

# Shadows of a Reich: Building of a Nation-State

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**Abstract:**

19th century is known as the century which gave birth to the concept of nations and nationalism as we define them today. In this context, the German example is particularly telling because it demonstrates how a nation could be built from the top-down with regulation and watchful eye of the state. Through examining the Kulturkampf period of 19th century German history the aim of the following is to show that the same model could and – if the author is allowed to put so- should be applied in the case of Armenia, which still has not performed its transition from Gemeinschaft (community) to Gesellschaft (society). The following is an examination of these complex cultural processes and of their political implications.

\*All the translations from the German original texts are done by the author, except when noted.

*We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,  
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,  
With an alien people clutching their gods. - T. S. Elliot<sup>1</sup>*

## **Introduction**

It is hard to speak about a phenomenon so complicated and yet seemingly so self-apparent as “national identity”. One’s best attempt towards an explication of this term will be an elusive one, since the subject at hand does not follow any set rigidity of forms and rules. It is fluid and is shaped through the obscurity of time past and by the ambiguities of time present. This, however shall not detain us in any manner from our curious journey into the sphere of “national identity”, for time and again it is more important to raise new questions than to find answers, since time may – and it surely will - offset many of our expectations rendering them invalid or even unnecessary.

The following, therefore, is a discourse and an investigation about Armenian national identity, and an examination of how to create and restructure that identity while following the lessons and examples set by the Imperial German government at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The aim is to show how the restructuring of the national identity stem from the direct actions of the state, following the logic set by Hobsbawm: “Nations do not make states and nationalisms but the other way round” (1990, p.10). While, it may sound plausible that the nation-states are past their prime if one follows the statements of Hobsbawm and other scholars, it is still important to structure a given people along the lines of certain forms and traditions, which will in the end also lead to the transformation of the traditional *Gemeinschaft* (*community*) into a modern *Gesellschaft* (*society*). Though, the task - if we follow the general delineation above - may seem too entangled in issues and concepts that need to be thoroughly

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<sup>1</sup> p. 97, 1967.

treated on their own, the suggestion of the current author to the future researchers in this or linked fields is to dare gazing into the abyss even if the abyss gazes back onto you.

## I

### 19<sup>th</sup> Century: Rise of the National Consciousness

In 1832, when the national sentiments of the German speaking people were still in the midst of various developments and were more lenient towards the cultural expression of that novel idea of nation and national identity, Philip Jakob Siebenpfeiffer had referred to the people gathered during the Hambach Festival in the following words:

The day will come...when sublime Germania shall stand on the bronze pedestal of liberty and justice, bearing in one hand the torch of enlightenment, which shall throw the beam of civilization into the remotest corners of the earth and in the other the arbiter's balance.<sup>2</sup>

These words may serve as an early sign, that call not only for a cultural unification of the German speaking people – which as history will show never actually materialized – but also to a unification that would have a political significance in form of a *sublime Germania*. Being an excerpt of a larger speech, these words may serve as a good introductory point based on which we can begin our survey.

Certain phenomena need a long time before they come to complete realization, despite this their slow yet steady advance can be seen and traced almost in the minutest details – that is when there are records left. Such are the histories of the concepts of national identity and nation state, since while one may trace the awakening of national consciousness at the time of

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<sup>2</sup> The German original reads: “Ja, er wird kommen der Tag, wo ein gemeinsames deutsches Vaterland sich erhebt, das alle Söhne als Bürger begrüßt, und alle Bürger mit gleicher Liebe, mit gleichem Schutz umfaßt; wo die erhabene Germania dasteht, auf dem erzenen Piedestal der Freiheit und des Rechts, in der einen Hand die Fackel der Aufklärung, welche civilisierend hinausleuchtet in die fernsten Winkel der Erde, in der andern die Wage des Schiedsrichteramts, streitenden Völkern das selbsterbetene Gesetz des Friedens spendend“ (Wirth, 1981, pp. 31-41). While the English excerpt is taken from the book *The Age of Revolution* by Eric Hobsbawm.

the French Revolution and immediately afterwards, it also took almost a span of a whole century for those to reach the form and shape, to which so many aspired in their minds. Regardless of then current or future ambitions of those leaders, Siebenpfeiffer being one of them, their national ambitions were circumscribed by the issues of that time, and thus were predominantly cultural<sup>3</sup>, even though their ideas bore repercussions for the creation of the later political nationalism.

It is true that as according to the definition by Benedict Anderson nation is “an imagined political community” (p. 6, 1991), but the first representations of that imagined community, had to be cultural because of the uncertainty that surrounded the newly conceived notion of nation, or national identity. This cultural nationalism can trace back its roots to the works and writings of great German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder, to whose ideas of cultural and primarily linguistic nationalism are many of the nationalist thinkers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century indebted. Following the logic of the above-adduced statement one can pose the question: Was it in any manner possible to speak about a German nation unified within a single realm? Hardly so, as the poem written in 1813 by Ernst Arndt comes to show:

What is the German's fatherland?  
Is it Prussia, is it Swabia?  
Is it where the vines blossom on the Rhine?  
Is it where the gull moves on the Belt?  
Oh, no! No! No!  
Our fatherland must be bigger! (2013, p. 114)

One could not point to a single Germany in any successful manner because of the multiple German states that existed within the Austrian Empire or later confederacies, partially led by Prussia or Austria. Hence so many questions raised by Arndt, and the conclusion he finally reaches is not satisfactory from a retrospective view, since he merely shows the cultural and linguistic limits of what he conceived as the German Reich.

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<sup>3</sup> This is especially so in the case of the German speaking people, and should be understood in that context.

Indeed, one of the most important symbols – which bear witness to this cultural nationalism – are perhaps the monuments that were constructed or erected in order to honor the Great Germans of the past generations. One such example is Goethe-Schiller Monument sculpted by Ernst Rietschel in the year 1857<sup>4</sup>. For what could explain this deeply cultural longing of unity than the representation of perhaps the greatest authors of German late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century literature? The statues of famous or influential Germans of course give an insight to the nature of the nationalism that was slowly opening the way for future politicians who were to use these cultural sentiments for shaping the nation-state. The even more vivid example of the Walhalla Memorial which was constructed east of the town Regensburg in Bavaria under the King Ludwig I<sup>5</sup>, demonstrates with clarity how what was meant by the word German once had a far wider meaning and application. The present author can tell from his own experience – being fortunate enough to see the impeccable monument – that he was surprised to find the busts of people who by today’s standards could not be considered as German: Queen Maria Theresia of Austria, Johannes von Müller, Erasmus and many others<sup>6</sup>.

This nevertheless does not imply that only the political institution of a German state would create the notion of an entity such as Germany, because as we see from Siebenpfeiffer’s speech and as the starting lines of Heinrich Heine’s poem named *Deutschland* “Deutschland

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<sup>4</sup> The examples are of course many: the Lessing Monument by George Ferdinand Howaldt (1852) in Braunschweig, Hans Sachs Monuemnt by Johann Krausser (1868), the many monuments commemorating Martin Luther erected in the years 1861, 1867, 1868 (Belgum, p. 461, 1993).

<sup>5</sup> Interestingly enough the same Ludwig I later (1853) also commissioned and established a *Ruhmeshalle* (Hall of Fame) designed, especially to commemorate notable Bavarians. This comes to show indeed how patchy was the existence of national consciousness as such.

<sup>6</sup> Now of course it is more than clear why would the inclusion of so many people who would be evidently classified as Austrians or Dutch. The poem of Arndt is again of help; “As far as the German tongue sounds...that, brave German, call that yours” (2013, p. 114), it was hence that the argument of Richard Böckh, that Germans as a nation should be considered on linguistic grounds only, due to their wide distribution throughout Europe (Hobsbawm, 1990, pp. 21-22). On a more general note of course the influence of Herder is to be seen both in the poem of Arndt and in the works of Böckh.

ist noch ein kleines Kind”<sup>7</sup> show the idea of that Germany did already exist and merely needed to be brought forth as a tangible political unit. Maybe a further step into the world of literature will help us better understand the existence of the so called German realm at least in the minds of the German intellectuals of 19<sup>th</sup> century. Perhaps the most famous piece of literature written in the era of German cultural nationalism is the poem by August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben whose *Das Lied der Deutschen* (The Song of Germans) written in 1841 with its famous lines “Germany, Germany above all else” to this day incites mixed feelings in the hearts of the Germans<sup>8</sup>, because of its incorporation in the National Socialist symbolic. Whereas if we look at the poem through the lenses of the theory developed by Quentin Skinner – that is trying to understand a text through understanding the intention of the author and the actual historical context, which gave rise to it<sup>9</sup> – Fallersleben’s idea was bereft of any militaristic aims and he only wanted to appeal to the national feelings of Germans and tell them that the interests of a unified Germany should be put above the individual aims of each German kingdom<sup>10</sup>. Hence, the final stanza of the poem “Unity, justice and freedom for the German fatherland,” which to this day remains the national anthem of the Federal Republic.

Coming back then to the idea of the bringing fourth of Germany as a political entity we can see that it had its roots in cultural nationalism, which in turn shaped the vision of those who were to actually create the nation state. In words of German philosopher Jürgen Habermas:

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<sup>7</sup> Germany is still a little child.

<sup>8</sup> Very recently the famous German band Rammstein had released a new single with its music video named *Deutschland*, and in the lyrics of the song the usage of the lines “Germany, Germany above all else” (Deutschland, Deutschland über allen), was one of the reasons, along with the music video itself, why the song stirred outrage amongst many people (Basad, 2019).

<sup>9</sup> “The essential question which we therefore confront, in studying any given text, is what its author, in writing at the time he did write for the audience he intended to address, could in practice have been intending to communicate by the utterance of this given utterance. It follows that the essential aim, in any attempt to understand the utterances themselves, must be to recover this complex intention on the part of the author “(Skinner, pp. 49-50, 1969).

<sup>10</sup> In the same manner, it can be deduced that the poem by Arndt had the specific aim of showing the French as the enemy, since it was written in the year 1813, when the unified armies of Prussia, Russia, and Austria defeated Napoleon at the battle of Leipzig.

On the one hand, it was the jurists, diplomats and military personnel, who belonged to the ruling circles of the king, and created a “rational state-institution,” on the other authors and historians, scholars and intellectuals in general, which with the propagation of more or less imaginary unity of a “cultural-nation,” prepared the ground for the diplomatic-military forth-bringing of the political unity (achieved first by Cavour or Bismarck)<sup>11</sup>.

Thus, the nation was first conceived and then made, but whatever was created did not necessarily correspond to what was conceived beforehand. This of course due to the fact that as Habermas had so delicately put it:

Nations are first of all ancestrally linked communities, that are connected geographically through their settlements and neighborhoods, culturally through the same language, customs and traditions, but are not yet politically integrated in realms of a state organization.<sup>12</sup>

What follows from this is the conclusion that the state meddling with the aim of creating a nation-state was to have its impact whether directly or indirectly on that *ancestrally linked communities* (Abstammungsgemeinschaften). This partly explains how and why in 19<sup>th</sup> century it was possible to use the word German as an umbrella term which denotes the German speaking people altogether, while in the 21<sup>st</sup> century hardly any Austrian or Swiss would be flattered to bear this demonym. Having then, at least partially, touched upon the origins and the fundamentals of nationalism and its cultural manifestations it has come the time to shift our attention towards its political representation, which we shall trace in the curious period of *Kulturkampf* in then newly established German Empire.

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<sup>11</sup> Auf der einen Seite waren es Juristen, Diplomaten und Militärs, die dem Herrschaftsstab des Königs angehörten und eine “rationale Staatsanstalt” schufen, auf der anderen Seite Schriftsteller und Historiker, überhaupt Gelehrte und Intellektuelle die mit der Propagierung der mehr oder weniger imaginären Einheit einer “Kulturnation” die (dann erst von Cavour oder Bismarck) diplomatisch-militärisch durchgesetzte staatliche Einigung vorbereiteten (1996, p. 128).

<sup>12</sup> Nationen sind zunächst Abstammungsgemeinschaften, die geographisch durch Siedlung und Nachbarschaft, kulturell durch gemeinsame Sprache, Sitte und Überlieferung, aber noch nicht politisch, im Rahmen einer staatlichen Organisationsform integriert sind (1996, p. 133).

## II

### Creating the Nation-State: *Kulturkampf* and the German Reich

To relate the historical circumstances which led to the establishment of the German state would be to sift into a wealth of historical documentation and facts, the narration of which would scarcely fit within the limits of this essay and neither would they be congruent with its aim. It, therefore suffices to say that through the adroit political maneuvers of Otto von Bismarck in the run of 1860's at the dawn of the next decade the German state came into being as a political unit, but *with an alien people clutching their gods*.

The creation of that German state was accompanied with turbulent events<sup>13</sup>, and was in itself also the result of those events. It was the defeat of the external enemy (France) that led to the formation of that state, the implications of which are again found in the poem of Arndt; "Where every Frenchman is called enemy" (2013, p. 114). However, it was not the external forces that were hindering the creation of that collective national consciousness amongst the populace of the newly born Empire, it was rather the so conceived enemy within, the one against which a cultural war was to be fought: the Catholic Church.

The *Kulturkampf* (1872-1886/7), waged against the Catholic Church, is a very interesting period not only because of its political repercussions within the Empire but also because of the cultural value which it to this day bears upon itself. In a retrospect one could easily term it as the period, during which the German nation was being actively created or during which the German-state identity was being forged and developed<sup>14</sup>. The addition of new territories such as Alsace-Lorraine to the newly established state created new problems, because of its population which was French, and preponderantly Catholic. The Catholic Church

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<sup>13</sup> The wars against the Danes (1864), the Habsburg Empire (1866), the French Empire (1870-71).

<sup>14</sup> This of course following the logic and the witty observation of Massimo d'Azeglio: "We have made Italy: now we must make Italians" (Carter, 1996, p. 545).

was considered a serious opponent of the liberal, secular values, which were to be pursued by the German Empire, and so they backed Bismarck's intentionally planned struggle against the Church, which was waged in order to give the state power over educational institutions, especially schools which were then led by churches, and marginalize the importance of the Catholic Poles and French within the Empire<sup>15</sup>. Consequently, in December of 1871 a law passed by the Reichstag, which made a criminal offence the discussion of politics by clerics, if it was to endanger the peace within the state (Gross, 1997, p. 549). In the following year, it was made clear that schools could no longer be led by clerics, through the legislation adopted by Prussian Landtag<sup>16</sup>.

The political consequences of these acts, which were predominantly against the Jesuit order and the Catholic Church, were to be severely felt in the run of the years, as growing number of Catholics became detached from the liberal party and aligned themselves with the Center Party, which in the end was gaining the upper hand in Reichstag, so much so that it became incrementally difficult for Bismarck to create a government without forming a coalition with the Center Party. We can therefore say that these acts only contributed to the political mobilization of Catholics as an important political power, while it thwarted the far-fetched aims of Bismarck<sup>17</sup> aimed at the complete takeover of the state of all the important roles that were performed by the Church.

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<sup>15</sup> For liberals, the most odious expression of the church's power in Germany was the Vatican Council's recent declaration in 1870 of papal infallibility on matters of dogma, a declaration which, in the age of modern science and nationalist pride, appeared as a grotesque aberration and an assault on the independence of the state. Papal infallibility seemed to require the allegiance of German Catholics not to the Kaiser but to the pope and the subordination of the sovereignty of Berlin to the Rule of Rome (Gross, p. 546, 1997).

<sup>16</sup> In itself an enlightened piece of legislation, which was to put the heads of schools at the hands of the secular state, the law was intended both against both Protestants and Catholics, but was overwhelmingly practiced against the latter.

<sup>17</sup> The historian Christopher Clark describes the situation in his book *The Iron Kingdom*: "In seeking to drive the Catholic church out of politics, Bismarck had used Prussian instruments to achieve German objectives" (p. 575, 2006) One can notice that therein lay his mistake but that mistake had already had its influence on the state of affairs in Germany and whatever

In a sense then the *Kulturkampf* was a necessary failure, since even though it proved to create a strong front against Bismarck's plans for the newly established German state it made a lasting impact on the educational system of Germany. Secularized or led mostly by Protestants they were made the means through, which the German identity was shaped. A *Volksbildung* became a possibility as a result of the titanic struggle of the Prussian state against the power of the Catholic Church. Adalbert Falk who was the Minister of Education in the years 1872 to 1879, unrelentingly carried on the reforms of the educational sphere for the hope of attainment of the patriotic belonging of the Germans to the German state, though as were the political so were the educational struggles aimed mostly at the Catholics (Lamberti, 1986, p. 63). The most essential result of this tumultuous struggles was as the old Iron Chancellor himself has acknowledged in his autobiography the leading role that the state assumed with regards to public schooling:

I was satisfied that the acquisitions which were made in the relation of the school to the state and the changing of the article in the Constitution have been successfully confirmed to be definite victories. Both are in my eyes of more value than the prohibition of clerical activity and the legal apparatus aimed at catching the reluctant priests as introduced by the May laws, and I have already had the chance to see the removal of the Catholic anti-state agitation and activity from Silesia, Poznan and Prussia as an important victory.<sup>18</sup>

Had these attempts in the long-run proven to be successful in at least outlining the direction, which the German identity was to take? Once again having the privilege of a retrospective view which is inclusive enough to give us a glimpse of the inner intricacies of the German state till the beginning of the First World War, we can say that even though Bismarck

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ameliorations were made in 1880's to the laws passed in 1870's the effects were not to be effaced.

<sup>18</sup> Ich war zufrieden, wenn es gelang, dem Polonismus gegenüber die im Kulturkampf gewonnenen Beziehungen der Schule zum Staat und die eingetretene Änderung der einschlagenden Verfassungsartikel als definitive Errungenschaften festzuhalten. Beide sind in meinen Augen wertvoller als die maigesetzlichen Verbote geistlicher Tätigkeit und der juristische Fangapparat für widerstrebende Priester, und als einen wichtigen Gewinn durfte ich schon die Beseitigung der katholischen Abteilung und ihrer staatsgefährlichen Tätigkeit in Schlesien, Posen und Preußen betrachten (2015, p. 425).

failed in immediately persuading everyone in his own beliefs he was proven right in the long-run by the fact that the nature of nationalism in Germany had seen a shift and for this change to him belonged a due credit.

Now if we turn our attention towards the development of the traditions that came after but one would be right to say were also an essential part of the *Kulturkampf* (or its continuation) a different face of the same event will come to light, since the efforts of politicians imposing a cultural unity (at least to some degree), would have been impossible had not it been for the role of the *invented traditions* a term, which so beautifully betrays the fine façade of what we call traditional and accept as inherently continuous<sup>19</sup>. We have mentioned time and again that the newly created German Empire was societally separated and this separation was not only to be seen in the culture or confession of each individual *Bundesland*, but also in the political symbolic of those *Länder*. Most of them have been ruled and some continued to be ruled by monarchs (Bavaria with its Wittelsbach dynasty being the most vivid example) even after the Unification.

The issues were many and addressing each of them was not a mere question of time but also of manner and motive. First of course came the question of legitimacy, the little-German

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<sup>19</sup> It should be here stated that the present author does not wish to lapse into the seemingly everlasting debate between perennials and modernists as these were juxtaposed in the book of Anthony D. Smith *Ethno-Symbolism and Nationalism*. However, for the sake of clarity a few ideas should be put forth for understanding the stance of the present author. The process of invention is grounded in some form of a collective experience (in most of the cases this collective experience should have had occurred in reality: say the Franco-Prussian War), and it does not matter whether this experience comes from the past long gone – as per Ernest Renan the Saint Bartholomew’s Day Massacre is fixed in the historical memory of the French nation (p. 4, 1992) – or from the immediate past of which the witnesses are still around. In a sense, then to create something out of thin air is an impossibility to an extent that whatever is created has to have its roots, has to be able to trace back its legitimacy to either a historical *longue durée*, or to an objective collective historical occurrence (*Ereignis*) as Edmund Burke attests to this in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*: “by preserving the method of nature in the conduct of the state, in what we [the British] improve we are never wholly new; in what we retain we are never wholly obsolete” (Burke, 2009, p. 34). Finally, it would be safe to add that at least in some respects to invent is to *conserve* with regards to important historical actualities.

solution that was brought about by the victories of Prussia seemed unsatisfying for those who have fostered hopes for a great-German solution<sup>20</sup> through the Habsburg Empire. This problem was not merely a political issue but also a historiographical one and was seen as and also addressed as such by those historians such as Heinrich von Sybel but above all by Heinrich von Treitschke<sup>21</sup>, who set to show and in ways construct the merging points of the Prussian and the more general German history (Hobsbawm, 1992, p. 274). These attempts were by and large concerned with presenting Prussia as a part of the Holy Roman Empire, and even though Prussia has been an entity expanded beyond the Empire this did not serve the intentions of Bismarck and was therefore not emphasized upon.

Other than the historiographical campaign which was nurtured by the *Kaiser* and *Reich* important was also the celebration of actual historical events, whether in forms of monument or in actual festivities that would serve to commemorate the significance of the achievements of the German people both in recent past and in past long gone. If the reader remembers the monuments erected before the actual unification of Germany were mainly cultural and were to be seen and interpreted only as such (what made Schiller a German was the fact that he was writing in German that he belonged to the German sphere). The creation of the state, however, not only necessitated the construction of monuments but also justified their creation, because now finally there was a single realm and a people that could be represented through them, as in words of Wolfgang Hardwig:

The nation, so might one put it in an exaggerated manner, unified itself symbolically in Kaiser and his helpers – in Bismarck, who during the conflict times of Prussia unconditionally struggled against the democratic and liberal demands, and in

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<sup>20</sup> *Großdeutsche Lösung* and *Kleindeutsche Lösung*, these were the competing views about the unification of the German people developed by the revolutionaries of 1848.

<sup>21</sup> It goes without saying that this historiographical narrative was confronted by those who did not share the reasoning behind it, the more prominent of opponents of the aforementioned was the Austrian historian Heinrich Friedjung. Nevertheless, it should be stated that the Austrian historiography changed its course and concentrated mainly on developing a distinct national history of Austria as a political entity on its own, which had little pretension of arguing for a different type of unification for the German people.

Moltke, who with his tendencies of putting war above politics – with the restriction of the budgetary reserves – supported the extra-constitutional positioning (role) of the army in the Empire.<sup>22</sup>

There were noticeable attempts towards achieving a justification of one Kaiser for the newly unified people, and as such the roles of Prussia and the Hohenzollern dynasty as the main powers behind the creation of the Empire (*Reichsgründung*) gave an additional buoyancy to the process of *Kaiserverehrung*<sup>23</sup> (Hardwig, 1990, p. 277).

However, as Hobsbawm states the German Empire was not particularly successful in its efforts of presenting Emperor Wilhelm I as the father of the newly founded Empire (1992, p. 264), instead it was Bismarck whose name was indeed associated with the creation of the Empire<sup>24</sup>. The further attempts towards showing a collective German realm through monuments are well listed by Kristen Belgum:

One year after the proclamation of the Reich, the *Gartenlaube*<sup>25</sup> presented its readers with a spate of projected monuments honoring the newly unified German nation. Within the first six months of 1872 the magazine described work on the Siegestaule, the Victory Column in Berlin, the *Niederwalddenkmal*, the National Monument depicting Germania located in the *Niederwald* overlooking the Rhine river, and the *Hermannsdenkmal*<sup>26</sup>, the monument of Hermann (Arminius) the Cheruskan who had led his people to victory over the Roman legions in the Teutoburg Forest in AD 9. (1993, p. 461.)<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Die Nation, so könnte man zugespitzt sagen, verkörperte sich symbolisch im Kaiser und seinen Helfern – in Bismarck, der in der Preußischen Konfliktzeit die demokratischen und liberalen Forderungen bedingungslos bekämpft hatte, und in Moltke, der mit seiner Tendenz zum Primat der Kriegführung vor der Politik die – mit der Einschränkung budgetrechtlicher Vorbehalte – extrakonstitutionelle Stellung des Heeres im Kaiserreich zusätzlich gestützt hatte (1990, p. 277).

<sup>23</sup> Roughly translated as Emperor worship.

<sup>24</sup> This again partly adds to the argument made in footnote 15, where was already posited that invention had to bear some relation with reality, and in actuality it was Bismarck's political genius aligned with the consequent clever actions undertaken by him that made it possible to unify the German people, and hence it was only just that Bismarck was accepted as the father figure of the Empire and not Wilhelm I.

<sup>25</sup> *Gartenlaube* was a prestigious mass-circulation German newspaper founded by Ernst Keil, active from the year 1853 to 1944.

<sup>26</sup> The history of this monument is rather curious, since its construction had begun already in 1830's, but came to a still stand in 1846, and was only continued in 1860's through the new awakening of the national movement and was finally completed only in the year 1875.

<sup>27</sup> It would be interesting to come up with such a study with regards to the authors and books that were published in the newly formed German Empire. The author believes that this would open a new insight in the study of how the promulgated *print capitalism* came to shape the

This comes to show the shift that took place in the monumental art in the German realm, it was hereafter possible to imagine the nation and nationality in terms of its politically prominent historical figures. During the run of 1850's and 1860's only one monument was dedicated to the emancipator of the nation; the monument of Heinrich Friedrich Karl vom und zum Stein in Nassau (Hardwig, 1990, p. 279), this was soon changed during the run of 1870's but especially in 1880's and during the reign of Wilhelm II.

It is with the reign of the latter that Hobsbawm associates the most vibrant period of invention of traditions within the German Empire:

Bismarck himself does not seem to have been bothered much about symbolism, except for personally devising a tricolor flag which combined the Prussian black-white with the nationalist and liberal black-red-gold which he wished to annex (1866) ...The invention of the traditions of the German Empire is therefore primarily associated with the era of Wilhelm II. (1992, pp. 273-274.)

To this period belong the construction of series of monuments and buildings; the new Reichstag building (1884-1894), the Kyffhäuser monument (1890-1896), the monuments dedicated to Wilhelm I, one at the Porta Westfalica (1892) the other at the Deutsches Eck (1894-1897). Finally, the Valhalla designed especially for the Hohenzollern princes in Siegesallee in Berlin finished in the year 1901 (Hobsbawm, 1992, p. 276). However, the more important aspect of the invented traditions had to deal with the creation of the German Empire itself and the event, which generated the conditions for its creation: the Franco-Prussian War. Indeed, the twenty fifth anniversary of this war has been celebrated in such a manner and grandeur that little doubt in considering it as the main collective national experience of the Germans in the German

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public view. Although, this does not belong to the sphere of the present essay it will be a worthy addition to mention by way of passing that in the year 1870 - 1872 (one year before and after the founding of the Empire) the works of none other but Johann Gottfried Herder (the father and founder of cultural nationalism) were published in five volumes by Meyers Klassiker-Ausgaben printed by the Bibliographisches Institut, the present author knows this only because he is lucky enough to dispose of a volume of Herder's works, but a deeper research in this field would prove to be rewarding.

Empire. As again Hobsbawm describes “watched by parents and friends, the boys marched into the school singing the ‘Wacht am Rhein’<sup>28</sup> (the ‘national song’ most directly identified with hostility to the French...)” (1992, p. 277).

With this said it is now time to understand whether, and if yes to what extent these methods utilized by the Imperial German Government were successful in their efforts of creating a unified identity for the German people. One thing is certain, if viewed in its full historical existence, that is between the years 1871-1918, the German Empire has managed to foster a feeling of belonging amongst the Germans and the struggle that Germany put up against almost the rest of the world during the Great War (1914-1918) is a further proof in that direction, since even those *Vaterlandslose Gesellen*<sup>29</sup> as the Social Democrats were described by then in the German Empire gave in to the idea of a war for protecting the fatherland. Moreover, it is not only through the Great War that one can see the commitment of Germans to their fatherland, but through their remembrance and attachment to the founder of that fatherland: only “within one year of Bismarck’s death in 1898, 470 municipalities had decided to erect ‘Bismarck columns’” (Hobsbawm, 1992, p. 264). Here again a short excursion in the world of literature can prove to be telling about the transformation of cultural nationalism to a political one. For this specific task the poem by Theodor Fontane dedicated to the death of Bismarck *Where Bismarck Should Lie* comes to show that the chancellor had managed to earn his place in the minds of intellectuals, in a sense the cultural nationalism embraced the political one as the representatives of the former started to write about that of the latter. In Fontane’s thinking then as expressed in the poem the awe of Bismarck shall always live on, and he suggests that the chancellor should be buried in Sachsenwald and that the passersby should always be reminded:

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<sup>28</sup> One can again see the reverberations of the poem by Arndt, the Frenchman being the archenemy was the main antagonist against which the collective existence of the Germans could be imagined.

<sup>29</sup> One can translate this phrase as people without fatherland.

“Do not make such noise! – *somewhere down here lies Bismarck.*”<sup>30</sup> This connection of Bismarck and Fontane continues and finds its manifestations in further works of Fontane: *Zeus in Mission*, *Young Bismarck* and of course *Yes! I would still like to find out about that*, which directly or indirectly deal with the legacy that the chancellor had left behind (Craig, 1997, Hillmann & Hühn, 2005, Perrey, 2002).

There is perhaps no better way of demonstrating the success of Bismarck than the above-mentioned facts, which clearly illustrate both his importance and the gratitude of the those who knew and appreciated the work that the great man undertook. This in itself comes to show the essential role that the great individuals may play in history, Bismarck created and shaped Germany and the monument dedicated to him, which was opened in the year 1906 in Hamburg came to equal the Goethe-Schiller Monument in Weimar. Having provided at least a somewhat plausible summary of the formation of the German identity now it is time to discuss the issues of nationalism and national identity in the experience of the Armenian people, and to this we shall turn in the following sections.

### III

#### **A Historical Nation? The Question of Armenian National Identity**

That there is a difference in the way we perceive Armenians as a nation in comparison with the Germans is an apparent observation, for as reads the question posed in the title of this particular chapter Armenians can be considered group of people that have an actual claim to being considered as a historical nation, whether this claim is justified or not is a different question in itself and we will try to answer it within the realms of the present chapter.

For understanding whether Armenians can be considered a historical nation is it first essential to define what constitutes a historical nation as such, and in what sense can a nation

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<sup>30</sup> Lärmt nicht so! – *Hier unten liegt Bismarck irgendwo.*“

be seen as an historical one. Such a definition as such may not exist, but Anthony Smith gives us at least an idea of how one can demarcate certain elements which in their turn may help us recognize the form and the framework within, which a nation can be considered as historical. Thus, for Smith most important characteristics of a historical nation lay in the ethnic as far as this can be traced beyond the modern times, and the continuity of the myths and narratives that can be seen as inherently existent (2009)<sup>31</sup>. If one follows this train of thought laid out by Smith, then as it is also stated in his book:

...we are to all intents speaking about the selfsame national community in ancient or medieval as in modern epochs. In this respect, the Jews and Armenians have become prototypical. (2009, p. 10)

That we speak of an Armenian people – regardless of the fact that the people have considerably changed throughout the run of history – in so far as we are speaking about certain characteristics that still find resonance within this group of people in modern times justifies our attempt at viewing Armenians as a historical nation, and thus also runs the train of thought of Levon Abrahamian: “I am not making ... primordialist claims here but think that some continuity in the national identity of the Armenians exists...” (2006, p. 141).

Of course, on a further note one should not forget the factual explanation behind this theoretically finely devised proposition of the historicity of Armenians as a nation. The most thorough narration of such facts, which also has its aim at showing the development of what

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<sup>31</sup> What the present author finds the most important in any categorization of nation is the presence of myths (creation myths mainly) that give a certain group a common ancestor with whom to identify (in Armenian case Hayk), and therefore create a claim to antiquity and historicity. Secondly - and perhaps if one views this in view with the process of nation-building and more or less modern national creation – comes the common *experience* of a certain group of people (the experience of a *crisis* which initiates the need for coming together) (Utz, p. 623, 2005), which then allows the creation of bonding and belonging between these people. Most certainly this latter case also implies the presence of certain conditions, such as speaking the same language, but may also itself bring about commonalities and at least a certain wish towards commonness where it did not exist before. Hence, also the idea of double historicity of nations as hinted at by Smith: “Their embeddedness in very specific historical contexts and situations, and their rootedness in the memories and traditions of their members” (p. 30, 2009).

still continues to constitute a great part of Armenian identity is that by Gregory Areshian whose very interesting article on the issue of Armenian identity in the times of Sasanian Empire allows us to espy the early stages of forging of Armenian identity. This early stage begun as a conscious choice of orientation of the Armenian Arsacid dynasty in 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> centuries CE towards Christianization of the people living within the realms of the Armenian Kingdom. Then followed the creation of alphabet, monastic schools and of course the need to protect this newly formed identity (Areshian, 2013, p. 151).

At the end of his article the author also lays down five basic points which were pertaining to that specific historical time-period, four of which are important enough to be incorporated into this essay:

(1) The formation of the Armenian national identity in Late Antiquity was preceded by a long period of cultural and linguistic unity of the population... (2) the existence of an institutionalized state preceded the formation of national identity... (3) elites of the state developed a nation-building program ... shaped in opposition to neighboring states and dominating empires... (4)<sup>32</sup> The Armenian national identity and nationalistic ideology formed during the Sasanian period were revitalized in the Armenian ethnic environment of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. (2013, p. 160).

While the first three points come also as a certain confirmation, of the general stipulation laid out in the earlier parts of the essay, the need of an elite intellectuals, statesmen, and of a state structure as such for the creation of a national identity, the final point gives us the longed-for proof for the continuation in the pursuit of creating or reinventing the Armenian national identity, thus rendering further validity to the definition of Armenians as a historical nation.

Now when one moves to the more specific question of Armenian identity, it is important to understand this role of revisiting the identity that was shaped in the Arsacid era. Naturally influenced by the processes of nation-building that were underway in Europe and also coming

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<sup>32</sup> In the original article this is the final fifth point, and here appears as the fourth only by the virtue of omission of the actual fourth point as presented in Dr. Areshian's writing.

about through the distinctive *endogenous*<sup>33</sup> environment developing in historical territories of Armenia torn between two Empires 19<sup>th</sup> century historiography was important in not only revisiting but also reshaping the identity entrenched in already bygone times. The question of historiography is nevertheless a topic of its own and cannot be treated in its completeness here, suffices to say that the writings of Leo and Adontz in their own turns reinvented that identity, which was already more or less forged through the historiography of earlier times but had to be re-realized in the context of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>34</sup>.

Meanwhile when leaving aside historiography one can find that parallel to that ran two events – one long stretched and aiming towards the second, the other rather short and abrupt but substantial enough to be of consideration – that of the struggle for independence, which came to be seen as the legacy of the deeds and wishes of certain individuals<sup>35</sup> (elites) or sometimes even those of ordinary people, since the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century and of course the creation of that short-lived Armenian state, the First Republic of Armenia (1918-20)<sup>36</sup>. It is inside these two ramifications that Armenian identity entered modernity and partly through this (predominantly through the work and influence of intellectuals) became possible to at least in certain degree undermine the central role that the Armenian Apostolic Church played in Armenians' understanding of their own identity (Areshian, 2018). To this one should also add the traumatic effect that the Armenian Genocide had on both the actual historical shaping of

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<sup>33</sup> The present author has borrowed this term from the writings of Dr. Areshian.

<sup>34</sup> It is important to add that on this framework of division of identity shaping between history and historiography an interesting article has been written by Ashot Voskanyan (2006), who presents the issue within other (wider) philosophical concepts in order to better explain the collective and common belonging – or rather the paradoxes thereof – of Armenian people.

<sup>35</sup> Inter alia, Israel Ori and Joseph Emin are the two most famous representatives of this so-called elite.

<sup>36</sup> To the symbolical importance of which we shall return in the final chapter of the present paper.

that identity and also on the perception of all those who were then or later occupied with reshaping that identity<sup>37</sup>.

If one follows the historiographical stratification outlined by Gregory Areshian in his article *Historical Dynamics of the Endogenous Armenian i.e. Hayots Identity* the above – summarized events comprise what he calls the fifth metamorphosis of the Armenian identity, that is the realization of that identity beyond cultural realms and the transformation (*Aufhebung*) of that self-same identity into the sphere of political nationalism (Areshian, 2018). This latter period of transformation of Armenian identity has been long enough to incorporate both the cultural and political inclinations of various intellectuals who had their own vision of Armenianness. From Abovyan’s famous novel *Wounds of Armenia* to the even more famous poem of Yeghishe Charents *I love my sweet Armenia’s...*, which come to show the overlaps between the nationalistic developments in the European states and the particular experience of Armenians.

The Soviet period that has followed and in a sense incorporated in itself this fifth stage of metamorphosis did not halt its progress, since historically Armenians knew from their own past how to protect their identity within great Empires (again the example of Sasanian times comes to one’s mind), which of course had a molding effect on the identities of the nations that lay within their realms. This period, however, does not belong within the scope of this essay partly because it is large enough to demand an essay on its own and partly because the treatment of it would be a digression from the actual aim of the present work.

However, one last comment should be added to this discussion of fifth metamorphosis of Armenian identity. This last addition is linked with the importance attached to names and naming in the book of Levon Abrahamian (2005), who rightly states that “We need to know a

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<sup>37</sup> “... the dramatic effect of the Armenian Genocide, which has been shaping the fifth metamorphosis [of Armenian identity] to a very substantial degree” (Areshian, 2018, p. 35).

name to learn its story, since every name is actually a story at its beginning” (2009, p. 27). It is this valuable theoretical proposition that adds even more weight to the factual linking of the names *Armenian* and *Hayots*, which as is argued by Dr. Areshian also took place in this fifth final stage of the development of Armenian identity (2018). That the closer linking of the two demonyms (one internal, the other external) also suggests a sort of mixing of historical experience – as lived within and outside the nation – cannot be rejected. Finally, at least in some circles there was a noticeable reconciliation of these two terms, and it meant that in the future even closer linking of the two became possible – whether in the minds of new elites or amongst the ordinary populace – which would smoothen the path for one’s own awareness of one’s identity and one’s individual relation to that identity.

In this part of the essay we have tried to understand whether Armenia can be considered a historical nation, and also dealt with the question of Armenian national identity as going through the transformative period from the cultural nationalism to the political one. Though, the conclusion reached here may not be unequivocal they certainly point towards some direction, which will help to fill the gap left by the insufficient treatment of some issues in this chapter. This we shall attempt to do in the next final chapter of the essay, where we will try to reconcile the statements made in all the preceding chapters through the juxtaposition of the German and Armenian experiences on their way towards their respective *Volksgeist*.

#### IV

##### **The Young Republic: What Is to Be Done?**

Earlier we have tried to identify the main trends, both past and present, that are specific to Armenian national identity, it was therefore not an attempt at defining that identity but just tracing it throughout the shifting historical eras. The task of this final chapter is rather different and in essence more intangible than that of its predecessor. Here we shall be concerned with the problem of *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gesellschaft* (society), and their applications

within the Armenian context. In other words, the aim of this chapter will be to point to ways through which it will be possible to revitalize or rejuvenate the *Sibyl*.

Having given an outline of the chapter in the introductory paragraph it is now time to define the terms *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* in order to better understand the frameworks represented by both forms of structural existence of a given people. For this we shall turn to the work done by Ferdinand Tönnies, a German sociologist who has committed most of his works towards explaining these concepts and bringing forth characteristics that define each of them respectively. Thus, according to Tönnies the definition of *Gemeinschaft* is:

The one tendency is that within a majority of people, abstention from (certain) hostilities and exercise of (certain) services takes place for the sake of definite lasting relations, which prevail between the wills of these people in such a manner, that they have a continuous inclination with regards to exercising or abstaining from certain actions. If one is to imagine this tendency in a perfect execution, the will of each person towards the other, whose will one has the chance or the ability to influence, would be represented in such a relation. And these can be of different strength, in such a way, that one can represent them in a number of concentric circles whose radii are inversely related in number and strength; Thus, in the outermost circle, the inclination toward hostility and the abstention from services would be the most significant and vice versa.<sup>38</sup>

For a more comprehensive view of what the *Gemeinschaft* stands for, one should make certain inferences from the definition given us by Tönnies. First of all, it appears so that this form of relation is a given, that is it exists beyond the rational and objective view of an individual and cannot be changed or adjusted in any manner, but this does not imply that this form is bereft of

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<sup>38</sup> Die eine Tendenz ist die, dass innerhalb einer Mehrheit von Menschen Enthaltung von (gewissen) Feindseligkeiten und Ausübung (gewisser) Leistungen um bestimmter dauernder Beziehungen willen stattfindet, welche zwischen den Willen dieser Menschen derart obwalten, dass sie in Hinsicht auf diese Ausübung und jene Enthaltung eine dauernd gleiche Richtung haben. Denkt man sich diese Tendenz in vollkommener Ausführung, so würde der Wille jedes Menschen zu dem Willen jedes Anderen, auf den er überhaupt einzuwirken die Gelegenheit hat oder erlangt, sich in irgendeiner solchen Beziehung befinden. Und diese könnten von verschiedener Stärke sein - etwa dermaßen, dass sie sich in einer Anzahl konzentrischer Kreise würden darstellen lassen, zu deren Radienlänge ihre Zahl und Stärke in umgekehrtem Verhältnis steht; es würde mithin im äußersten Kreis die Neigung zur Feindseligkeit und die Abneigung gegen Leistungen am Bedeutendsten sein und umgekehrt (Tönnies, 2012, p. 46)

rationality altogether<sup>39</sup>. It exists because certain ties are present in the environment in which these group of people live, hence the example of the multiple circles brought by Tönnies, which shows that if the ties with which these people are bonded lay afar from the center – and in accordance with their distance from the center – then the goodwill of the people concerned towards one another decreases and the chance of hostility increases. This then, shows a communal level of relations, which first and foremost appears wherever the persons are relatives or family members. Now if one is leave aside this theoretical statements for a moment and try to see their application amongst the Armenian people, one cannot fail to notice that kinship still dominates the relations and actions of the latter. A number of explanations can be rendered for such a statement one of them can probably be the fact that the Western word *nation* (stemming from Latin *natio*) is translated into Armenian as *azg*, which has ineluctable affinities with family, and hence an Armenian's *imagined community* of a nation is actually that of an extended family and is much more tribal (Abrahamian, 2006, p. 146).<sup>40</sup>

It is now time to turn our attention towards the second of the terms discussed, namely *Gesellschaft*. It is however worth to point out that Tönnies believed that the *Gemeinschaft* could be transformed into a *Gesellschaft*, and that this latter form was not a set and given ways of relations amongst a group of people but one that can be achieved:

The other tendency, however, embodies the following: each person is ready, to abstain from hostilities towards the other in the same measure as the latter towards him; and to do services to the other person under the conditions in which the latter answers back with equivalent services. The complete and pure realization of this tendency will be shown in a state of affairs, which – again represented in concentric circles – will be so constructed that the innermost circle and the outermost one will

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<sup>39</sup> Indeed, Tönnies himself differentiates between *Wesenwille* (natural will) and *Kürwille* (rational will), and states that the former is manifest in *Gemeinschaft* while the latter can be seen in a *Gesellschaft*, and is completely rational, as the name itself implies. While making this differentiation, he attaches a certain sense of *Vernunft* (reason, good sense) to the natural will, and hence makes clear that an inherently present reasoning underlays the functioning of the *Gemeinschaft* (Tönnies, 2012, p. 242).

<sup>40</sup> A more thorough treatment of this subject can be seen in the book by Abrahamian *Armenian Identity in the Changing World* (2006, pp. 145-148).

have the smallest and the biggest impact on the abstention or the offered service. The number and strength of friendly relations will grow as the radii increase.<sup>41</sup>

Thus, what we see in this second tendency comes from the order of things, which allows for individual rational actions, that is that one is ready to act towards the other person in the manner in which this other person will act towards them. Thus, the burden of obligation, which again according to Tönnies belonged to the sphere of *Gemeinschaft* is absent in this second tendency, since here the relations are dealt with through rational calculation. This also makes apparent the fact that the individuals or peoples concerned are not only passive, doing whatever has been done for a long time, but also are actively engaged in planning their steps according to the development of the events and the view of the other party. Extending this argument to a different sphere one can claim plausibly that this second tendency allows for creation of meritocratic system, in which each person is treated on the basis of one's own individual merits, which also follows the rational path. While it would be impossible to imagine such scenario in a *Gemeinschaft*, where being related or acquainted to the right people could warrant one with a chance of acquiring positions or things that are above one's own merits.

We have already mentioned that kinship still plays an important role amongst Armenian people, this implies that Armenians are still inherently oriented towards a communal (gemeinschaftliches) life, and there still needs to a period of transformation – which to some degree is already underway – that will allow for an emergence of the modern *Gesellschaft* bringing with it the values of meritocracy. The present author is of the opinion that the

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<sup>41</sup> Die andere Tendenz enthält aber Folgendes: Jeder Mensch ist bereit, sich genau in dem Maße jedem anderen gegenüber den Feindseligkeiten zu enthalten, als dieser sich derselben enthält; und jedem anderen unter der Bedingung Leistungen zu gewähren, dass dieser ihm entsprechende Gegenleistungen gewährt. Die vollkommene und ausschließliche Verwirklichung dieser Tendenz wird einen Zustand zeigen, welcher – gleichfalls in konzentrischen Kreisen dargestellt – so beschaffen sein würde, dass wenn der innerste die geringste und, der äußerste die größte auf der Gegenseite dargebotene Enthaltung und Leistung bezeichnet. Zahl und Stärke der freundlichen Beziehungen mit den Radien in *geradem* Verhältnis wachsen müsste (Tönnies, 2012, pp. 46-47).

essentially communal level of connection that exists among the Armenian people in the present-day Republic of Armenia, stems from the fact that there is a lack of sense of belonging to a greater group rather than one's own community or even family. While it is certainly true that Armenians collectively and individually identify with the Armenian nation, it is hard to notice if this same people identify with the Armenian state, and it is here that arises the process so well noticed by Gregory Areshian, namely the transformation of the Armenian identity from the ethno-cultural to an ethno-political one, which as a matter of fact comes about also through the opposing values presented by *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* (2018).

Thus, far our observations were mainly theoretical, but for us to better envision the already begun process of the transformation of Armenian national identity, and the means through which it will be possible to achieve this transformation in a quicker and more efficient manner we need to turn towards the actualities in the present-day Republic of Armenia.

First shortly about the events that facilitated or ran parallel to the creation of the Third Republic, that is the fall of the Soviet Empire and Kharabakh movement and the war that it entailed. The fall of the Soviet Union, is of interest to us because of the already tangible nationalist tendencies of each individual state within the Union towards the end of 1980's, that finally caused the destruction of the tottering system (Beissinger, 2009). Whether it was nationalism that brought end to the Soviet Union or the economic crisis (Hobsbawm, 1996) that haunted it the last two decades, which created room for nationalism can be of little concern for us, since the fact remains that after this system was removed from the stage, each member state tried to go back to the past before the Soviets, either to reconnect with history or try to rediscover it. Armenia was no exception, and one thing that is worth mentioning is the eagerness with which the newly established Republic incorporated the symbols of the First Republic (Abrahamian, 2006). In a sense then it was more or less an attempt to connect with the national past, that lay beyond the Soviet regime and history:

Armenia perceived its independence as a return to the first Republic of 1918-20, much like Azerbaijan and Georgia did. In this context, it would hardly be a surprise that the first Republic's state symbols were passed down to the new Republic. (Abrahamian, 2006, p. 58)

The newly gained independence brought with itself also changing of names. In this regard of specific observation made by Levon Abrahamian in his book *Armenian Identity in a Changing World*, where he relates how the streets of Soviet Yerevan got new names as the city became the capital of an independent Republic (2006, p. 48). Now if we turn our attention to the Kharabakh movement, without delving much into the general developments that took place in the year 1988, an essential statement should be made – partly derived from the observations made by Levon Abrahamian – on the movement itself and its relation to the national identity of Armenian people. The interesting proposition made by Abrahamian that “Civil society was created in Armenia, in fact, only in the square during the rallies” (2006, p. 61)<sup>42</sup>, raises the question that the more collective sense of belonging of the Armenian people along societal lines came about during protests and rallies, hence it can be assumed that it set a sort of precedent or added a new dimension to the Armenian identity, much like the Glorious Revolution of 1688/9 determined the political and societal path of the British and the French Revolution of 1789 that of the French.

It seems appropriate here to make a short digression into the sphere of theory again, just to clearly demonstrate how the Kharabakh movement could set to be a precedent. In a sense, it was the harbinger of the Republic, but aside this essential point we should again stress the importance of events in and themselves as such, since events bring about change in the perception of the people as is so well represented by Reinhart Koselleck with his dual concepts of *Erfahrungsraum* (space of experience) and *Erwartungshorizont* (horizon of expectation).

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<sup>42</sup> This statement did not go without criticism and Professor Gregory Areshian sees the Kharabakh movement as an example of the Armenian *Gemeinschaft* at its purest and not as a sign of civil society (Personal correspondence).

According to Koselleck a certain *Erfahrung* (experience) brings change to our expectations of the future (*Erwartungen*), hence a shift in the *Erfahrungsraum* leads to a change in *Erwartungshorizont* (1988)<sup>43</sup>. If we apply this theoretical framework to the experience of the event at hand, namely the Kharabakh movement, then we will see that it certainly changed the perception of those who were present during the rallies, and also imbued the thinking of the generation, which came after it hence necessitating a marked shift in the political tradition of the Armenian people. We shall return to this point later when we will discuss the more or less current political path that the Armenian people and the Republic tries to follow.

When we treat the Kharabakh war (1988-1994), that accompanied the creation of the Third Republic, and also justified its existence in general, since the new Republic won the war, we can note by way of passing how important a component is the proof of strength in the formation of the nation-state. A comparison with the Franco-Prussian war could be made, since it was this war – just like the ones waged earlier – which not only created the chance for but also justified the creation of the German nation-state, for how could a defeated Prussia ever claim to unite the German people?

Having thus touched upon the three main events that took place before or during the onset of the Republic, it is now important to see what has been done ever since for a creation of a nation-state not only on paper but also in actuality. That there have been attempts cannot be denied, and one can even distinguish between ways through, which the governments of the Republic tried to implement the visions that they had. Thus, for example the government of

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<sup>43</sup> The example brought by Koselleck himself might be more illustrative of the theory here proposed: Jacques Turgot did his utmost to convince Louis XVI of France to initiate reforms in the kingdom, since he was aware of the past experience of the execution of Charles I of England, and that if reforms were not underway the same fate awaited the French monarch (1988, p. 313). We can conclude that the execution of Charles I, naturally brought a change in the people's expectation about the fates of monarchs, this does not imply that all monarchs suddenly started losing their heads one after the other, but does imply that during certain crisis conditions people already knew from the past experience what could happen or what could be done to the monarch.

Levon Ter-Petrosyan followed essentially a model, which stressed the importance of the state and constitutionality but forgot about nationalism and the idea of the nation, which exists within that state, and was marked with failure (Barseghyan, 2003)<sup>44</sup>. The other vision came with ascension to power by Robert Kocharian, who tried to bring about the reconciliation of the patriots of the diaspora with the Armenian Republic, which was only the tiny fraction of the imagined historical homeland. Under the Kocharian government projects such as Pan-Armenian Games, Pan-Armenian Conference came into being under the dubious slogan of “One Nation, One Culture” (Barseghyan, 2003). This later saw its further development under Serzh Sargsyan’s government, with a further stress on the idea *oneness*, that leads us to the wisdom of the most prophetic of German writers, Friedrich Hölderlin, who so manifestly warns us to beware of this *oneness* in the following words: “Being at one is god-like and good, but human, too human, the mania Which insists there is only the One, one country, one truth, and one way.”<sup>45</sup>

It is now perhaps time to reflect on the most significant event that took place in the Republic of Armenia since the chaotic 1990’s. For someone writing on the issue of Armenian identity it will now be hard to skip the importance of the so-called Velvet Revolution that took place in 2018, not only because it is still too fresh and is strongly imprinted in the minds of the

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<sup>44</sup> This point reminds the author of the *Historikerstreit* (historians’ quarrel) that took place within the German academic sphere in the late 1980’s, and which was also concerned with the idea of the German national identity. More specifically the articles exchanged between Jürgen Habermas and Hagen Schulze are of interest to us, since for Habermas there exists only one true form of patriotism the so called *Verfassungspatriotismus* (constitutional patriotism), notice the link to the ideas of Levon Ter-Petrosyan who was from the beginning planning a “constitutional way of development for the Republic” (Abrahamian, 2006, p. 223). While Schulze argued that dry constitutional patriotism would lead to nowhere, and there needs to be a sense of national belonging and emotions. The failure of Ter-Petrosyan’s government and their attempt towards the realization of whatever vision they had can also be seen in Schulze’s criticism of Habermas’ idea.

<sup>45</sup> The German original: “Einig zu sein, ist göttlich und gut; woher ist die Sucht denn Unter den Menschen, daß nur Einer und Eines nur sei?” The English translation used in this essay is done by Michael Hamburger.

Armenian people, but also because it followed that precedent set by the Kharabakh movement, and in its own unique way – if one applies the approach of Levon Abrahamian – created Armenian civil society and a new sense of belonging while in itself also transforming the *Erfahrungsraum* and therefore eliciting new expectations with regards to the future of the Republic. This is of course due to not only the fact that the Revolution has a symbolic connotation to it, but predominantly due to the more immediate effect of the Revolution that is the changing of the government and the appearance of a new political elite, with a new vision for the same old *alien people*. It is partially through this Revolution that a new perspective opens itself for the formation of the Armenian nation-state and the reshaping of the Armenian identity.

The government led by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan is naturally obliged to do more than its predecessors, and if in the economic sphere the issues are more pressing than in others, it should be here emphasized that the reforms undertaken by this government directly or indirectly will affect the process of transformation of *Gemeinschaft* into the *Gesellschaft*, hence also the reshaping of the Armenian identity. If one is to learn lessons from the German model discussed in the first two sections of this paper, there needs to be stronger state intervention in the public sphere for the advancement of the vision of the government. One field of such intervention as we have already learned from the experience of the *Kulturkampf* is education, maybe in a sense there needs to be an Armenian period of cultural struggle where the state would try to challenge the role played by the Church in the lives of the Armenian people. It is of course not to be rejected that the Church is an important safeguard of the Armenian identity (Abrahamian, 2006), but it essentially relies and has its roots from the cultural and not the

political nationalism, and cannot facilitate the undertaking of *Vergesellschaftung*, a concept introduced by Georg Simmel, that lies at the heart of the nation-building process<sup>46</sup>.

With regards to the *Vergesellschaftung* one should not forget to mention that according to Raphael Utz the former becomes a possibility “if the experience of a national identity has a direct bearing on the life of the individual and if this contact is experienced as positive” (2005, p. 623). In this respect, the individual’s own finding of his place in a general, collective identity acquires a certain importance, and if one is to look in the work of Simmel, he can find that the general identity renders possible the existence of an individual identity within itself, that is within a rational *Gesellschaft* (1992, p. 61). Whereas if we return to the work of Tönnies, in his short essay *Gemeinschaft und Individuum* (Community and the Individual) we can clearly see that within a *Gemeinschaft* an individual is in ways forced to a certain behavior, which does not stem from his/her own rational choices (2012, p. 206).

Here once again we shall refer to the work of Utz who when reflecting on the issues of nation-building as a form of cultural intervention states that:

In principle, all nation-building processes are cultural interventions as the center establishes a particular identity on the periphery, or, in other words, the elite creates a national identity for the rest of the population. In addition, there has always been a certain measure of foreignness in nationalism. In Russia, the contributions of enlightenment thought and later German idealism have been crucial. The same applies to Arab nationalism in which the German notion of the *Kulturnation* played a prominent part (2005, pp. 638-639).

We know well from history that at certain point Armenian national thinking also incorporated ideas of European enlightenment; Joseph Emin and Shahamir Sahamirian perhaps remain the

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<sup>46</sup> For a better understanding let us dwell on this last point for a moment. *Vergesellschaftung* is essentially the process of the transformation of a *Gemeinschaft* into a *Gesellschaft*, hence it implies the rationalization of the populace brought by the state institutions as stated by Hobsbawm (1996, pp. 339-240). If one is to clarify this idea and explain it in Andersenian terms, governmental institutions can extend the imagination of a given community beyond its communal basis and the idea of a nation (an extended community) is one of the ways of creating a more efficient *Gesellschaft* where kinship comes to play a lesser role.

more prominent among those who propagated the ideas of enlightenment, heavily relying on the British experience. What the present author suggests here is to not only adopt ideas but also learn from the concrete experience of the nation-building process from the case of Germany. That the fact that the period of *Kulturkampf* can be of help in not only understanding the measures that can be taken in order to establish a cultural path to which the population of the current Republic and the diaspora can relate but also the constitution of a new political culture that cannot be undermined, since sooner or later we will face tensions between the new political elites – who already have presented the willingness towards change and reform – and the *alien people clutching their gods*.

If we look beyond the stretches of *Kulturkampf* we should also stress the importance of inventing traditions, much like the German government celebrated the victory achieved during the Franco-Prussian war, but perhaps in case of Armenia it would be wiser to invent a tradition around the recent Revolution. The latter could be, and also should be used as a way of creating a certain consciousness of the civil society within the Armenian people, also considering the fact that the Armenian people were preponderantly in favor of the change of the regime it becomes apparent that the Revolution is an event that can stimulate the creation of a collective belonging in Armenia, while also not undermining the role of the individuals. At this point, however, we should also accentuate the fact that whatever measures are taken by the government it is after thorough considerations only that they should be implemented, or else we have the danger of lapsing into that idea of *oneness* that has already been discussed in the above-adumbrated paragraphs.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, following the metaphor of laying parks

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<sup>47</sup> Here of specific interest can be the book by James Scott *Seeing Like a State* in the first chapter of which the author explains with the metaphor of scientific forestry production invented by the Germans (Prussians to be more precise) in the 18<sup>th</sup> century led to devastating ecological consequences, and “illustrates the dangers of dismembering an exceptionally complex and poorly understood set of relations and processes in order to isolate a single element of instrumental value” (1998, p. 21). A monotone approach towards the various complex issues present in the society therefore would be a grave mistake.

discussed by Levon Abrahamian in the introduction of his book (2006, p. 2), we can say that it is the “German” way of constructing parks that needs to be adopted, since everything has to be observed and understood before further steps can be taking towards the actual realization of ideas.

In our concluding remarks, we shall turn to the idea of monumental art, since it is perhaps the only form of art that bears upon itself whatever immediate change that is perceived in the political or cultural reality of a given people or country, as we saw in the example of Germany where the establishment of the German state gave rise to the worship of new heroes. In case of the Armenian Republic one important symbolic example should be mentioned; the statue commemorating the father of the First Republic Aram Manukian, the opening ceremony of which took place after the political Revolution in Armenia in the July of 2018. The symbolic importance of this statue is not only its subject, but also the fact that the implementation of such a project and the sheer manifestation of it is also a sign of change that took place in the young Republic.

Finally, there is certainly a historical *longue durée* at the center of what we conceive as being the Armenian identity. This might be hard to define, for the definition implies a narration of the history of the Armenian people, but it is impossible to reject the continuity even amidst the newly created traditions and political conditions. If one turns one’s look at the currently ensuing developments in Armenia, which inevitably in way or the other bear upon themselves the mark of the Revolution, one can clearly notice a new phase, a shifted *Erwartungshorizont*, and a not so old – but already belonging to the *Erfahrungsraum* – collective experience. On this basis also following the words of Anthony Smith: “... important as the economic, political and military developments, it is inner changes and reinterpretations that are so critical for the shaping and persistence of nations” (2009, p. 21), the inner change brought by the Revolution puts the Revolution itself on the path of the development of Armenian identity one that is

centuries old and yet is being newly reinterpreted in the minds of the Armenian people. Will it be so then that the creation of an Armenian nation-state identity takes a smooth path of development and also bring about a civil society (*Gesellschaft*) or will we witness a situation much like the one in the famous poem of T. S. Elliot where the enlightened magi on their way back home witness *an alien people clutching their Gods*? This last question will be best answered by the future, of which nothing certain can be said.

### **Literature Review**

An essential part of the literature written on this subject does not concern itself with theory but is actually sipped into the world of experience and facts, which explicate the complex developments through the run of the last century or two. In fact, it is even harder to find this latter type of literature, since the abundance of facts and events always offers the researcher a more dazzling and complicated choice in terms of things their congruency with the topic at hand. The present author himself had inevitably faced this hard choice, and made choices based on the hope and projection that this literature will only help enhancing his research in this field.

Thus, the first article, which concentrates on the issue of state-directed creation and development of national identity and also touches upon the how this was achieved through education in Bismarck's Germany. It relates the issues between state and church in directing the country's education and the overall reform of the education system during the Kulturkampf era. It also shows that even given the fact that Bismarck politically lost the Kulturkampf he still managed to change reformulate the German education system in manner close to the Prussian one, and hence laid the basis for the development of German national identity.

The next book that is a very important and indeed unmatched work on the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is the one written by Eric Hobsbawm in 1994, named *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century*. That nationalism reached its apogee in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially if one takes a look at European history, is undeniable, and the book by Hobsbawm

clearly demonstrates the slow step down of nationalism since the end of the Second World War. This, however, is not the only virtue of this book and the most important aspect of it is precise and detailed description of the Soviet Empire, which was home to many nations, most of which did not live through the process of developing their own national identity. This led to conflicts within the Soviet Union itself, and became one of the reasons of its demise (p. 461, 1994). The importance of this work for the essay of the current author is constituted in the fact that it gives interesting insights on the Soviet world, a part of which was Armenia that among other countries also strived at the end decade of the Union to create its own independent republic based on the Armenian national identity.

Following the logic of Hobsbawm's book but also offering a deeper insight to the issues of different nationalities within the Union, is the article by Mark Beissinger, which examines the complex relations of nationalities and the Soviet Communism. Written in 1989, it gives us an overview of what was happening in the Union during the last years of its existence. The article comprehensively summarizes the escalation of nationalistic sentiments within the Soviet Empire, and fills the gaps left by Hobsbawm's book on this issue<sup>48</sup>. The present authors work then is to reevaluate these works and to trace the importance of the past events in the current post-Soviet Republic of Armenia.

Finally, a recent paper written by Gregory Areshian and published in 2018, offers a broad analysis of the historical development of the Armenian national identity. The paper, as its title suggests - *Historical Dynamics of the Endogenous Armenian, i.e. Hayots Identity: Some General Observations* - treats the topic of both Armenian's view on themselves and the view that foreigners had about Armenians over the centuries. The paper also presents a review of the

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<sup>48</sup> One should also consider the fact that Hobsbawm's view on the issue of decline and fall of the Soviet Union is significantly different from that of Beissinger, he suggests that it was the economic decay of the Union that led to the rise of the nationalistic sentiments within its different peoples, and not the other way round.

past literature on the subject of Armenian identity. Moreover, being the latest and also perhaps the most comprehensive research done the subject Areshian's paper not only finds answers to the questions (what is Armenian identity? What does it mean to be an Armenian?), but also poses questions itself, leaving a room for further inquiries and research, which the present author hopes will be able to answer.

When writing the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Hobsbawm clearly states that during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the transition from Community (Gemeinschaft) to Society (Gesellschaft) was already complete in the developed western European states (1994, p. 348). This subject of transition from a communal level of lifestyle to that of societal is linked to a people's connection with more abstract phenomena, one of which can be national identity, that allows for a more rational structuring of the population of a given state.

The literature concerned with this section of the paper again shall mainly occupy itself with a more theoretical rather than factual approach to the issues at hand. The most important works on this issue of Community and Society, are written by Ferdinand Tönnies, the sociologist who came up with the two terms and the definitions behind them. The collection of his essays are indeed an invaluable asset to every author that wants to conduct a research in this field, since most what he had written remain sound to this day. The theory of a society based on rational motives and relations and that of a community based on one's personal connections and relatives are still important for our understanding of modern day states. When one looks at the societal structuring of modern day Armenia one can notice these two forces constantly in conflict, the situation is different in Germany, to which applies the above-mentioned statement of Hobsbawm.

When speaking of societal changes, one should also take notice of the events that bring about those changes, because those events change the experience of a given people and either add or subtract from their expectations for the future. This point is very thoroughly treated in

German historian Reinhart Koselleck's 1988 book *Vergangene Zukunft: Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten*. Aligned with Tönnies' theoretical considerations this work by Koselleck will allow to identify the possible changes in Armenian society as a result of the Velvet Revolution earlier this year, since the latter is an event of major importance that has brought about issues and questions that were once absent from the public sphere of the Republic of Armenia. The appearance of these new factors in Armenia have reshaped the *Erfahrungsraum* (space of experience) and added new hopes and expectations to Armenian public's *Erwartungshorizont* (horizon of expectation). The explanation of these new issues is possible through the theories of Koselleck and Tönnies.

The existing literature on the subject of nation states, and national identity is rich in its scope and whatever new research that one plans to conduct is inevitably going to repeat some of the already known facts, this, however should not be a disappointing factor rather one that will help the researcher to reevaluate the work of the past in the light of new developments. The present research shall also follow this line of development, but will also try to identify the research gaps in the specific subject, which is at the center of discussion of this essay. The main question that this research will try to answer will be concerned with the further development of Armenian national identity, and what effects can it possibly have for the transitioning of the Armenian public from its community level to that of the societal.

At this point the words of Gregory Areshian remain the most definitive and certain direction for any future research – including this one – on the current subject;

In that we clearly see the opposition between the modern Armenian *Volksgemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, the two mutually oppositional forms of societal systems investigated by Tönnies and Weber. Whether this opposition would result in a centrifugal differentiation of the current Armenian identities or their centripetal consolidation – only further research could probably find the answer (2018, p. 17).

This leaves us with the impression that there is much to be said and done in this field, and the

case of 19<sup>th</sup> century Germany shall prove to be an instructive one in guiding the work and projections of the present author.

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