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**ELITE PERCEPTIONS AND THE ADOPTION  
OF AN EXTREMIST POLICY OF GENOCIDE:  
A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF ARMENIA AND RWANDA**

**BY**

**NICOLE POWELL**

**BA, University of New Hampshire, 2004**

**THESIS**

**Submitted to the University of New Hampshire**

**in Partial Fulfillment of**

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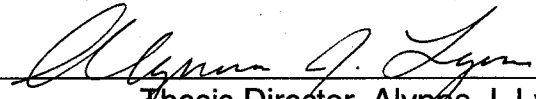
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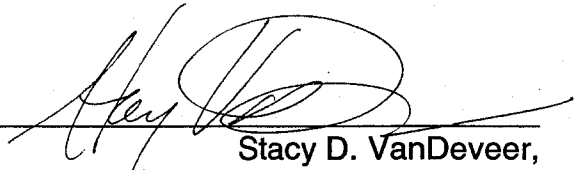
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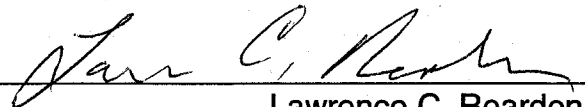
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**DEDICATION**

**For my Mother**

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## ABSTRACT

### ELITE PERCEPTIONS AND THE ADOPTION OF AN EXTREMIST POLICY OF GENOCIDE: A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF ARMENIA AND RWANDA

by

Nicole Powell

University of New Hampshire, September, 2006

The events leading up to the genocide that occurred in Rwanda in 1994 are similar to the events that led to the genocide that occurred in the Ottoman Empire in 1915. Economic and political crises plagued both states, international pressures to democratize weighed on both states, and both states were subject to ethnic polarization. This project examines those common factors preceding the Rwandan and Armenian genocides; and looks at elite's perception of a threat to their power because of the existence of those factors. Furthermore, the paper examines the relationship between the perception of a threat to elite power and the subsequent adoption of a genocidal policy. This comparative, most similar systems case study of the Rwandan and Armenian genocides provides a model that suggests a trajectory for the adoption of a genocidal policy. Recognizing precursory factors that are perceived to threaten elite's and lead them to adopt a radical policy of genocide may enable the prevention of the most horrific atrocity still afflicting the twenty-first century.

## INTRODUCTION

Ethnic cleansing, genocide, politicide, and democide are phenomena that have scarred the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1</sup> Despite the adoption of the Genocide Convention in 1948, genocide continues to plague the world. The convention was adopted by the United Nations pledging an assurance that genocide would never again be repeated. Yet, mass killing has ensued regardless of the promise made by the international community. Scholar R. J. Rummel estimates that during the 20<sup>th</sup> century political regimes have murdered 170,000,000 of their own citizens and foreigners. Those 170,000,000 people represent about four times the number of individuals killed in all international and domestic wars and revolutions (Rummel 1995, 3). Unfortunately, mass murder has not disappeared with the close of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; rather it continues to account for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people this century.

Prior to 1955, the most commonly referenced occurrences of mass killings are the Armenian Genocide in 1915, Stalin's state engineered famine in

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<sup>1</sup> Merriam Webster defines ethnic cleansing as "the expulsion, imprisonment or killing of an ethnic minority by a dominant majority in order to achieve ethnic homogeneity." Genocide has been defined by the United Nation in Article II of the Genocide Convention and by various scholars who have qualms with the UN definition. Barbara Harff has offered definitions of the terms genocide and politicide. Her definitions are utilized in this project. She defines genocides and politicides in *Peace and Conflict 2005* as "the promotion, execution, and/or implied consent of sustained policies by governing elites or their agents—or, in the case of civil war, either of the contending authorities—that are intended to destroy, in whole or part, a communal, political, or politicized ethnic group." Rummel defines democide as: "the intentional killing of people of people by the government." Democide accounts for the variety and extent of ruthless murder carried out by governments. Democide includes politicide and genocide (Rummel 1995, 3-4). These terms are similar in nature.

Ukraine in 1933, the rape of Nanking in 1937-1938, and the Nazi Holocaust from 1938-1945. Pol Pot's genocide in Cambodia from 1975-1979, the *Anfal* Campaign in 1988, the genocide in Bosnia from 1992-1995, and the Rwandan genocide in 1994 are mass murders that occurred in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The crisis in Darfur and Iraq could be considered the most recent accounts of mass killing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Understanding certain cases of genocide provides insights that may be relevant to understanding the phenomenon in general.

Examples of genocide include Joseph Stalin's engineered famine in Ukraine in 1932. The famine was an attempt by Stalin to destroy those seeking independence from his rule. By the spring of 1933, 25,000 people were dying daily. Entire villages perished. By the end of 1933, 25 percent of the Ukrainian population, including 3 million children, had died as a result of Stalin's policy of genocide (United Human Rights Council, Ukraine Famine).

In perhaps the most widely studied instance, the German Holocaust accounts for the deaths of approximately six million Jews. The Nazi party believed that Germans were racially superior to the Jews and aimed to remove the Jewish population in Europe. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) provides a statistic that details the toll the genocide took on the Jewish population in Europe: "By 1945, close to two out of every three European Jews had been killed as part of the Final Solution, the Nazi policy to murder the Jews of Europe" (USHMM).

In another case, Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge Army marched into Phnom Penh and seized control of Cambodia on April 17, 1975 (United Human Rights Council, Cambodia Genocide Pol Pot). From 1975 to 1979, 2,000,000 people died in Cambodia under Pol Pot's rule. The three largest ethnic minority groups were subject to genocide. Ultimately, estimates suggest that fifty percent of the Chinese living in Cambodia in 1975 perished under this regime (United Human Rights Council, Cambodia Genocide Pol Pot).

In 1988, the *Anfal* campaign conducted by the Iraqi regime against the Kurdish population cost the lives of 50,000 to 200,000 Kurdish civilians (Leezenberg 2004, 375). Between 1992 and 1995 in the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina ethnic cleansing resulted in the murder of 200,000 Muslims (United Human Rights Council, Bosnia Genocide). Throughout 1993, the Serbs in Bosnia freely committed genocide against the Muslims. The devastation that had ensued cost 200,000 lives, more than 20,000 went missing, and 2,000,000 had become refugees (United Human Rights Council, Bosnia Genocide).

Genocide can occur in any region in the world and devastate any community. The cases of interest in this study are the Armenian genocide and the Rwandan genocide. The Armenian genocide is considered the first genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Armenian men, women, and children were mass murdered in an effort, led by the leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress, to Turkify the Ottoman Empire. The genocide ultimately cost the Armenians residing in the Ottoman Empire over half their population (Astourian 1990, 113-114). 1,500,000 people perished during this crisis. In Rwanda, over a period of three months in

1994, approximately 1,000,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were murdered in a genocidal campaign.

Scholar Barbara Harff found forty-one cases of genocide and politicide in the world since 1955 (Harff 2005, 57). The study of genocide is a difficult but imperative endeavor that may help abate the murder of innocent people. The section below highlights both the definitional dilemmas and previous efforts to study genocide.

### **The Definition and Study of Genocide**

This study refers to the United Nation's definition of genocide to facilitate an understanding of the violence that occurred in Rwanda and Armenia. Raphael Lemkin, a Polish Jewish Jurist coined the term 'genocide' in 1944. He played a major role in drafting the United Nations Genocide Convention which was adopted by the United Nations on December 9, 1948.<sup>2</sup> Article II of the United Nations Genocide Convention defines genocide to include:

- Any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such:
- (a) Killing members of the group;
  - (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of a 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.

Genocide scholars highlight some of the challenges associated with the United Nation's definition and the particulars constituting an act of genocide

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<sup>2</sup> The term genocide was created by combining the Greek word *genos*, translating to race or tribe, and the Latin derivative *cide* meaning to kill.

(Heidenrich, 2001; Williams 2003; Trotten 2004). They note that the United Nation's definition of genocide excludes political and socioeconomic groups from targeted groups. In addition, it lacks specificity of the magnitude of killing necessary to constitute genocide (Heidenrich 2001, 2; Williams 2003, 194). These murky areas have inspired alternative definitions of genocide. These alternative definitions have been used to research genocide<sup>3</sup> (Trotten et al. 2004, 4).

This study relies on Alex Alvarez's (2001) examination of the general commonalities found among the definitions. His findings conclude that generally scholars agree that the state or similar authority structure is responsible for the systematic planning and the ongoing attempt to eliminate a vulnerable, politically and socially marginalized minority group of people. These people are singled out for destruction because of their membership in a particular group. In addition, scholars concur that the intent of genocide is the ultimate destruction of a group of people, either culturally or physically. Lastly, Alvarez concludes that scholars recognize genocide as a crime that must be prevented and punished (Alvarez 2001, 47-53).

Barbara Harff's definition of genocide and politicide is the framework for this study and future studies utilizing the model advanced in this project. Harff defines genocides and politicides in *Peace and Conflict* (2005) as:

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<sup>3</sup> Robert Melson (1992), Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn (1990), Helen Fein (1992), and Israel Charny (1994) all provide a definition of genocide that differs from that provided by the United Nations.



the promotion, execution, and/or implied consent of sustained policies by governing elites or their agents—or, in the case of civil war, either of the contending authorities—that are intended to destroy, in whole or part, a communal, political, or politicized ethnic group (Harff 2005).

The commonalities found by Alvarez are included in Harff's definition. Harff provides a concise description of the genocide in her definition. Her definition is used in this project because of the inclusiveness of Alvarez's findings and its applicability to further research.

This project examines elite perceptions and the adoption of an extremist policy of genocide. The study chose to examine elites because elites hold power and access to resources. Elites hold financial power and have the power to influence and shape the media. Elites control the state and ultimately the elites develop a policy of genocide utilizing the power they hold. The project addresses two questions in an effort to understand how an extremist policy of genocide is adopted. The two additional questions are:

- 1) What makes the ground ripe for genocide?
- 2) How do political elites come to view genocide as a viable policy solution?

This study is particularly relevant for social scientists. Understanding what makes the ground ripe for genocide may facilitate the recognition of geographic areas where genocide may be likely to occur. In addition, the examination of elite perceptions and the adoption of a policy of genocide lends to the scholarship currently circulating explaining causes of genocide. For the policy community, the findings in this project may aid in the prevention of future genocides, thereby possibly saving hundreds of thousands of innocent lives.

Identifying precursors that may contribute to the development of a genocidal policy may enable the de-escalation of an outbreak of genocide.

Primordialists and instrumentalists offer explanations for the outbreak of violence between groups. Primordialists argue that innate differences account for the violence that is witnessed. Instrumentalists argue that identities are construed to serve political and economic objectives and can become contentious. However, the primordialist explanation does not accurately account for the horrors witnessed in the mass killings that have occurred in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The murder of half the Armenian population in the Ottoman Empire in 1915; the murder of a quarter of the Ukrainian population in 1933; the murder of half the population in Nanking in 1937; the murder of two-thirds of European Jews during the Holocaust; the murder of half the Chinese population in Cambodia in 1975; the murder of 50,000 to 200,000 Kurds in Iraq in 1988; the murder of 200,000 Muslims in Bosnia in 1993-1994; and the murder of 800,000 Tutsi in Rwanda in 1994 can be more accurately explained using an instrumentalists understanding of the origins of conflict.

An examination of the differences between the primordial and instrumental approaches to understanding ethnic conflict is necessary to address the questions broached in this study. Primordialism is dismissed and instrumental factors are explored. Glicks (2002) research on scapegoating is also examined as evidence for the development of a genocidal policy. This study proposes a model that examines the role economic and political crises, international pressures and a polarized society may have on elite perceptions of threat. It is

hypothesized that the perception of a threat may lead to the adoption of an extremist policy of genocide.

### **Methods**

This study uses a most similar system comparative case study to qualitatively examine the Rwandan and Armenian cases of genocide. The collection of information on the political environment and economic situation of the cases prior to the genocides is gathered from historical documents, journalistic accounts, and secondary sources.

According to Ragin (1987), the benefit of conducting a qualitative case study allows the cases to be interpreted historically, and allows for the examination of change in specific settings (Ragin 1987, x). There is a limitation associated with this method, but the benefit of conducting an in-depth examination of the events that occurred over time in each case outweighs the fact that the findings are not applicable to a large number of cases. Further research may be able to use the implications found in this study of the Armenian and Rwandan case and use it to understand additional cases of genocide.

This study deliberately chose to examine the Armenian and Rwandan cases because genocide occurred. In addition to choosing cases based on the dependent variable, the cases were chosen because the antecedent variables advanced in the model were present. The presence of economic and political crises, international pressures, and a polarized society in both cases allowed for specific focus on the relationship between elite perceptions and the influence they play on the adoption of a genocidal policy. Selection bias occurs when

cases are chosen based on having achieved the desired outcome, but the study is able to determine what the Armenian and Rwandan cases have in common (Geddes 1990, 132). It would not be possible to determine whether the specific antecedents are crucial unless one studies cases where genocide did not occur, but the commonalities found in the Armenian and Rwandan cases may facilitate an understanding of genocide that can be developed further.

Comparative social science aims to explain and interpret macrosocial variation. Ragin provides an overview of comparative methodology. He writes:

comparativists are interested in identifying the similarities and differences among macrosocial units. This knowledge provides the key to understanding, explaining, and interpreting diverse historical outcomes and processes and their significance for current institutional arrangements (Ragin 1987, 5-6).

This study uses comparative methods to interpret a path genocidal policy could take. Ragin notes that comparativists apply theory to cases in order to interpret them (Ragin 1987, 11). A model is presented in this study to examine elite perceptions and the adoption of extremist genocidal policy.

The most apparent similarity is both the Armenians and Tutsis were minorities in their respective populations. Both groups had also undergone some polarization. In addition, radical extremist elites had assumed power only a short time before the genocides occurred. This change in governance took the place of an established government that had been in existence for a lengthy period of time. Upon delving deeper into the cases it becomes apparent that the Rwandan and Armenian cases are similar in that the antecedent variables in both cases

closely resemble each other. Economic and political crises were present in both Rwanda and the Ottoman Empire prior to the occurrence of genocide. In addition, both the Ottoman Empire and Rwanda were under international pressure to meet demands promoting the recognition of minority populations within their state.

Table 1.

Similarities in Armenian and Rwandan Cases

	Armenian Case	Rwandan Case
Minority Populations Subject to Violence	Armenians	Tutsi
Polarization	British Influence	Belgian Influence
Presence of Radical Extremists	Committee of Union and Progress	<i>Akazu</i>
Economic Crisis	Economic Collapse	Economic Collapse
Political Crisis	Revolutionary Parties	Civil War
International Pressure	Treaty of Berlin	Arusha Accords

There are also differences apparent in the cases. There is a religious dimension in the Armenian case. This religious dimension was not as clearly apparent in the Rwandan case. In addition, the genocidal violence was perpetrated differently. The Turks marched the Armenians into the desert. Those that did not perish along the way were subjected to abuse and ultimately murdered; whereas, the genocide in Rwanda occurred under the wrath of machetes. Radical elites were able to successfully adopt a radical extremist policy of genocide in an effort to deflect culpability and abate societal ills.

## CHAPTER I

### THEORETICAL DEBATE

Primordialism and instrumentalism frame the theoretical debate explaining the occurrence of ethnic conflict. The primordialist approach suggests that individuals coalesce because of the innate attachments they have formed with each other (Geertz 1963, 109). Instrumentalism suggests that identities are construed to serve political or economic ends (Fenton 1999, 24; Harff and Gurr 2004, 96). Instrumental influences may play a role in the adoption of a radical, extremist policy of genocide.

#### **Primordialism/Instrumentalism**

Primordial attachments are the bonds by which groups form and associate (Geertz 1963, 109). According to Geertz (1963), the innate desire to develop an attachment with people whom one shares a religion, a language, and social practices with underlies the concept of primordial attachments (Geertz 1963, 109-110). Tribalism is an example of a primordialist explanation for the occurrence of ethnic conflict. Tribalism is the belief that deep-rooted and ancient hatreds that exist between groups inevitably explode into conflict.

Instrumentalism suggests that identities are construed to serve political or economic ends (Fenton 1999, 24, Harff and Gurr 2004, 96). Identities may become construed during polarization. An instrumental understanding of conflict

suggests that individuals shift or alter their group association because it is beneficial to do so (Jenkins 1997, 44-45). Instrumentalists often highlight one component over another. Elites may see it as beneficial to polarize identities if they perceive a threat to their political power. Elites generate reasons for ethnic groups' reasons to disassociate.

The instrumental argument explaining the occurrence of ethnic conflict provides an more concrete explanation for conflict. Instrumentalism refutes primordial scholar's explanation of conflict as the result of innate attachments. The work of Catherine Newbury (1988), WM. Roger Lewis (1979), Gerard Prunier (1995) and Alain Destexhe (1994) negates tribal animosity as the sole explanation for the ethnic violence that erupted in Rwanda. The work of Newbury, an established scholar on Rwanda, suggests instrumental influences provide a clearer explanation of the crises experienced in Rwanda. Her text provides evidence suggesting that the Hutu and Tutsi identities were first polarized by the Belgian's during colonial penetration. Destexhe posits that the massacres prior to the genocide were not the result of deep-rooted and ancient hatred between two ethnic groups. He provides evidence that the Hutu and Tutsi cannot even correctly be described as ethnic groups. He acknowledges that there were distinguishable social categories in existence before the arrival of colonizers, but the differences were not based on ethnic or racial divisions. The Hutu and Tutsi stereotypes were exaggerated by the Belgians. The Belgian elevation of one group influenced the categorizing of ethnicity. Destexhe's research found that following independence in 1962 the political party in power

played the ethnic card each time it searched for a way out of political difficulty. *Akazu*, the radical political party that seized power after President Habyarimana's death, was able to play the ethnic card because of Belgium's original polarization of the Hutu-Tutsi identity (Destexhe 1994, 36).

Instrumental explanations for the occurrence of conflict between the Turks and Armenians are also present in Armenian genocide literature. Renowned scholars Ronald Suny (1993), Peter Balakian (2003), Donald Bloxham (2005), Stephan Astorian (1990), and Rouben Adalian (2004), have conducted extensive research on the Ottoman Empire and Armenian genocide. They present evidence of instrumental influences on the outbreak of conflict in the Armenian case. It has been noted that there was a religious divide between the Muslim Turks and non-Muslim Armenians, but scholars agree that the Armenians and Turks were able to co-exist for many years without the eruption of ethnic or religious conflict. The religious divide was not the sole cause of the outbreak of conflict in the Ottoman Empire. Bloxham's research suggests an international influence around the middle of the 1800's challenged the subordinate and super-ordinate relationship that existed between the Muslim's and non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire (Bloxham 2005, 15).

The colonial experience in Rwanda and the Ottoman Empire polarized relations between the minority and majority populations. Their advocating of change between the minority and majority populations and the implemented structural changes to the political status quo spurred conflict. The Belgians instituted reforms to change the governing structure in Rwanda. The British



introduced a treaty which advocated more equal treatment of the minorities residing in the Ottoman Empire.

### **Precursors to Genocide**

According to Benjamin Valentino (2004), explanations for the occurrence of genocide are considered to fall into either the primordial or instrumental theoretical categories in qualitative research or within an empirical model in quantitative research. Valentino (2004) provides an overview of explanations accounting for what causes genocide. According to Valentino, three broad categories denote preconditions for the occurrence of genocide and mass killing. These categories include: social cleavages, national crises, and the concentration of political power in certain forms of government. Scholars who suggest social cleavages as the precondition to the occurrence of genocide focus on the presence of deep divisions between different groups living in the same society. They understand conflict to be initiated because of those divisions within society (Valentino 2004, 17). Deep divisions can include religious and ethnic cleavages. This first category shares the theoretical underpinning of primordialism.

According to Valentino, scapegoat theory and political opportunity theory, referenced in association with national crises, denotes the second category of literature explaining the occurrence of genocide. The scapegoat theory suggests that the psychological effects of national crises trigger genocide. Generally speaking, scapegoat theory is the blaming of a specific group for societal ills. The political opportunity theory suggests that opportunities and incentives for

mass killing are generated by national crises (Valentino 2004, 22). This second category shares instrumental assumptions. Identities are ultimately construed to serve political and economic interests.

The third category of literature found by Valentino suggests the concentration of political power in certain forms of government leads to genocide (Valentino 2004, 16). It is hypothesized that democratic institutions are less likely to engage in genocide than autocratic regimes<sup>4</sup>. R.J. Rummel (1995) and Mathew Krain (1997) advance arguments based on the theory that power is a precondition of genocide. This third common category introduces quantitative literature. Quantitative studies develop empirical models that assess the likelihood of genocide occurring. These studies introduce risk assessment and early warning models for the occurrence of genocide and politicide<sup>5</sup> (Gurr and Moore 1997; Harff and Gurr 1998).

Harff and Gurr (1998) lead the study and development of empirical models that assess countries at risk for genocide. Harff's study (2003) looks at which factors distinguish episodes that lead to genocide and politicide from those episodes that do not. The results of her study conclude that:

the optimal model identifies six preconditions of genocide and politicide that make it possible, using the case-control procedure and logic regression, to

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<sup>4</sup> Harff (2003) defines an autocratic regime: "In autocracies citizens' participation is sharply restricted; chief executives are selected within the political elite; and, once in office chief executives exercise power with few or no institutional constraints" (63).

<sup>5</sup> Harff differentiates between genocide and politicide in terms of how the groups are victimized. Victimized groups defined by their perpetrators in terms of their political opposition to the regime risk politicide. Groups defined by communal characteristics risk genocide (Harff 2003, 58).

postdict accurately 74% of episodes that began between 1955 and the late 1990s<sup>6</sup> (Harff 2003, 57).

The six factors in the optimal model include: political upheaval, prior genocides, elite ideology, regime type, ethnic and religious cleavages, and international interdependences. Use of Harff's model to assess risks of future genocides and politicides suggests that:

The risk factors include the extent of political upheaval and the occurrence of prior geno-/politicides. The probability of mass murder is highest under autocratic regimes, and is most likely to be set in motion by elites who advocate an exclusionary ideology, or represent an ethnic minority, or both. International economic interdependences sharply reduce the chances that internal war and regime instability will have genocidal consequences (Harff 2003, 70).

Harff provides a quantitatively based approach to signaling possible genocides. Her goal is that "anticipatory responses should save more lives at less cost than belated responses after the killing has begun" (Harff 2003, 72). Harff's model predicts with 76% accuracy the 36 serious civil conflicts that led to episodes of genocidal violence between 1955 and 2004 and the 93 other cases that did not (Harff 2005).

A seventh factor was also suggested by Harff in *Peace and Conflict* (2005): severe political and economic discrimination. Six of the seven risk factors at the time of the 2005 *Peace and Conflict* publication were present in Sudan. The presence of these risk factors indicates that Sudan tops the list of countries

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<sup>6</sup> Quantitative studies of genocide and politicide usually compile and analyze data from 1955 on. Harff provides an explanation for the 1955 starting point: "Most episodes [genocides and politicides] in the late 1940s and early 1950s were continuations of prior conflicts...As a consequence of decolonization, many new, conflict prone states entered the international system beginning in the 1950s, and as a practical matter, reliable data for most independent variables were sparse or nonexistent before then" (Harff 2003, 59).

at high risk for possible genocide (Harff 2005, 64). Harff concludes that systematic risk assessment cannot identify when genocidal violence is likely to begin, but is capable of suggesting that a country is in the latter stages of upheaval which may result in genocidal behavior (Harff 2005).

This study takes into account the differing scholarly explanations for the occurrence of ethnic conflict and mass killing. The project explores how the perception of a threat to elites in power influences the formation of a genocidal agenda. It examines whether the presence of economic and political crises, international pressures, and a polarized society seems to induce the perception of a threat to elite power.

### **Scapegoating**

This study suggests that the occurrence of scapegoating is evidence that extremist genocidal violence may be occurring. Peter Glick's (2002) work is utilized in this study to understand the psychological and sociological construct: scapegoating. Scapegoating is defined as: "the venting of frustrations on an innocent but weak target" (Glick 2002, 113). Glick (2002) develops a model to address the deficiencies of scapegoat theory in previous research, and searches for an answer to why the Nazi party chose to enact a policy of genocide on the Jews.

Glick presents an ideological model of scapegoating. Scapegoating ideologies blame shared frustrations on a specific group of people (Glick 2002, 114). Scapegoating ideologies are adopted when they offer a psychologically and socially attractive explanation and course of action designed to remove the

frustrating conditions a population is experiencing (Glick 2002, 114). Glick suggests that widespread economic and social frustrations motivate people to seek plausible causal explanations at a collective level (Glick 2002, 114).

Glick proposes that a crucial mediator of scapegoating is an ideology of envious prejudice (Glick 2002, 115). Envious prejudice occurs when a group thinks another has dangerous or evil intentions (Glick 2002, 115). Glick notes that the targeted group is perceived to have the ability to in fact create the problems being experienced and has a valid reason to cause the problems (Glick 2002, 129). Glick explains how targeted groups are chosen. Targeted groups are those groups that have the ability to influence the economy and society or those groups that intend to do harm. Targets of envious prejudice are those viewed as intentionally causing economic and social problems (Glick 2002, 130). Envious prejudices are most acute when majority group members feel that their social status has shifted downward relative to the status of the minority (Glick 2002, 130).

Glick's ideological model suggests that scapegoating occurs under a specific set of conditions. According to Glick, the conditions conducive to scapegoating occur when "the causes of widespread economic or social frustrations can plausibly, in the minds of those affected, be blamed on a particular social group" (Glick 2002, 139). He notes that his ideological scapegoating model fits the genocidal attack of the Armenians and the Tutsis (Glick 2002, 139). For the purposes of this study, scapegoating is indicative of a genocidal agenda because the perception of a threat to elite power seems to

initiate the deflection of culpability for societal ills and influence the adoption of a genocidal agenda.

### **Model**

Instrumental influences contributed to the outbreak of conflict in Rwanda and Armenia. The model presented below suggests four independent variables that may collectively weigh in on elite's perception that their power is being threatened. The collective presence of a polarized society, economic crisis, political crisis and international pressures may threaten elites holding power within a state. The perception that their power is being threatened may instigate the formation of a policy of genocide. Scapegoating deflects culpability for the crises away from the elites in power and is evidence that a genocidal policy may have been set in motion. This deflection of culpability serves as a means to retain political power. Furthermore, a policy of genocide becomes legitimized as scapegoating ideologies are advanced and people begin to view those being scapegoated as the culprits responsible for societal and economic ills. A policy of genocide becomes a viable solution. Figure 1 presents a depiction of the factors that elites may perceive to threaten their power. Collectively, those variables and the perception of a threat may lead to the adoption of a genocidal policy.

## Theory

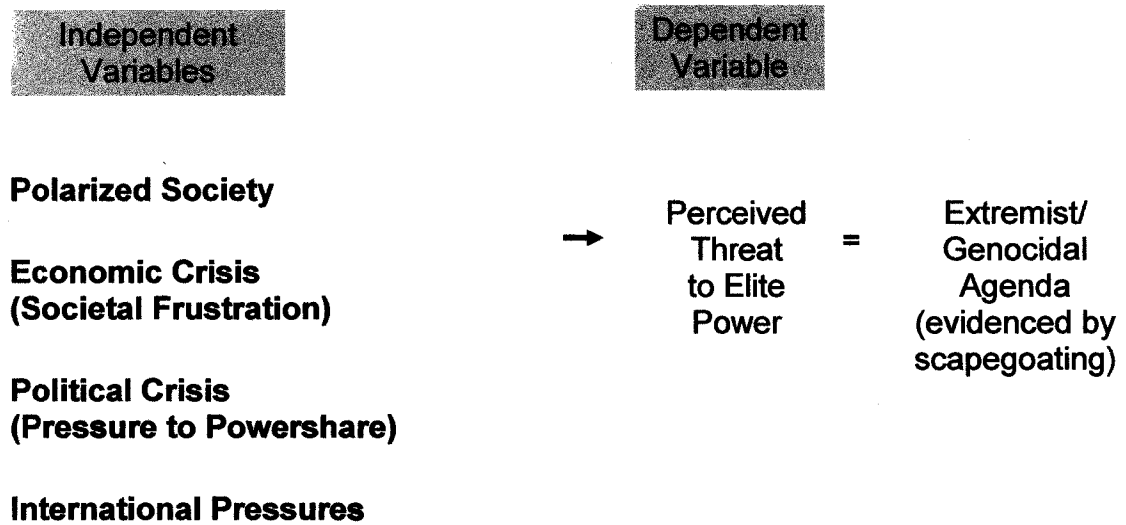


Figure 1. Proposed Model

This project explores each of the independent variables. The study examines whether each independent variable was present in each case. In addition, the study illustrates that collectively the independent variables could have influenced elite perception of a threat to their political power. It finds that the perceived threat to their power resulted in the advancement of an extremist genocidal agenda. The adoption of an extremist genocidal agenda is measured by the scapegoating rhetoric that occurred in both cases.

A polarized society is defined as a society that has been broken up into opposing factions or groups. An understanding of economic crisis is borrowed from Helen Hintjens definition of economic crises (Hintjens 1999, 242). Economic crises are indicated by economic recession or collapse, external debt, and the collapse of state welfare policies. An understanding of what denotes

political crisis is developed by borrowing Harff's (2003) concept of political upheaval. Political crises include defeat in war, revolutions, coups, and regime transitions that result in the acquisition of political power to a group or individual who embraces extremist ideologies (Harff 2003, 62). The study borrows concepts from the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom to define extremists (2005). Extremists can be defined as individuals who advocate an ideology of political change that advocates condones or even implies violence. International pressure is defined as pressure exerted by legitimate international actors who collectively seek change for the repressive domestic situation within a country.



## CHAPTER II

### RWANDA

The genocide that occurred in Rwanda in 1994 may be considered one of the world's most tragic events since the Second World War. United Nation's estimates suggest that approximately one million people perished during the genocide, and more than twenty five percent of the Rwandan population became displaced between April and August (*United Nations and Rwanda* 1996, 4).

#### **Political Environment**

The violent conflict between the Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda is commonly referenced as 'ethnic' or 'tribal' conflict. Primordialists understand the violence between the Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda as tribal. This section attempts to establish that the primordialist perspective of conflict is weak and does not account for the ethnic violence that has occurred. In this section the presence of instrumental factors on the Hutu/Tutsi identity is substantiated. It seems likely that instrumental influences weighed in on the development of a policy of genocide in Rwanda in 1994. This study relies on the work of Newbury (1988), Destexhe (1994), Louis (1979) and Prunier (1995) to provide a historical overview of the Tutsi and Hutu identity.

The Hutus are the original inhabitants of Rwanda. They were primarily engaged in agricultural production. Around the 15<sup>th</sup> century the Tutsis slowly

migrated into western Rwanda from the East, eventually accounting for 10 percent of the population. The Hutus constituted 86 percent of the population.<sup>7</sup> The Tutsi acquired the Hutu language, shared their religion, and followed similar traditions (Louis 1979, 108; Destexhe 1995, 37). The difference between the Hutu and Tutsi was essentially their occupation. The Hutus were agriculturalists. The Tutsis were breeders of long horned cattle.

The movement of the Tutsi population into Rwanda is generally regarded as a peaceful process. During this early pre-colonial period the Tutsis dominated Rwandan politics. The Tutsis dominated the political arena because of the value that was associated with owning cattle.<sup>8</sup> Cattle and wealth were synonymous. Those that breed cattle were considered more influential. Having cattle enhanced opportunity for political and social elevation. In order for a Hutu to obtain cattle, and elevate socially and politically, they were required to perform services for the Tutsi. A cattle agreement between the Hutu and the Tutsi in Rwanda, referred to as *ubuhake*, enabled the Hutu to acquire cattle and move toward Tutsi status. *Ubughake* required that Hutus be loyal to the Tutsis granting the cattle. *Ubughake* also included provisions such as: Tutsi cattle being allowed to use Hutu land; sharing of Hutu crops with Tutsis; and a guarantee that the Hutu would provide military protection to the Tutsi. *Ubughake* was a mutually

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<sup>7</sup> These numbers are representative of the Rwandan population just prior to Belgian control in 1916. The Twa were an ethnic group but were thought to make up only one percent of the population. Due to the small percentage of Twa in the total population, and the insignificant role they are believed to have played in the region, the group is not addressed in this study (Destexhe 1995, 37).

<sup>8</sup> The extent to which the Tutsi dominated the Hutu pre-colonization varied by region.

benefiting, contractual relationship. The Tutsi provided protection to the Hutu as well (Louis 1963, 110). *Ubugake* and the similarities in Hutu and Tutsi language and religion illustrate that ethnicity played a relatively non-existent role in the social fabric of Rwanda's pre-colonial society. Primordialism cannot account for the conflict that erupted in Rwanda in 1994.

The outbreak of ethnic conflict in Rwanda can be explained via instrumentalism. The German and Belgian involvement in Rwanda ultimately manipulated the relationship between the minority and majority groups. An analysis of the reforms instituted by the Belgians concludes that the Belgians were most influential in polarizing the Hutu/Tutsi identity, thereby making the ground ripe for conflict. The Belgians were not the first to occupy Rwanda though. The first Europeans arrived in the Great Lakes Region in 1892. The territory of contemporary Rwanda was included within German East Africa by 1894. In 1914, the Germans physically ventured into Rwanda. The German government allied with the Tutsi Monarchy, increasing Tutsi power internally. German indirect rule created a power discrepancy in favor of the Tutsi. This power differential began the polarization process of the Hutu/Tutsi identity. The Tutsi's had access to power and resources because of their position on the political spectrum. The Germans had only a small presence in Rwanda (Destexhe 1995, 40). Their light administrative implementation could not have modified the Rwandese society in depth (Prunier 1995, 25). The German colonizers certainly influenced the Hutu/Tutsi dynamics, but the real changes came during Belgian colonial involvement.

The Belgians entered Rwanda after the Germans. During Belgian penetration, polarization of the Hutu/Tutsi identity is witnessed most. The Belgian presence in Rwanda was longer and more influential than the German stint. In 1916, Belgium officially occupied Rwanda. In 1919, the League of Nations sanctioned the colonial relationship. Throughout the 1920's, Belgian colonial over-lordship was recognized by the League of Nations. Following World War II, Rwanda was administered as a Belgian Trust Territory under the United Nations. During Belgian colonization, the Belgians became actively involved in the political, social, and economic structures of Rwanda's society. Their involvement resulted in a significant change to *ubuhake*.

The administrative reorganization that occurred in Rwanda under Belgian colonial over-lordship significantly influenced the relationship between the Hutu and the Tutsi. The reorganization began in the late 1920's and early 1930's under the Belgian policy known as les reforms Voisin. The central measure of these reforms was the transfer of all chiefly function to a single hand (Prunier 1995, 27). The Belgians placed all political power in the hands of the Tutsi. Belgian governor Charles Voisin was able to transfer power by slowly replacing the Hutu chiefs and sub-chiefs with Tutsis. The transfer of power resulted in political domination of the Hutu by the Tutsi.

The Tutsis bore responsibility for carrying out Belgian policies. The Tutsi sub-chiefs carried out policies such as taxation, imposing cultivation of obligatory crops, forced labor, and recruitment of workers for the Europeans. In addition to fulfilling the Belgian policies, the chiefs also imposed "traditional" obligations on

their subjects. These traditional obligations existed under *ubuhake*. The obligations included the sharing of Hutu land for Tutsi cattle grazing, and the production of Hutu crops for the use of the Tutsis. The extensive demands experienced by rural dwellers in Rwanda, and the closing of appeal channels resulted in a powerless situation for the Hutu. Gerald Prunier (1995) describes the consequences of the Belgian reforms in Rwanda: "The Belgian reforms of 1926-31 had created a modern Rwanda: centralized, efficient, neo-traditionalist and catholic, but also brutal" (Prunier 1995, 35).

Social and political restructuring in Rwanda standardized and institutionalized a hierarchical relationship between the Tutsi and Hutu. The Belgians used the Tutsi elites as administrative puppets to install a hierarchical structure of political authority. The Hutus were deprived of political power and were exploited by the Tutsis and white colonizers. The implementation of the Belgian reforms resulted in the Tutsi believing they were a superior race. Ultimately, the restructuring and the implementation of reforms polarized the Hutu and Tutsi identity.

*Ubughake* ceased to exist following Belgian colonization. At the conclusion of Belgian colonial rule the Belgians solidified polarization of the Hutu and Tutsi identity by distributing identification cards. The mere distribution of identity cards indicates that the differences between the Hutus and Tutsis were not pronounced enough to be able to determine ones ethnicity by looks alone. The identification cards did not denote ethnicity though; rather, they indicated the amount of cattle an individual owned. One who owned ten or more cows were classified as a

Tutsi, and those with less than ten cows were classified as a Hutu (Alex de Waal 1994, 2). These cards identified the Tutsis from the Hutus based on the amount of cattle one owned.

As the Belgians withdrew from Rwanda and prepared to grant Rwanda independence the Hutus and Tutsis perpetrated violence against one another for succession of the throne. Four parties succeeded in mobilizing significant followings. Two parties were considered Tutsi. The first Tutsi party, the Union Nationale Rwandaise (Unar) was Monarchist and sought to preserve Tutsi hegemony. The second Tutsi party, the Rassemblement Democratique Rwandaise (Rader), was a moderate progressive party calling for the democratization of institutions and a constitutional monarchy. The two predominately Hutu parties were the Association pour la Promotion Sociale de la Masse (Aprosoma) and the Parti du Mouvement de l'Emancipation Hutu (Parmehutu).<sup>9</sup> Aprosoma consisted of populist oriented leaders demanding social progress for oppressed groups in Rwanda, welcoming poor Tutsi as well as Hutu. Parmehutu was a militaristic anti-Tutsi group demanding the improvement of the Hutu status.

The mere existence of these four parties and their philosophy at the time of independence illustrates polarization occurred during Belgian colonization. The discrimination felt by the Hutu during Belgian colonial rule instigated retaliation against the Tutsi at the time of independence.<sup>10</sup> The violent

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<sup>9</sup> MSM was converted into PARMEHUTU in 1959.

encounters between the Hutu and Tutsi resulted in thousands of Tutsi fleeing Rwanda, and an overthrow of the monarchy. Political power was relegated to the Hutus.

### **Economic Crisis**

The presence of economic crisis prior to the outbreak of genocide is an important precursor. Economic crisis produces anxiety among a population. There is no doubt that Rwanda was in a state of economic crisis prior to the occurrence of genocide in 1994. Rwanda's staple export on the international market plummeted, structural adjustment policies (SAP's) imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank were implemented, and agricultural and food production collapsed. These events plunged Rwanda into severe economic crisis.

A state of economic crisis did not always exist in Rwanda. Prior to the late 1980's, the Rwandans were considered well off in comparison to others in the region. Hintjens finds that prior to the mid 1980's, Rwanda's government managed to avoid becoming heavily indebted. The economy was also relatively well managed, money was stable and levels of inflation, foreign debt and corruption remained low (Hintjens 1999, 256). In addition, Rwanda provided its citizens with access to drinking water, electricity, primary education, and basic health care.

The progressive economic situation in Rwanda began to deteriorate as international coffee prices fell in the late 1980's. Coffee was Rwanda's key

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<sup>10</sup> Rwanda was granted independence July 1, 1962.

export. The exportation of coffee accounted for 75% of the export earning in Rwanda (Keane 1995, 22). The recession was exacerbated by stagnated food production between the years of 1985 and 1990.

To illustrate the decrease in food production, Peter Uvin notes that Rwandan farmers Kcal production decreased from 2,055 Kcal per person per day in 1984 to 1,509 Kcal in 1991. Although the production of cash crops during the same period slowly increased, the outbreak of civil war closed essential trade routes beginning in 1991 displacing farmers responsible for the production of food and agricultural export (Uvin 1998, 54). In 1993, Rwanda's food production totally collapsed. Food had to be imported and famine increased exponentially. The increase in food imports and the devaluation of currency resulted in a trade gap which produced export revenue barely covering one third of the import bill (Hintjens 1999, 258). The economic crisis forced Rwanda to accumulate external debt and challenged the existing re-distributional welfare policies that had enhanced the quality of life for many Rwandans.

In 1991 Rwanda signed a \$90 million structural adjustment program with the World Bank. The cornerstone of the policy was the devaluation of currency. The implementation of the SAP's resulted in the devaluation of Rwandan currency by 40% in November of 1990, and an additional 15% in June of 1992. The consequence of the devaluation included inflation rising from 1% in 1989 to 19.2% in 1991 (Uvin 1998, 58). The effect of the SAP's administered by the IMF and the World Bank is controversial. SAP's imposed by the World Bank and the IMF, as Villa Jefremovas sees them, contributed to the impoverishment of a large



part of Rwanda's peasantry and ultimately devastated the entire Rwandan population (Jefremovas 1995, 29).

To be fair to the World Bank and the IMF, the SAP's were not intended to be applied to a region in the throes of civil war. Rwanda's implementation of the SAP's was also spotty. Two main areas that would have facilitated an improvement in the economic condition of the state included managing the size of the state and its degree of intervention in the economy. These two areas were ignored. The size of the state and its degree of intervention was hardly reduced (Uvin 1998, 59). Uvin notes the devastating effects of the SAP's: "the loans did not pull Rwanda out of its economic crisis. By 1993 Rwanda's debt as a percentage of GNP had skyrocketed from 32% in 1990 to 62%" (Uvin 1998, 59). In addition, resources were being applied to the civil war effort in an attempt to combat the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) penetrating Rwanda. As the result of a 10% increase in participation in the Rwandan Army military expenditures in 1993 rose to 7.6% of GNP compared to only 1.6% of GNP between 1985 and 1990. Conditions within Rwanda deteriorated with the economic recession and Rwanda ventured further down a path of destitution.

### **Political Crisis**

A series of political crises occurred as economic conditions deteriorated in Rwanda. A rise in political discontent between the Northern and Southern Hutu within Rwanda developed as the economy collapsed, a civil war broke out in 1990, and the international community pushed Rwanda to democratize.

When Rwanda achieved independence in 1962, Hutu rulers targeted Tutsis. Thousands of Tutsis fled to bordering countries to escape the wrath of violence. Throughout the early 1960's Tutsi's fought to return to power in Rwanda, but the Hutu's proved horrifically successful in deterring Tutsi attacks. "From 1959-1967, some 20,000 Tutsi were killed and another 200,000 Tutsi—half their population in Rwanda at the time—were driven from the country as refugees" (Kuperman 2004, 63). The refugees coalesced and decades later formed the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF).

The RPF was active beginning in 1979 under the name the Rwandan Alliance for National Unity (RANU). RANU sought return to Rwanda and were aligned with Ugandan's Museveni guerrilla warfare rebel movement (Kuperman 2004, 65). The RPF was established following Rwandan President Habyarimana's formal ban in 1986 on the return of Tutsi refugees to Rwanda. The RPF was established in December of 1987. In 1988 Ugandan President Museveni attempted to persuade Habyarimana to allow Tutsi refugees back into Rwanda. The RPF wanted more than what Museveni was trying to negotiate. They wanted the removal of Habyarimana from power and a significant share of political power in Rwanda (Kuperman 2004, 68).

Museveni proved unable to negotiate the wants of the RPF. The RPF invaded Rwanda in October of 1990. Habyarimana responded with a counter attack and a military crackdown on Rwandan civilians accused of supporting the rebel force. Habyarimana detained 10-15,000 Rwandese accused of supporting the RPF. Throughout the early 1990's Habyarimana proved fickle in his relations

with the RPF. He attempted to make concessions with the RPF signing a declaration on the right of refugee return in February of 1991. In April 1992, Habyarimana installed a multi-party government but retained effective control of the government (Kuperman 2004, 72). Unsatisfied with Habyarimana's efforts the RPF continued to penetrate Rwanda with offensive attacks.

The international community began to pressure Habyarimana to solidify a peace agreement and end the civil war perpetuating in Rwanda. Pressured by the international community, Habyarimana signed the Arusha Accords in August of 1993. The signing of the Arusha Accords promoted both a peace agreement and introduced a transitional government. The peace agreement clause sought an end to the civil war playing out in Rwanda. The introduction of a transitional government aimed at acquiescing multi-party elections and integrating the RPF into the Rwandan Army. The dissatisfaction felt by the RPF regarding Habyarimana's signature on the Arusha Accords was shared by the Movement Republican National for Development (MRND) and the Coalition for the Defense of the Republic (CDR). MRND and CDR viewed President Habyarimana's signature as an act of betrayal. His agreement to the Accords was viewed as an act of betrayal because the President's own hard-line inner circle, *Akazu*, was unwilling to negotiate any end to the war that would accommodate the Tutsi (Peterson 2000, 272).

### **Elite Response**

Two Hutu parties increasingly promoted a racist ideology through the early 1990's: a wing of the Movement Republican National for Development (MRND),

the only party to have held power since independence, and the Coalition for the Defense of the Republic (CDR). Human Rights Watch concludes that “this genocide resulted from the deliberate choice of a modern elite to foster hatred and fear to keep itself in power” (Human Rights Watch 1999, 1).

The genocide of Tutsis and moderate Hutus is thought to have been devised within *Akazu*, the close circle of elites surrounding President Juvenal Habyarimana (Destexhe 1994, 28). *Akazu* illustrates the presence of radical extremist elites within the government structure. Economic and political crises within Rwanda perpetuated the need for regime survival. Hutus were unwilling to share political power. *Akazu*, the hard-line inner circle surrounding Habyarimana, felt Habyarimana was jeopardizing the power held by the Hutus and began to circulate their own policies. From 1990 on, it is thought that with the active complicity of Habyarimana and *Akazu* massacres of Tutsi's increased and went unpunished, eventually leading to full scale genocide in 1994 (Destexhe 1994, 28).

### **Findings**

Scapegoating the evils of colonization to the Tutsi allowed the Hutu to blame other ills experienced in Rwanda to the Tutsi. Contentious cleavages between the Hutu and the Tutsi were slowly absorbed by the Rwandese during colonization. The polarized identities were reinvigorated by radical extremists, *Akazu*, within the Rwandan government. Scapegoating was used to polarize Hutu and Tutsi relations prior to the genocide.

Utilizing the model advanced in this paper, it can be hypothesized that *Akazu* recognized that as economic and political crises unraveled within the country Hutu power could more easily be challenged. To avoid losing political power, blame for the economic and political crises were placed on the Tutsi. The crises were scapegoated to the minority population. Habyarimana and *Akazu* blamed the Tutsis for societal ills. They referenced the jobs held by Tutsis as those capable of propelling Rwanda into economic crisis. Habyarimana suggested that a conspiracy of traders, merchants, and intellectuals, professions held by a Tutsi majority were responsible for the deteriorating economic condition (Hintjens 1999, 256).

Propagandists, such as *Kangura* and Hate Radio incited hatred for the Tutsi by referencing the economic crisis. The Tutsi were propagated as wealthy. The Hutu were propagated as poor. The Hutu were propagated as experiencing the more adverse conditions associated with the economic decline.

Propagandists suggested that the elevated economic situation of the Tutsi could be attributed to their educational advantages and the fact that they were employed in jobs Hutus should hold. Propagandists instructed hatred and fear for the Tutsi. Human Rights Watch documented the propaganda spread to elicit such hatred and fear.

The propagandists said the Tutsi had infiltrated economy,—at one point *Kangura*<sup>11</sup> claimed that 70 percent of the rich in Rwanda were Tutsi—monopolized credit at the banks, and won a disproportionate share of the highly coveted import and export licenses. In a clear effort to divert the resentment otherwise directed at towards Hutu from Habyarimana's region,

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<sup>11</sup> newspaper

propagandists argued that it was Tutsi, not other Hutu, who occupied the jobs which Southern Hutu wanted and failed to get. They also accused the Tutsi of having taken a disproportionate share of places in secondary school and university and, because of their educational advantages, of having dominated the professions and government (Human Rights Watch 1999, 74).

According to Keane's journalistic account of the situation in Rwanda, extremists told Hutu peasants that the Tutsis were also coming to seize their land (Keane 1995, 23).

Another method by which propagandists were able to invoke hatred for the Tutsi included playing on the fears of past Tutsi political domination. The revolution of 1959 had freed the Hutu from the throes of Tutsi political power. The Hutu were fearful of a return to Tutsi rule. Propagandists reminded Hutus that should the Tutsis win the civil war playing out in Rwanda, "they [the Tutsi] would not just reverse all the political changes of the revolution but also reclaim all the property that had once been theirs, leaving many Hutu destitute" (Human Rights Watch 1999, 78). The Hutu, experiencing the adverse effects of severe economic crisis and uncertainty of their political future, could have begun to view genocide of the Tutsi as a viable solution to abating societal ills.

Uvin notes that people are more apt to view radical solutions as viable under economic stress: "For many people, hatred of the other served to combat the low self-esteem caused by chronic unemployment and squelched aspirations; these young, frustrated men were the ones most vulnerable to the kind of ethnic appeals that led to genocide" (Uvin 1998, 137). The Hutu population was served propaganda instructing them to believe that Tutsi domination would further

deteriorate their already destitute situation. A solution to their destitute situation could be found in taking Tutsi land and assets. According to Human Rights Watch, 86 percent of the population was living in poverty at the time of the genocide; this figure was the highest percentage in the world (Human Rights Watch 1999, 261). The appeal for genocide was initiated within the radical extremists surrounding the Habyarimana, *Akazu*. The destitute situation of the Hutu in Rwanda in 1994 enabled extremists to convince the population that genocide was a viable policy choice for abating societal ills.

Pressure from international actors for democratization threatened to deprive Habyarimana and his regime of the power they utilized to control the state. In an attempt to secure political power, ethnicity became a political tool of the radical extremists. Ethnic hatred was used as a tool to unite a large majority of the population around the Hutu government (Uvin 1998, 53). The Tutsi became scapegoats for the political upheaval felt within Rwanda. The radical extremists successfully invoked animosity between the Hutu and Tutsi. The radical elites established an artificial link between the rebel Tutsi force trying to gain access to political power in Rwanda, the RPF, and the general Tutsi population. Propagandists instructed by *Akazu* often used the terms Tutsi and RPF interchangeably (Human Rights Watch 1999, 74). The RPF, and by extension all Tutsi's, were also blamed by *Akazu* for the murder of President Habyarimana when his plane was shot out of the sky just prior to the outbreak of the 1994 genocide (Keane 1995, 28).

## CHAPTER III

### ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

On the nights of April 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, 1915, several hundred Armenian political, financial and intellectual leaders were arrested in Constantinople, deported to Anatolia, and murdered. This event is recognized as the official beginning of the genocide perpetrated against the Armenians residing in the Ottoman Empire (Adalian 2004, 53). Over the spring, summer and fall months of 1915 scholars and journalists estimate that between 800,000 and 1 million Armenians died (Balakian 2003, 179). Ultimately, the genocide cost Armenians residing in the Ottoman Empire over half their population (Astourian 1990, 113-114).

The Armenian genocide had its origins in the aspirations of the dictatorial triumvirate belonging to the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP).<sup>12</sup> Enver was Minister of War. Talaat was Minister of the Interior. Jemal was Minister of the Navy and military governor of Syria. In 1913, Enver, Jemal and Talaat seized the government in a coup and ruled the empire with a Turkish nationalist ideology for the following five years. Adalian (2004) illustrates the policy of the triumvirate in August of 1914, at the brink of World War I: "The CUP had become

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<sup>12</sup> The Committee of Union and Progress was known in the West as the Young Turks (Adalian 2004, 54).



a dictatorial, xenophobic, intolerant clique intent on pursuing a policy of racial exclusivity (Adalian 2004, 54).

The Young Turks had originally advocated constitutionalism, egalitarianism, and liberalism (Adalian 2004, 54). Deep economic and political crisis and the near destruction of the hierarchical social structure in the Ottoman Empire radicalized the original liberal Ottomanist views of the Young Turks.<sup>13</sup> Adalian comments on the unraveling of a policy of genocide in the Ottoman Empire: “The Ottoman leaders decided that the only way to save the Turkish state was to reduce the Christian population” (Adalian 2004, 53). A genocidal policy was viewed by political elites and the population as a viable solution toward the eradication of societal ills (Suny 1993, 108).

It is important to note the connotation of the term “deportation.” For the purposes of this project, deportation refers to acts of massacre. This connotation is found in Peter Balakian’s work (Balakian 2003, 335). Deportation as massacre is illustrated through the acts that occurred during the ‘deportation’ of the Armenian provinces, cities, and villages beginning in April of 1915 and continuing through the fall. First of all, the deportations were not an orderly relocation process (Adalian 2004, 56). According to the research of Rouben Adalian, the Ottoman government made no attempt to provide food or housing to the deportees. The deportations were intended to expose the Armenians to

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<sup>13</sup> Prior to World War I, the Ottoman Empire experienced a series of political and military defeats. The annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by Austro-Hungary in 1908, the subsequent declaration of independence by Bulgaria, the merger of Crete with Greece, revolts in Albania between 1910 and 1912, losses to Italy in Libya (1911), and in the course of two Balkan wars (1912-1913) the diminution of Ottoman territory in Europe and the forced migration of Turks from Europe into Anatolia (Suny 1993, 108).

abuses consisting of thievery, random butchery, rape, and kidnapping. The authorities made no attempt to protect the deportees; rather, they went to great lengths to ensure the deportees perished before reaching the final destination in the Syrian Desert (Adalian 2004, 56).

The initial stage of deportation involved the immediate killing of men and teenage males. Women and children were forced to march for weeks to a dispatching center located in Aleppo. The women and children were starved, beaten, and forced to march without clothing. Upon arrival in Aleppo those that had endured the journey were deported to desert encampments in the Mesopotamian and Syrian deserts. Adalian provides horrific statistics regarding the survival rate of those forced to march: "Only a quarter of all deportees survived the hundreds of miles, and weeks of walking" (Adalian 2004, 56). Those who made it to the Syrian Desert encampments were expected to die from food and water deprivation. Adalian also provides an account of the horror that occurred upon reaching the Syrian Desert: "In this final carnage, children were smashed against rocks, women were torn apart with swords, men were mutilated, and others were thrown into flames alive (Adalian 2004, 57). Deportation involved more than what Webster's dictionary defines as an act or instance of carrying or sending out of a country. The deportation of Armenians denotes massacre; a slow death that lasted weeks finally ending with the collapse of their bodies from abuse and neglect.

## **Political Environment**

Instrumental factors influenced the adoption of an extremist policy of genocide in the Ottoman Empire in 1915. An overview of the relationship between the Muslim Ottomans and the non-Muslim subjects illustrates that the identities were eventually polarized, but had co-existed under the *millet* system for centuries.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Ottoman tribes overran the cradles of modern civilization. They conquered vast geographic areas with military genius. Henry Morgenthau, the American ambassador to Constantinople prior to the genocide, provides an impressive description of the accumulation of land and people by the Ottomans:

[The Ottoman's] swept from the plains of Central Asia and, like a whirlwind, overwhelmed the nations of Mesopotamia and Asia Minor; it conquered Egypt, Arabia, and practically all of northern Africa and then poured into Europe, crushed the Balkan nations, occupied a large part of Hungary, and even established the outposts of the Ottoman Empire in the southern parts of Russia (Morgenthau 1919, 277-78).

Vast accumulations of territory also meant the accumulation of large populations of people. A subordinate relationship was imposed on the conquered non-Muslims (Adalian 2004, 53). The divide was influenced by religion because Ottoman common law was based on Islamic doctrine

The Muslims' belonged to the *Umma*, the politically organized community of believers and were recognized as having a higher status, that of over-lordship; the non-Muslims were relegated a lower status, that of infidels (Dadrian 1995, 5). Despite the super-ordinate - subordinate relationship between the Muslim Turks

and Catholic Armenians their relationship between 1453 to 1878 is characterized as a period of “benign symbiosis” (Suny 1993, 101). In fact, Armenians came to be known as the loyal *millet* (Suny 1993, 101). The non-Muslim Armenians and Muslim Turks were able to coexist despite the existence of the superior and subservient relationship. It can be argued that Muslim Turks and non-Muslim Armenian identities were construed and polarized by international influences and were subjected to further polarization under the CUP’s policy of Turkish nationalism.

### **International Pressures**

The Tanzimat era greatly influenced the relationship between the Muslims and non-Muslims within the Empire. In the 1850’s the British advocated changes to the hierarchical relationship between the Muslims and non-Muslims by introducing a Protestant *millet*. In addition, the Treaty of Berlin advocated more equal treatment for minorities within the Empire as states within the Empire fought for independence. The treaty, influenced by international actors, was drawn up following the Tanzimat era and the introduction of the Protestant *millet*. The Berlin Treaty may have been perceived by elites as threatening to their retention of political power.

During the 1800’s, the era of *Tanzimat* significantly introduced reform within the Ottoman Empire. *Tanzimat* called for equality among all Ottoman subjects and an end to the discrimination against non-Muslims (Suny 1993, 25).<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> According to Bloxham, the decree of Tanzimat in 1856 known as the *Hatti Humayun* was a restatement of the values of the 1839 *Hatti Serif of Gulhane* Tanzimat decree. The main

The period of *Tanzimat* introduced Armenians to the idea that the state should not discriminate against minority groups and that Muslims and non-Muslim subjects could co-exist in a relationship of equality. During *Tanzimat*, a change in the hierarchical societal structure was broached. Bloxham notes that the Ottoman Empire embarked on the *Tanzimat* reform movement in an effort to retain support from the Great Powers and to balance Russian interference. Although sincere in their general intent, much of the decree was a public relations exercise (Bloxham 2005, 33). Unfortunately for the Armenians, the *Tanzimat* reforms were never fully applied and the reform era ended in 1871 (Walker 1980, 100).

The introduction of reform within the Empire changed the subservient and super-ordinate relationship between the Muslims and non-Muslims within the empire. Less toleration was extended as non-Muslims vied for a place of equality within society. It is suggested by Bloxham that British pressure in 1850 to incorporate a Protestant *millet* changed the Ottoman *millet* system. The changes to the *millet* formed the initiative for reform movements within the Empire (Bloxham 2005, 43). Bloxham notes that traditionally the *millets* had functioned as little theocracies. The *millets* had essentially governed themselves

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differences in the two resided in: *Hatti Humayun* went further in its rhetoric of inter-religious equality and secularization, and its view of an inclusive common Ottoman identity; *Hatti Humayan* made no reference to Islamic law and confirmed that apostasy from Islam would not be punishable by death; and Military service, administration of justice and taxation, and entry into schools and public employment were to be equally relegated to Muslims and non-Muslims. Lastly *Hatti Humayan* stipulated the need for adherence to annual budgets, establishment of banks, use of European skill and capital, and codification of penal and commercial law. Interestingly, Bloxham mentions that the 1856 decree was deemed necessary because of the lack of progress made since the 1839 decree, but also the need to tie in the aspirations of the large Christian population with the future of the state thereby deterring interventions by other states on behalf of the Christians (Bloxham 2005, 31).

and simply coordinated their policies with the Ottoman Empire. The introduction of the Protestant *millet* by the British initiated reforms in the constitutions of the other *millets*, the Catholic, Jewish, Greek and Armenian *millets*. A separation in religious and civil affairs was introduced along with the idea of democratic representation (Bloxham 2005, 43).

Bloxham's research argues that the changing of state structure and ideology provides an explanation for the occurrence of genocide. He presents evidence of this claim by evaluating the relationship between the Ottomans and Armenians before the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Bloxham 2005, 15). Armenians were regarded as non-Muslims monotheists. They occupied a position in the Islamic theocracy that was legally assured but were considered subordinate. Although there was a superior and subservient relationship between the Ottomans and the Armenians, they co-existed. Bloxham regards Ottoman toleration in his research: "Ottoman toleration of non-Muslims compared favorably with the record of many European states toward their religious minorities" (Bloxham 2005, 15).

Nationalism ensued following the flop of the *Tanzimat* era. Turkish resentment for foreign power involvement in Ottoman affairs invoked a nationalist response. Foreign powers advocated for a disturbance in the hierarchical natural order of super-ordinate and subordinate Muslim and non-Muslim relationship. It is apparent that the *Tanzimat* era introduced minorities to the concept of reform and equality. In 1828, Greece successfully fought its war for independence. In 1876, after staging a rebellion the Ottomans massacred the Bulgarians in an

incident referred to as the "Bulgarian Horrors". Also, from 1875-1900 the Balkan states petitioned for reforms. In 1887, the Russo-Turkish war was fought. At the conclusion of the Russo-Turkish war the Treaty of Berlin was drawn up.

The Treaty of Berlin proved extremely important in two ways. The treaty promised reforms for the Balkan states and the Armenians. Article 23 in the Treaty of Berlin promised reforms for the Balkan states. Article 61 promised reforms for the Armenians. The Treaty of Berlin facilitated partial autonomy for the Bulgarians and initiated the process of Balkan succession. Alliances between Balkan states were formed in opposition to Ottoman rule by 1912. Massacres by the Turks ensued in response to the coalescing in the Balkans. In October and November the Balkan states warred against the Ottoman Empire. Turkey suffered heavy losses to the combined fronts of Balkan armies. Turkish sentiment was again marked by rage toward the Europeans for intervening. The Turks were unable to accept the advocated notion of equality. In December of 1912 an armistice was declared. The London peace conference followed. During the peace conference Turkey refused to give up European Turkey and pay a war indemnity. War continued in the Balkans through the spring of 1913. At the conclusion of the Balkan conflict the Turks lost 70 percent of their European population and 85 percent of their European territory. Russia mobilized on the Caucasian frontier and informed Turkey that if there was war in the Balkans again they could not promise neutrality. Germany responded to Russia, claiming that an attack on Turkey might trigger an all-out European war. The Balkan states provided the impetus for the Armenians to take a closer look

at their reform efforts. The Balkan wars also forced the Ottomans to look at what should be done with the Armenians. Armenians were forming revolutionary units and were perceived to want their own independent state. The Armenian question came into existence.

Morgenthau comments on the consequences of the withdrawal of the allied fleet from the Dardanelles (Morgenthau 1919, 274). England, France, Russia and Italy had after a century, lost influential power and control in Turkey. The Turks were free agents; they were no longer dependent on the European powers. "For the first time in two centuries they could now live their national life according to their own inclinations, and govern their peoples according to their own wills" (Morgenthau 1919, 274). "The Turks freedom from European tutelage was celebrated by murdering a million of its own subjects" (Morgenthau 1919, 274).

### **Political Crisis**

The CUP may have seen it as beneficial to the Empire to polarize the Muslim and non-Muslim groups following the Balkan wars. As Ottoman territory waned and former Ottoman states gained independence, the Ottoman Empire faced the reality that it may collapse. Ultimately, the triumvirate was unwilling to face the loss of additional territory and people. As the international community and the Armenians advocated for more equality, the Young Turks began to view requests for equality as indicative of the destruction of the Ottoman Empire.

The Armenian question, which is often referenced as a cause for the genocide that unraveled, developed in the last decades of the nineteenth century



(Dadrian 1995, 34). It is suggested that Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin invoked a sense of Armenian nationalism the Turks felt they had to crush (Dadrian 1995, 35).

Armenians formed the largest element in the population in the six provinces in the north-eastern part of Asia Minor, bordering on Russia. This geographic area is known as Armenia. The territory which the Armenians inhabit forms the connecting link between Europe and Asia. The mere geographic residence of the Armenians formed an area of contention between the Turks and Armenians (Morgenthau 1919, 287). The Armenians lived in the mountainous plateau between Turkey and Russia. The Russians posed a threat to the Turks because they were not allied. In 1914, the Turks instigated war with Russia. In the early days of 1915, the Turks were defeated by the Russians in a battle waged by Enver at the Russian military base of Sarikamish. The defeat cumulated in the loss of three-quarters of Enver's army (Walker 1980, 199). The relationship between the Turks and the Armenians proved extremely contentious after Enver suffered a humiliating military defeat.

Turkish nationalism rendered a disgraceful provision of services to non-Turkish subjects within the empire (Suny 1993, 25). The Armenians experienced severe discrimination at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century under the rule of Abdul Hamid II (1876-1909). The Armenians rebelled against discriminatory practices. The Ottoman Empire responded to Armenian self defense with brutality. Between 1894 and 1896, a policy of Massacre was advanced to maintain the decaying empire (Suny 1993, 105-106). Sultan Abdul Hamid was unable to

complete his intended destruction of the entire Armenian population because foreign powers threatened to get involved.

In 1908, Sultan Abdul Hamid was overthrown by the Young Turk Ittihadists. The Young Turks promised liberty, justice and equality for all Ottoman subjects. Initially, the Armenians and minorities were pleased by the Young Turk rise to power (Suny 1993, 106). In fact, the Dashnaktsutiun revolutionary party, an Armenian political party, had been allied with the Committee of Union and Progress. The Armenians were pleased by the Young Turks intent on restoring the liberal constitution. Social hostility between peoples of the empire developed as the Young Turks rose to power (Suny 1993, 106). The reversal of the traditional Muslim-*dhimmi* hierarchy created resentment toward Christians, Europeans, and elements of European life filtering into the Ottoman Empire (Suny 1993, 107). The policy of the Young Turk government during World War I changed the party's original conviction. The political policy became a revolutionary project to completely alter the ethnic and political balance in Eastern Anatolia. The goal of the project was to permit the eventual creation of a Turkic Empire (Suny 1993, 106). According to Vahakn Dadrian, the leaders of the Young Turk Ittihadists "recognized the pervasive influence of Islam in the country, and resolved to exploit it in their plans to eliminate the sources of domestic nationality conflicts" (Dadrian 1995, 5).

The Ottoman Empire's commitment to maintaining a hierarchical relation with minorities left the Armenians two choices: they could remain silent victims of state injustice, or organize to defend themselves. In response to their

deteriorating situation the Armenians formed a small revolutionary movement, although they preferred to petition the government and the Western powers (Suny 1993, 98-99).

### **Economic Crisis**

In 1876 the Ottoman Empire declared bankruptcy (Bloxham 2005, 36). Bloxham's research posits that the non-Muslim population of the Ottoman Empire was a comprador class.<sup>15</sup> The non-Muslims Armenians cooperated economically with Europeans in the region because they benefited from the trading privileges passed on by the Europeans through the capitulatory system.<sup>16</sup> The Greeks and Armenians were depicted as having different interests than the Islamic Ottoman state. They were seen as forestalling the development of the Muslim bourgeoisie and inhibiting Turkish national development. The depiction of Greeks and Armenians as economically more sound was adopted because of the disproportionate number of minorities occupying commercial and financial positions in Istanbul and western Anatolia (Bloxham 2005, 18).

In addition, Christian social visibility increased in certain social sectors. Those sectors happened to be evident to visitors in western cities and to Ottoman elite in Istanbul. The 1838 Anglo-Ottoman commercial treaty stimulated international trade. Bloxham regards the founding of anti-Christian sentiment:

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<sup>15</sup> A comprador class is essentially a class that acts as an intermediary in the business affairs of foreign establishments.

<sup>16</sup> In 1569 France was granted the concessions of the capitulations. These were granted to other European powers and made permanent. They were originally granted willingly by Ottoman rulers as a way of bestowing favor and consolidating alliances. The capitulatory system granted legal and economic privileges for citizens of the Christian powers and their Christian clients living in the Islamic state (Bloxham 2005, 12).

According to Bloxham as it regards the Armenians, “the anti-Christian stereotype was founded upon urban merchants, moneylenders, and middlemen and rural traders; upon certain regions and elements of the agricultural economy, notably in Cilicia; and upon the association of Armenian success with Westernization and foreign influence, because of the Armenian importation of Western technologies and the diasporic character of Armenian trade networks (Bloxham 2005, 41).

Bloxham argues that Christians were simply trying to maximize their economic situation. They were not intentionally disregarding the interests of the Empire (Bloxham, 41).

By 1914, the economic situation in the Ottoman Empire was in a state of failure. In fact, Talaat confided to Morgenthau that there was no money in the Turkish Treasury (Morgenthau 1919, 37). The treasury was in a more exhausted state than normal because of the closing of the Dardanelles. The blockading of the Mediterranean ports had stopped all imports and customs dues.

The peasantry plunged into starvation at the outbreak of World War I. Thousands were dying daily of starvation in Turkey. The starvation was the result of government looting and the recruitment of men into the army. The government looted the civilian population of their livestock and looted materials from merchants and shop men with the thought that World War I would be quick and they would replace what they had taken (Morgenthau 1919, 64). In addition, all able bodied men had been recruited into the army. This action left behind only a few men to till the fields. Food production severely declined. A million families were left without breadwinners resulting in destitution. In addition, the

inadequate amount of money the soldiers received resulted in the deaths of thousands from starvation (Morgenthau 1919, 66). The empire lost a quarter of its Turkish population in the beginning years of the war.

### **Elite Response**

Hovannisian provides a concise, concrete analysis of the process by which the Young Turks and the CUP came to power. There was opposition to Sultan Abdul Hamid among the Armenians and among émigré centers.<sup>17</sup> The Young Turks formed societies that drafted ideas to keep the Ottoman Empire from collapsing. Most patriotic Turkish leaders believed that only an institution of efficient, just government could save the Ottoman Empire.<sup>18</sup> Anti-Hamidian opposition was renewed in the Ottoman Empire during the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Ahmed Riza's Young Turk faction merged with anti-Hamidian's to form *Ittihad ve Terakki*, the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP). *Ittihadists* marched on Constantinople and demanded that the constitution be restored. Abdul Hamid agreed to play the role of constitutional monarch on July 24, 1908. A cabinet of *Ittihadists* assumed the control of the government (Hovannisian 1967, 29). In 1909, after succumbing to an attack by conservative Turkish elements supporting Abdul Hamid, the Committee of Union and Progress dethroned and exiled Abdul Hamid. By 1911, dissension within the Committee of Union and Progress resulted in the formation of the Liberal Union. The Liberal

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<sup>17</sup> These are centers where people were forced to migrate for political reasons. Such centers existed in Geneva and Paris

<sup>18</sup> Ahmed Riza was a Patriotic Turkish leader.

Union pledged the original revolutionary goals. In 1913, an *Ittihadist* counter-coup brought dictatorial nationalist elements to the forefront of the Committee of Union and Progress goals (Hovannisian 1967, 30). The assassination of Nazim Pasha brought down the Liberal Party. Mahmud Shevek Pasha, the grand vizier, was assassinated in June of 1913, which opened the door for Talaat to become minister of the interior and later in 1916 Grand Vizier. Enver became minister of war, and Jemal became minister of the Navy (Balakian 2003, 159). Talaat, Enver, and Jemal represented the new ruling triumvirate.

### **Perception of Threat**

In wake of the Balkan wars and the initiation of World War I Balakian feels that the Young Turk trio was anxious about the future of the empire (Balakian 2003, 160). Talaat was able to promote a nationalist ideology and propagate a policy of genocide as a solution to abate societal ills. According to Balakian, “the CUP waged a campaign of race annihilation against the Armenians by deeming them the internal enemy” (Balakian 2003, 166).

Balakian suggests that with the loss of Christian states in the Balkans, the Ottoman government grew more unstable and the ruling elite fell under attack (Balakian 2003, 159). In addition, the coup staged by the nationalist faction of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) on January 26, 1913 significantly shifted power in the Ottoman Empire. The assassination of Minister of War Nazim Pasha brought down the liberal party. The nationalist faction of the CUP, lead by Talaat and Enver seized control of the government (Balakian 2003, 159).

The military defeat of Enver's army by Russia in the winter of 1915 is viewed as a political crisis that contributed to the foundation for the occurrence of genocide. Enver allegedly scapegoated the Armenians as responsible for the defeat of his army, claiming the Armenians acted as spies (Walker 1980, 199). Deportation of the Armenians was viewed as a viable solution to ensure there was no further collaboration between the Armenians and the Russian army (Suny 1993, 109).

### **Findings**

Abdul Hamid, the "Red Sultan," first devised a scheme to forestall disruptions in the Turkish Empire. Between 1895 and 1896, 200,000 Armenians were massacred. Abdul Hamid was forced to abandon his aim to destroy an entire race because England, France and Russia threatened to intervene if the Sultan progressed as he had planned (Morgenthau 1919, 288-290). The Committee of Union and Progress led by Talaat and Enver adopted Abdul Hamid's Armenian policy and decided to do away with the subject people all together. Their goal was to terminate them wholesale and Turkify the empire by massacring the non-Muslim elements (Morgenthau 1919, 286). The Young Turk goal rested upon murdering every living Christian.

According to Suny, the state encouraged anti-Armenian hostility from Muslims by creating an Armenian scapegoat. The defeats and failures of the Ottoman government could be blamed on the Armenians (Suny 1993, 106). "Armenians were seen as responsible for the troubles of the empire, allies of the anti-Turkish European powers, and the source of politically radical ideas

including trade unionism and socialism” (Suny 1993, 108). The idea of an Armenian alliance with the Russians may have been perceived by the CUP as a threat to the retention of Turkish political power.

Chief propagandist of the Committee of Union and Progress, Ziya Gokalp, played a role in the dissemination of nationalist ideology (Balakian 2003, 163.) Ziya Gokalp advocated that Turkey could only be revitalized if it rid itself of its non-Muslim elements. He advocated for a return to the Golden age; the pre-Islamic era of Turkic warriors. Gokalp believed that the Empire’s return to its great military past and a homogenous nation were essential for the strength of Turkey (Balakian 2003, 165). Gokalp wrote:

a nation must be “a society consisting of people who speak the same language, have the same education and are united in their religious and aesthetic ideals—in short those who have a common culture and religion (Balakian 2003, 165).

In addition to the nationalist propaganda disseminated by the CUP’s chief propagandist, the sheikh-ul-Islam’s published proclamation of *Jihad* summoned the Muslim world to arise and massacre its Christian oppressors (Balakian 2003, 169). Balakian suggests that *Jihad* pamphlets appealed to the need to exterminate all Christians (Balakian 2003, 170).

The CUP instructed the scapegoating of the Christian population for the defeat suffered by the Turkish army in the Caucasus. The CUP asserted that large numbers of Armenian soldiers in Van and other Armenian provinces deserted, crossed the border, and joined the Russian Army. The Armenian’s knowledge of roads and the terrain was propagated as an important factor in the



Russian victory (Morgenthau 1919, 294). "Treasonable behavior of the Armenians of Van provided an excuse for the subsequent treatment of the whole [Armenian] race" (Morgenthau 1919, 295). The Armenians were scapegoated as revolutionists (Morgenthau 1919, 300).

Morgenthau's conversations with Talaat provide evidence that scapegoating occurred. In early April when hundreds of Armenians were deported to the interior from Constantinople, Talaat told Morgenthau that the government was acting in self defense (Morgenthau 1919, 326).

"The Armenians at Van, he said, had already shown their abilities as revolutionists; he knew that these leaders in Constantinople were corresponding with the Russians and he had every reason to fear that they would start an insurrection against the central government. The safest plan, therefore, was to send them to Angora and other interior towns" (Morgenthau 1919, 327).

At another time Talaat explained to Morgenthau that the Armenians were in constant correspondence with the Russians (Morgenthau 1919, 333). "These people, he [Talaat] said, refused to disarm when we told them to. They opposed us at Van and at Zeitoun, and they helped the Russians. There is only one way in which we can defend ourselves against them in the future, and that is just to deport them" (Morgenthau 1919, 335).

In a meeting with Morgenthau, Talaat explained that the objections to the Armenians were based on three distinct grounds:

In the first place, they [the Armenians] have enriched themselves at the expense of the Turks. Armenians have regarded themselves as Europeans. They speak and Indo-European language and are thought to be of the Aryan race. Their religion is also the religion of Europe (Morgenthau 1919, 288). In the second place, they are determined to domineer over us and to establish a separate state. In the third place, they have openly encouraged

our enemies. They have assisted the Russians in the Caucasus and our failure there is largely explained by their actions. We have therefore come to the irrevocable decision that we shall make them powerless before this war is ended (Morgenthau 1919, 337).

Morgenthau argued with Talaat about his justification for the ill treatment of Armenians. Talaat responded:

It is no use for you to argue, we have already disposed of three quarters of the Armenians; there are none at all left in Bitlis, Van, and Erzeroum. The hatred between the Turks and the Armenians is now so intense that we have got to finish with them. If we don't, they will plan their revenge (Morgenthau 1919, 337-8).

Genocide was viewed as a viable policy by the extremists in an effort to deflect culpability for societal ills. The perceived threat to the retention of Turkish political power felt by the CUP weighed in on the development of a radical extremist policy of genocide to rid the Armenian threat to Turkish power.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

The study examined factors that may have led elites to perceive a threat to their power and consequently respond by introducing a radical extremist policy to diffuse the threat. An answer to the first question asked in this study: what makes the ground ripe for genocide seems to lie in the evaluation of factors that may instigate elites to question the status of their power. Economic crises, political crises, international pressures, and the pre-existence of a polarized society are all variables present in the Rwandan and Armenian cases. These factors seem to play a role in the elite's choice to adopt a policy of genocide.

An answer to the second question: How do elites come to view genocide as a viable policy solution may be found in the evaluation of the elite's perception of a threat. *Akazu* and the CUP were unwilling to share their political power. They adopted a policy of genocide to eliminate the threatening aspect of society and diffuse those advocating for changes to the political status quo. The study suggests that the mere existence of a threat and the possibility of the threat remaining unabated leads to a more radical extremist approach to removing the threat.

In both cases similar events unfolded. The figures below depict the similarities.

## Rwandan Case

Independent Variables	
<b>Polarized Society</b>	Hutu/Tutsi Belgian Colonization, <i>Akazu</i>
<b>Economic Crisis</b>	Staple Export Plummets on Int'l Market SAP's Devalue Currency
<b>Political Crisis</b>	Rise of <i>Akazu</i> -Hutu Power Civil War Rwandan Patriotic Front
<b>International Pressures</b>	Arusha Accords

Figure 2. Evidence of independent variables in the Rwandan case.

## Armenian Case

Independent Variables	
<b>Polarized Society</b>	Muslim Turks/non-Muslim Armenians British - Protestant Millet 1850 Turkish Nationalism 1915
<b>Economic Crisis</b>	Turkish Treasury Exhausted Closing of Dardanelles
<b>Political Crisis</b>	CUP Coup 1913 Balkan War Defeat by Russia 1915
<b>International Pressures</b>	Treaty of Berlin Article 61

Figure 3. Evidence of independent variables in the Armenian case.

*Akazu* and the CUP scapegoated the minority groups for the societal ills within the states. They sought to deflect culpability to retain political power.

### **Implications**

A perceived threat to the power held by elites in countries where polarization has occurred, economic and political crises are occurring, and international demands to democratize pressure governments, may be indicative of a cause for adopting a policy of genocide.

As the United Nations, various non-governmental organizations and other nations continue to attempt to resolve conflicts between intrastate groups they may find it beneficial to evaluate whether economic and political crises exist, whether polarization has occurred and whether the international community is advocating for a change in the political status quo of the country. They may also be on the look out for the occurrence of scapegoating propaganda to minority groups. De-escalation of genocidal tendencies may lie in dissuading elites from perceiving these factors as threaten the retention of their power.

Continuing to research causes of genocidal violence may facilitate the termination of such horrific violence. Understanding that economic and political crises, international pressures, and the presence of a polarized society threaten elite's perception of their power may provide a piece of the puzzle that could ultimately bring to an end to genocide in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Further research into the role international pressures play on elite's perception of the status of their power may provide interesting insights. Understanding why genocide occurs and how a genocidal policy is adopted is a huge endeavor. This research hopes to

have impacted the scholarship currently in circulation, adding yet another dimension to the understanding of the adoption of a policy of genocide.

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