scale killings are identifiable as well, including one massacre in August, where over 100 families of Chams and some Khmers had been murdered in a single village. In the end, due to a combination of disproportionate persecution, as well as direct killings, at least one-third of the Cham population, or about 90,000 people, perished at the hands of Khmer Rouge, a death rate far larger than that of ethnic Khmer. (Ciorciari & Chhang, 2005, pp. 268–269; Kiernan, 1988, p.17; Kiernan, 2005, p. 458)

Besides the Khmer and Vietnamese, other groups had been victims of targeted extermination by the Khmer Rouge as well. In addition to those associated with the previous regime, this included for example the Buddhist monks, 9,400 of whom had been murdered „in robes“ while perhaps as many as 25,000 died in total. Notably, the Chinese community had also been particularly affected by the regime, and out of the 1975 population of 430,000 only about half survived the next four years. However, at the same time, with some exceptions and despite much-existing prejudice, it seems that no „noticeable racist vendetta“ existed against the Chinese minority. Rather, as people of Chinese origin were overwhelmingly urban dwellers, these deaths resulted from broader persecution of the „new people“, with a particularly large number of Chinese succumbing to hunger and diseases like malaria as opposed to systematic targeted violent extermination that the Vietnamese or Cham peoples experienced. (Harris, 2012, pp. 132;137; Kiernan, 2005, pp. 295–296) While the estimates vary, it is likely that by the time Vietnamese invasion toppled it, the Khmer Rouge regime was responsible for a death toll between 1,6 and 1,8 million people, or 21 to 24 percent of the population. However, while the general death toll of roughly between 1,4 to 2,2 million is widely accepted, uncertainties remain over the proportion of victims of violence and executions, which are estimated to have been anywhere from as low as single digits to as many as 60 percent, although it is generally accepted that roughly half of the victims had been killed directly. (Kiernan, 2003b, pp. 585–589; Tabeau & Zwierzchowski, 2013, p. 224)

### **3.10. Denial**

In the final stage of the genocide process, an attempt is made by perpetrators, their sympathizers, or any other group, to conceal the existence of atrocities, contest their classification as genocide, justify their necessity, or shift the blame elsewhere, perhaps even on the victims themselves.



## *Armenia*

Recalling the earlier discussion on the current state of Armenian genocide recognition and denial, in the first chapter of this thesis, it is apparent that the denialist narratives are closely tied to the role that the Armenian genocide denial plays in the Turkish society, and as such its roots need to be examined. In a way, the Armenian genocide denial is somewhat peculiar in the sense that its implicit recognition actually preceded the emergence of the concerted denial efforts. Following their defeat in World War I, since 1919 the failing Ottoman government attempted to ease their position in the post-war conferences by both conceding that atrocities against Armenians took place, and more importantly also by putting on trial the leading members of the CUP for committing the mass murders. It was during these trials that a large body of evidence emerged, one which would come to serve as a basis for much of the subsequent Armenian genocide literature.<sup>108</sup> However, while the leading genocidaires including all three pashas, as well as CUP leaders such as Dr. Bahaeddin Şakir and Dr. Mehmed Nazımhad, had been sentenced to death, mostly in absentia, it soon became clear that the military tribunal would not be able to bring the main perpetrators to justice, and once it became obvious that the trials would not spare the Ottoman Empire from a draconian peace settlement the tribunals lapsed into inactivity. With the emergence of Turkish National Movement and the subsequent dissolution of the Ottoman state, the tribunals had been dissolved and their sentences were never carried out. (Baker, 2015, p. 197; Rogan, 2015, pp. 388–389)

Conversely, the Turkish Republic that arose from the vanished Empire has adamantly denied the genocide almost from the start, largely due to the involvement of a number of the republic's founders in the genocide. Indeed, in ideological terms, there is a great deal of continuity between CUP and the post-war Turkish leadership, as cadres of the national resistance movement almost without exception consisted of former Unionists. As such, the denial, trivialization, or relativization of major war crimes played a central role in forming a broad Turkish nationalist consensus. (Cooper & Akcam, 2005, pp. 81–83; Kieser, 2018, pp. 385–386; Zürcher, 2011, p. 308) Over the following decades, this denial had been entrenched in the Turkish narratives. While the rudimentary argument remained the same, over the years the specific tactics of the denial shifted. Initially, as the deaths were so widespread and well documented that their outright rejection was impossible, so other explanations had to be

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<sup>108</sup> As Eugene Rogan points out: „*These records, published in Ottoman Turkish, have been in the public domain since 1919 and make a mockery of any attempt to deny the Young Turk government's role in ordering and organizing the annihilation of the Ottoman Armenian community.*“ (Rogan, 2015, p. 389)

created. Immediately after the war, the tactic was then to find scapegoats to blame for what was termed a justified security measure that had gone awry. The blame was shifted onto unscrupulous officials who exceeded their authority, ravaging Kurdish bands not controlled by the state, or enraged peasants taking vengeance. This was followed by an attempt to sidestep the whole issue and avoid it with silence, diplomatic efforts, and political pressure where possible. In the 1930s, for example, Turkey applied sizeable international pressure to successfully prevent production of a major Hollywood film based on Franz Werfel's novel *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*, depicting Armenian resistance during the Genocide. (Minasian, 1986, pp. 129–130; Smith, 2014, p. 105; Smith, Markusen, & Lifton, 1995, p. 3)

The tactic of silence had been feasible only for as long as the genocide remained outside of the international spotlight. This however changed with the renewed attention that it received, mostly due to efforts of the sizeable Armenian diaspora in western countries, in connection with the worldwide commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the genocide in the 1960s and throughout the 1970s. From this point onward, the Turkish state began making great efforts to counter the „Armenian narrative“ by influencing journalists, teachers, and public officials by telling „the other side of the story.“ Since the 1980s, the denial was professionalized and institutionalized, as Turkey supported the establishment of „institutes“ whose apparent purpose was to further research on Turkish history and culture, but which were often used to instead advance denial of the genocide by funding or influencing denialist research, particularly in the fields of Ottoman or Turkish studies, and the Turkish government, usually the Turkish embassies, began disrupting public events or academic conferences. (Bayraktar, 2016, pp. 199–200; Quataert, 2006, p. 250; Smith, Markusen, & Lifton, 1995, pp. 3–4) The central argument that emerged in this period is that the Armenian lives were indeed lost, but not as a result of a strong state fully in control intending to carry out an extermination of Armenians. Instead, the conditions in the Ottoman Empire were by 1915 almost anarchical, and it was this breakdown of order, along with war, famine, and disease that accounts for most lives lost. In general, the denialist narrative is clearly reflective of the arguments put forward by the CUP to justify the deportations in the first place. The deportations were allegedly a legitimate wartime necessity stemming from military security considerations, and deportees were generally treated well and provisions were made for their safety. Those killed were murdered by criminals and roving Kurdish tribes, while others died as a result of the guerilla war they were waging against Turkey. Moreover, the denial is usually accompanied by the rhetoric of Armenian treachery, aggression, criminality, and territorial ambition. (Bloxham, 2005, p. 234; Smith, 2014, pp. 105–106; Smith, Markusen, & Lifton, 1995, p. 3)

In short, the denialist argument, and some of its internal contradiction, might be summarized as: „*There was no genocide, and the Armenians were to blame for it. They were rebellious, seditious subjects who presented a danger to the empire and got what they deserved.*“ (Suny, 2015, pp. xii–xiii) This narrative continues to be prevalent even today and remains one of the tenets of modern Turkey. As of today, the position of genocide denial continues to be strongly advanced by the Turkish government and, despite some notable pushback by certain actors of civil society, large swathes of the Turkish society, including all major Turkish parties across the political spectrum, many of whom react strongly when the genocide is recognized abroad. (de Waal, 2015a, p. 139; Galip, 2020, pp. 2–6,163) Moreover, when Turkey does acknowledge that some form of atrocities happened in 1915, such as in a special condolence message sent by Turkish president Erdogan to the Armenian communities worldwide before the 2015 centenary, the deaths are described as a tragedy and „shared pain“ alongside the loss of life of ethnic Turks and millions other who perished in the World War. (Ben Aharon, 2019, p. 339)

### ***Cambodia***

Following the deposition of the Khmer Rouge regime and the transformation of the Cambodian-Vietnamese war into a struggle between the Vietnamese-based People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Khmer Rouge guerillas, who later once again joined forces with the Sihanouk Royalists and the Khmer Nationalists in Khmer People's National Liberation Front, some members of the Khmer Rouge leadership continued to deny that the events that transpired constituted a genocide, even as the movement suffered internal fractures, defections and ultimately collapsed by 1999. For example, in an interview just months before his death, Pol Pot denied any responsibility for the killings, and instead proclaimed himself to be a misunderstood and unfairly vilified figure with a clear conscience, and asserted that his goal was to „carry out struggle“, not to kill people. (Alvarez, 2001, p. 56; Dy, 2007, pp. 61–62) Other Khmer Rouge leaders too shared the sentiment, such as the president Khieu Samphan who declared that the CPK leaders never exterminated „our people“ and that the genocide charge had been invented by Vietnam with the „blessing of current Cambodian leaders.“ More recently, however, by now the sole surviving member of Pol Pot's inner circle, Samphan acknowledged the atrocities but continued to deny his personal complicity. (Cheang & Rising, 2021; Thul, 2017) Marking a stark difference from the Turkish denial of the Armenian Genocide, and reflecting the broad international recognition stemming from the UN-backed Cambodian genocide tribunal discussed in the first chapter, the denialist narrative

of Cambodian genocide is today lacking the support by any national government. Within Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge atrocities are well-recognized, and since the 2013 law passed in response to remarks by then-opposition leader Kem Sokha, the denial of Cambodian genocide had been deemed illegal. (Greenwood, 2013)

However, even if no concerted effort to propagate denialist narratives at the state level exists today and the Genocide is widely recognized, this had not always been the case. Specifically, for reasons not too dissimilar from those that delayed and continue to delay the international recognition of the Armenian genocide, the international recognition of the Khmer Rouge atrocities had also been suppressed for geopolitical considerations. Specifically, a great deal of international concern prevailed after the fall of Khmer Rouge regime, and for the Western countries in particular the growth of Soviet influence via their Vietnamese client state was seen as a significant threat. As such, for the United States, denouncing the Khmer Rouge crimes was not at top of the agenda, and instead, opposition to perceived Soviet expansionism, and the budding relationship with China and their Khmer Rouge proxies, was prioritized, a vision shared by a number of other countries, including all the ASEAN nations. As a result, the charge of genocide was not invoked, and the US marshaled widespread support in the UN General Assembly to maintain the Khmer Rouge as official representatives of Cambodia in the organization. This lasted until the end of the Cold War, at which point the United States withdrew their support and the Khmer Rouge atrocities began to gain wider international recognition, especially in light of their refusal to participate in the UN-negotiated peace process (Locard, 2005, p. 135; Marks, 1999, pp. 693–694; Peang-Meth, 1992, pp. 40–41; Ratliff, 1999, pp. 1208–1209) While the motivations behind state-level denial and deliberate ignorance by third countries are jarringly similar in both studied cases, this is not true for the academic denialism that has also been present in both cases

Marking an interesting point of comparison, while in the case of the Armenian genocide the western academic denialism seems to have stemmed from external factors such as concerted pressure and close institutional links with the Turkish state in certain academic fields, in the case of Cambodia such denial seems to have stemmed primarily from ideological biases. As Beachler concluded: „*During the years following the revolution, scholars and journalists debated allegations that the Khmer Rouge was committing genocide. ... Much of the positioning by academics, publicists, and politicians seems to have been motivated largely by political purposes.*“ (Beachler, 2009, p. 214) Primarily, the denialist narratives had been advanced in the late 1970s by a group of American, principally left-wing and anti-war, scholars who believed that the tales of murder and deprivation under the Khmer Rouge

regime would validate the claims of those who had supported the greater war on communism. These scholars believed that Khmer Rouge would free, or indeed already freed, Cambodia from the ravages of colonialism, capitalism, and American military interventionism. These anti-war academics then obfuscated Khmer Rouge behavior, denigrated the refugee reports, and denounced the journalists who reported first-hand accounts. (Beachler, 2009, pp. 214–215; Ear, 1995, p. 93; Hawk, 1984) This pro-Khmer Rouge intelligentsia had been titled by Cambodian scholar Sophal Ear as the „Standard Total Academic View on Cambodia“, which included in its ranks almost all Cambodian scholars in the Western world, and which „ ... *hoped for, more than anything, a socialist success story with all the romantic ingredients of peasants, fighting imperialism, and revolution.*“ (Ear, 1995, p. 97)

Perhaps most notoriously, this group included Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky, who repeatedly blamed much of the destruction in Cambodia on the American interventions, particularly the American bombing campaign which was in their view responsible for most of the deaths in the country. Additionally, they accentuated the positive reports on Khmer Rouge, including their „spectacular results“ in agriculture, and disparaged the negative reports based upon refugee testimonies as biased and unreliable and warned that atrocity reports from Cambodia represented propaganda against all efforts to gain liberation from Western domination. In the face of a growing amount of incontestable evidence of the atrocities, however, Chomsky and Herman recognized the atrocities, even if they continued to question their scale. Similarly, many other formerly pro-Khmer Rouge authors recanted or moderated their earlier views. Notably, and tellingly of the general attitudes following the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime, this included also Ben Kiernan who initially doubted the reports of ongoing atrocities, but after interviewing hundreds of refugees became one of the important proponents of labeling the Khmer Rouge atrocities as genocide and of the foremost Cambodian genocide scholars.<sup>109</sup> (Beachler, 2009, pp. 222–223; Bellamy, 2015, pp. 133–134; Ear, 1995, pp. 97–98) In sum, while Cambodian genocide denial is all but vanquished from the modern discourse on academic, national, and international levels, denialist narrative in regards to the Armenian genocide continues to survive, if not thrive, albeit it is also countered by the general trend towards recognition of the genocide, especially by third countries.

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<sup>109</sup> „I was late in realizing the extent of the tragedy in Kampuchea after 1975 and Pol Pot's responsibility for it ... I was wrong about an important aspect of Kampuchean communism: the brutal authoritarian trend within the revolutionary movement after 1973 ... points clearly to a systematic use of violence against the population“ (Kiernan, 1979, p. 19)

Stages	Armenia		Cambodia	
	Onset	Principal Forms	Onset	Principal Forms
<b>1. Classification</b>	Before 19th Century	Millet System	Before 1975	Revolutionary Class System
<b>2. Symbolization</b>	Before 19th Century	Sumptuary Laws; Divisive Language	Before 1975	Deviations from KR attire; „Counter-Revolutionary“ traits; Blue scarves
<b>3. Discrimination</b>	Before 19th Century	Excessive taxation; Legal Discrimination; etc.	Before 1975	Curtailing of political and human rights; Imposed uniformity
<b>4. Dehumanization</b>	Late 19th Century	Dehumanizing language; Later systematic sexual violence	Before 1975	Dehumanizing language and treatment
<b>5. Organization</b>	1890s – 1914	Establishment of Hamidiye and Special Organization	c. 1975	Establishment of Santebal; Military and administrative reorganization
<b>6. Polarization</b>	Mid-1914	Narratives of treachery and disloyalty; Later limited internal purges	April 1975	Pervasive indoctrination; Later systematic internal purges
<b>7. Preparation</b>	February 1915	Disarming of Armenian soldiers; Formulation of deportation plans;	April 1975	Evacuation of Phnom Penh and other urban areas
<b>8. Persecution</b>	April 1915	Decapitation strikes; Localised killings and massacres	May 1975	Forced labour and deliberate malnutrition; Localised killings and ethnic cleansing
<b>9. Extermination</b>	June 1915	Genocide by attrition via deportations; Later systematic extermination in camps	Late 1976	Genocide by attrition via man-made famine; Later systematic violent extermination
<b>10. Denial</b>	c. 1920 (Ongoing)	Successor state denial; International non-recognition	c. 1977	Perpetrator denial; Academic denial; International non-recognition

*Table 2. Overview of the genocide stages*

## Conclusion

Despite both of the cases representing the core of what has been termed a „genocide canon“, to the best of this author’s knowledge, the Armenian and Cambodian genocides had so far not been a subject of a targeted mutual comparison study, let alone one that would focus specifically on the processual aspects of the respective genocides. This thesis has aimed to alleviate this potential shortcoming, and contribute to the field of comparative genocide studies by examining and contrasting the two examined cases, principally through the prism of Gregory Stanton’s Ten Stages of Genocide model. Throughout the research, certain limitations had become apparent. Firstly, this included the confines of this author’s linguistic knowledge, which sadly partially excluded many of the non-English works from the available pool of potential primary, and to a lesser degree secondary, resources and led to general dependence on their intermediation through other sources. This contributed to the single notable shortcoming of some of the selected literature, as in very few cases, conflicting interpretations or inconsistent translations of certain terms or quotations led to some momentary uncertainty. Otherwise, however, the utilized secondary literature, as well as primary sources, proved to be largely sufficient for this thesis, and together enabled comprehensive and robust examination of the topic at hand. Secondly, the somewhat turbulent nature of the Khmer Rouge regime, and by extension, the genocide, at times partly complicated the precise application of the selected processual genocide model. However, as both of these limitations had been expected and ultimately accounted for, neither had a negative impact on the quality of the thesis as a whole. As such, in this author’s view, the general objective of this thesis has been satisfactorily achieved, and despite the apparent asimilarity between two cases in aspects such as spatiotemporal setting, the ideology of the genocidaires, or the broader historical context, multiple interesting parallels and similarities had been observed, including some that go beyond the broad presumptions associated with the phenomena of Genocide in general.

Specifically, these can be determined firstly by answering the research question: „*What are the key similarities and differences in the contextual and historical background of the Armenian and Cambodian Genocides?*“. Throughout the second chapter, some expectable, and perhaps obvious, differences between the two studied cases emerged. In addition to the specific unique historical developments that preceded the installation of genocidal regimes, most evidently this included the outward ideological posturing of the two genocidal regimes, i.e. ethnoreligiously-motivated reactionary Turkish nationalism in the case

of CUP, and radically agrarian, secular, Maoist-inspired domestic branch of Communism in the case of CPK. On closer examination, however, it became apparent that a number of shared features is identifiable. Despite the apparent contrast between parliamentary monarchy and revolutionary socialist state, by the time the genocide took place both countries had been effectively functioning as one-party, totalitarian military dictatorships, both of which had been installed via violent means, a deadly 1913 Coup d'Etat in the case of CUP, and prolonged civil war in the case of Khmer Rouge. Additionally, despite the seemingly dissimilar ideologies of the two regimes, some crucial similarities existed. Most visibly, the phenomena of „messianic nationalism“ is clearly identifiable, as both CUP and CPK came to be dominated by the belief that the nation and state could be returned to the idealized past glory only by rejecting the heterogenous composition of the two states and instead cultivating homogenous society built upon a clearly defined ethno-social foundation, which were to be Muslim Turks in Ottoman Empire and peasant ethnic Khmers in the case of Cambodia. Furthermore, curious similitude can be identified in the „French connection“. Not only had the ideologies driving both genocides initially developed under French in particular, influence, but the genocidal groups also shared much more tangible links to the country, as both the CUP and the „Paris student group“, from which the leading Khmer Rouge leaders would be drawn, emerged and spent their formative years in the French capital.

Other similarities can be found in the broader contextual background as well. Somewhat unsurprisingly, these included the expected contextual actors that had been previously identified by genocide scholars as being closely related to the occurrence of mass atrocities. For example, as identified by Helen Fein, war and internal strife were present in both examined cases. Ottoman Empire suffered a series of devastating military defeats throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, and the genocide itself took place within the context of ongoing World War and in aftermath of severe internal upheaval. In the case of Cambodia, the genocide was immediately preceded by years of destructive civil war, which would bleed over into a war with Vietnam soon after Khmer Rouge took over. Additionally, however, some more distinctive parallels can be drawn. Specifically, this includes the existence of feared neighbouring power and the looming real or perceived threat of subjugation by this larger nation. For Ottoman Empire, this had been Russia, which was continuously expanding its territory and influence at Ottoman expense for the century prior to the genocide, while for Khmer Rouge this was Vietnam, which historically dominated Cambodia and which indeed had a sizeable control over the CPK early in their history. In the context of the two genocides, the fears of this second power would play an important role, as the victimized groups had



been wholly or in part been perceived as subversive agents of said powers. Therefore, the presence of a powerful state neighbour could perhaps potentially serve as a potent genocide predictor, although further comparative research in this regard would be necessary.

With the historical and contextual parallels between the two cases established, the main research question can be answered: „*What are the key similarities and differences in the individual stages of the genocide process in Armenian and Cambodian genocides?*“. To this end, the „Ten Stages of Genocide“ model proved to be a useful tool, enabling structured pointed comparison of the two genocides in defined and distinguishable phases, even if their precise identification was not entirely straightforward in the Cambodian case. Nonetheless, the research question had been answered. Notable differences emerged already in the Classification stage. While in the Ottoman Empire, the millet system of classification was in essence natural, durable, well-defined and emerged decades, and arguably centuries, before the genocide culminated, the classifications as introduced by the Khmer Rouge had been mostly artificial, arbitrary, and continued to severely fluctuate throughout the regime. The different foundations of the societal divisions had been reflected also in the Symbolization stage, as even the state-imposed symbolization under the Ottoman Empire, such as the sumptuary laws, stemmed from pre-existing traditions. Under Khmer Rouge, the symbols that reflected societal divisions were mostly somewhat arbitrary, such as the blue kroma scarves that marked Eastern Zone deportees, with the notable exception of ethnic minority dresses or hairstyles, although even those had been symbols only in the sense of representing a deviation from the CPK-imposed arbitrary standards.

Similar logic permeated also throughout the Discrimination stage as, despite some variations in space and time, the systematic discriminatory measures that affected Armenians had generally been well defined and clearly targeted, and some general policies, such as the additional taxation of barring from army service, steadily persisted. In the Cambodian case, however, the discrimination had been somewhat erratic and to some degree applied to most of the population. This holds true also to the Dehumanization stage, as in Cambodia the dehumanization in a broader sense permeated throughout the entire revolutionary society, unlike in Ottoman Empire where it was limited only to the victimized groups, and Armenians specifically. Despite some common themes, such as labeling of the victims as „disease“ that needs to be removed, the language of dehumanization differed as well. While for the Armenians, it was mostly limited to a denigration of their allegedly nefarious, disloyal, or subversive character, for victims of Khmer Rouge the dehumanization was much more explicitly subverting their human status. In the latter phases of the genocides, however, the

dehumanization via the violent and inhumane treatment of the victims became equally horrendous in both cases, although even in this sense another difference can be observed, as it seems that systematic sexual violence played a rather central role in deliberate dehumanization of Armenians, but no such practice could have been observed for the Khmer Rouge.

As for the Organization stage, interesting parallels exist between the CUP's Special Organization and the CPK's Santebal, both of which had played important roles in the genocides. Nonetheless, it seems that organization in a broader sense played a more central role for Khmer Rouge, as in addition to the establishment of Santebal, a comprehensive administrative and military restructuring that would directly enable later genocide policies can also be observed. Therefore, an important difference emerged in the sense that while CPK had to devote much of its security and administrative apparatus to carry out the genocide, in the case of the Armenian genocide the responsibility was mostly carried out by only a limited number of actors. The polarization stage, too, seems to have been more intense in the Cambodian case, as the extensive systematic indoctrination campaign of the Khmer Rouge is simply unparalleled in the Ottoman Empire. However, besides the shared intensification of divisive propaganda introduced in earlier stages, there are also certain intriguing similarities in the role that internal party purges played in the process. Both CUP and CPK resorted to early strikes against moderates or insubordinate figures, sometimes of considerable seniority, within their own ranks when they seemed to be an obstacle in implementing the genocidal policies. The Preparation phase differed significantly and illustrates that a single tool of genocide might serve different purposes depending on the intent behind its use, as unlike the CUP, the Khmer Rouge did not utilize mass-scale deportation of civilian populations for deliberate extermination by attrition, but rather it was a utilitarian measure necessary for further implementation of their ideology. Similarly, in the subsequent Persecution stage, the deportations were transformed into a tool of non-exterminatory ethnic cleansing by forcefully evicting most of the ethnic Vietnamese out of the country. Barring this difference, the Persecution stage also revealed some interesting similarities. Specifically, the „decapitation strikes“ against the leadership of the targeted groups were present in both cases, and so were the localized instances of mass murder, justified as a punitive measure for real or alleged acts of rebellion or sabotage, as well as eliminations of previously disarmed soldiers belonging to the targeted minority groups.

The Extermination stage, a culmination of the genocide process, took on very different forms in the two examined cases. While both the Armenian and Cambodian genocides

represent notorious examples of „genocide by attrition“, that’s where the similarities largely end. While CUP forced this attrition upon Armenians directly and deliberately via imposing conditions incompatible with survival during and after the forced deportations, under Khmer Rouge it was, to a degree, a by-product of a combination of both direct measures, such as insufficient rations for victimized groups, as well as indirect impacts of failed economic policies, which Khmer Rouge nonetheless chose to continue despite their disastrous impact. In a general sense, some similarity can perhaps be seen in that both regimes ultimately resorted to violent mass-scale murder as a tool of extermination, although even here differences prevailed. While Armenians had been subjected to wholesale massacre within the desert concentration camps once it became apparent that attrition alone would not yield the desired results, in Cambodia the heterogenous nature of the regime’s victims was also reflected in the manner that systematic murder was conducted, as it was a combination of indiscriminate massacres, mass-scale targeted killings, and systematic executions inside the security centers.

Genocide denialism emerged not long after the murders concluded in both cases, although once again with some crucial differences. Most importantly, while denial of the Armenian genocide continues to be a powerful position today due to its embrace by Turkey, as a successor state to the genocidal regime, this is not the case with Cambodia, where Khmer Rouge atrocities are wholly recognized. The nature of academic denial also differed, as while it was motivated principally by ideological biases and early lack of overwhelming evidence in the Cambodian case, the academic denial of the Armenian genocide can largely be traced to the influence and pressure of the Turkish government. The central denialist arguments showed some dissimilarities, as they centered on shifting blame for the killings or justifying the deaths as unfortunate results of necessary wartime policy in the Armenian case, while in the case of Cambodia they were seemingly more explicitly dismissive of any atrocities happening in the first place. Nonetheless, some notable similarities can indeed be observed, specifically in relation to the role of geopolitical interests in the international denial, or rather the lack of genocide recognition, in both cases as western powers refused to acknowledge the respective atrocities as genocide for fear of alienating their international allies.

Finally, in addition to the observations based upon comparing the individual stages, some general conclusions can be drawn based upon the overall examination of the two genocide processes more broadly. Somewhat expectedly, while not the subject of this research *per se*, the functionalist perception of the two genocides as a gradual embrace of genocidal policy brought upon by „cumulative radicalization“, rather than meticulously pre-planned

escalation to mass-scale systematic extermination, seems to be validated, although further research might be necessary in this regard. More to the point, however, is the observation that the duration of the broad genocide process differed significantly between the two cases. For Armenian genocide, the process that would culminate in the extermination of the Ottoman Armenians spanned decades in the immediate sense, and perhaps even centuries if interpreted more loosely, while the Cambodian genocide unfolded over a much shorter period of time, and the first stage of the genocide preceded the final one only by several years. On a related note, the pace at which the process transpired had fluctuated and differed between the two cases as well. For example, during the Cambodian genocide, several of the stages unfolded almost concurrently, but then the process arguably decelerated and entered the full-scale extermination stage only a year or more after the Khmer Rouge seized power. In the Armenian case, meanwhile, a clear progressive acceleration can be identified as while decades passed before the genocide entered the Organization stage, only months separated the Preparation and Extermination phases. This variance can be directly tied to a number of endemic internal and external factors explored throughout the second and third chapters, but nonetheless serves as a reminder of the variety that genocidal processes can manifest it, and further comparative research focusing on the pacing and duration of other cases of genocide might potentially lead to some interesting observations.

In sum, many important differences exist both in the contextual and historical background of the genocides, and also in the specific ways that each stage of genocide manifested, reflecting the broad nature and understanding of the crime itself. However, perhaps more substantively, some of the notable or novel parallels that emerged throughout this thesis might represent an interesting point of comparison and basis for further comparative genocide research. Specifically, in this author's view, it might be worthwhile to focus on exploring the shared phenomena of internal purges and removal of moderate figures in the immediate prelude to the policy escalation, particularly in regards to the role that it might play in enabling the genocide to occur, or whether it might serve as a reliable genocide predictor. However, for similar reasons, other shared features, such as the presence of decapitation strikes against the leadership of victimized groups or disarming of minority soldiers could also represent possible points of focus for future in-depth comparative research.

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## **Abstrakt**

### ***Genocida jako proces: Komparace arménské a kambodžské genocidy***

Stanoveným cílem této práce je přispět do oblasti komparativních studií genocidy průzkumem arménské a kambodžské genocidy, které i přes svůj status předních zástupců „kánonu studií genocidy“ dosud zřejmě nebyly podrobeny komplexnímu a hloubkovému vzájemnému srovnání. Za tímto účelem byl vybrán model „Deset fází genocidy“ Gregoryho Stantona, který umožňuje strukturovanou analýzu dvou genocid v každé z jejich základních fází prostřednictvím relativně málo využívaného procesuálního prizmatu. Protože však proces genocidy nelze oddělit od širšího kontextuálního pozadí, je analyzován a srovnáván také obecný historický vývoj, který každé genocidě předcházel a doprovázel ji. Tento přístup umožňuje spolu s následnou procesní analýzou a také krátkou diskusí o souvisejících jevech, jako je např. fenomén uznání genocidy, poskytnout komplexní a mnohostranný rozbor obou genocid, který odhalil mnoho důležitých rozdílů, ale možná poněkud překvapivě také řadu neočekávaných podobností.

## **Abstract**

### ***Genocide as a Process: Comparison of the Armenian and Cambodian Genocides***

The stated goal of this thesis is to contribute to the field of comparative genocide studies by examining the Armenian and Cambodian genocides that, despite their status as foremost examples of „genocide studies canon“, seems to have so far escaped a comprehensive, in-depth mutual comparative examination. To this end, Gregory Stanton's „Ten Stages of Genocide“ model had been selected, as it enables a structured analysis of the two genocides in each of their constituent stages via relatively underutilized processual prism. However, as the genocide process cannot be divorced from the broader underlying contextual background, the general historical developments that preceded and accompanied each genocide are analysed and compared as well, together with the subsequent processual analysis, as well as brief discussion on related phenomena such as genocide recognition, providing a comprehensive and multifaceted examination of the two genocides, which revealed many important differences, but perhaps somewhat surprisingly, also a number of unexpected similarities.