the issue of the Armenian Genocide has been disputed for 100 years. This, certainly, is a cause for serious concern. The victims and the executors, as well as for the international community at large. But if we are to understand how genocides emerge and what outcome and consequences they have both for the perpetrator and for the victim, we need to consider the political considerations and calculations by some. Genocides, regardless of national or cultural affiliation, are a consequence of the interaction of political, economic, and social factors. The study of the literature of the question shows that the Turkish anti-Armenian propaganda machine is rather powerful, and it does not spare any means to enforce its ideology of denial. Hence our responsibility is to resist the anti-Armenian propaganda, for although today an obvious positive shift in the process of recognition and condemnation of the Armenian Genocide can be observed, the question still remains one of the key and intricate problems on the Armenian national agenda. Of course, we have to agree that the Armenian historical and journalistic thought has recorded great results in the scientific elaboration of the problem, however some aspects of the issue need a thorough examination.

It is my firm belief, that today special attention should be paid to the study of linguistic facts which are key elements of the textual mechanisms of perversion and distortion of the historical events. The study of words, expressions, syntagmatic units, syntactic constructions, terms, toponyms, as well as all kinds of stylistic devices used in texts on the Armenian Genocide from linguistic, stylistic, pragmatic and cognitive points of view is timely and ardent. The textual analysis of perverted facts in various interpretations and commentaries on the Armenian Genocide needs a comprehensive and systematic approach which also implies a reference to the historical outlook of the problem as to a corresponding element of the vertical context of the given text. Our examination manifests the authors’ main intention and often his clear pro-Turkish goal, aimed at affecting the perception of the Turkish viewpoint which they try to do by implementing their strategy of persuasion.

For an example I would choose to refer you to a book by Ronald Suny – an American scholar of Armenian descent who has unfortunately appeared in the web of anti-Armenian propaganda and, willingly or unwillingly, yielding to Turkish-born ideas, contributes to their promotion. Our examination of the linguistic aspect of some of the questions raised in his book «Looking Toward Ararat» (1993) and the book «A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire» published in 2011 under his editorship, reveals the author’s implicit intention to attenuate the guilt of the Ottoman authorities and rid them of responsibility.

Suny attempts to use the context of World War I, and some circumstances surrounding it, to deny the Armenian Genocide, to label it as a mere deportation of other peoples, and to deny the undeniable truth.

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The larger context of the passage shows that Suny, relying upon Melson’s opinion (Melson 1982: 157–166), accepts the insinuation based on the assertion that Armenians themselves provoked the Turks to commit the crime. In the passage this allegation is especially highlighted in the statement: the Turkish actions against the Armenians were taken in desperation and panic. Indeed, a euphemistic manner of interpreting the unpardonable behavior of the Ottoman authorities, isn’t it? It even sounds absurd in the global historical-social-political-religious-psychological and after all, attitudinal context of the period in the Ottoman Empire. But Suny ignores all these circumstances and enhances his strategy of persuasion. This statement about the Turkish actions against Armenians to have been taken in desperation and panic, to be put mildly, is not quite honest on Suny’s part because it would have been appropriate to speak of desperation and panic with reference only to the Armenian and other Christian population. The very wording of the passage clearly shows that the inhuman policy of the Turks, of course, was not aimed at an execution of displacement with good intentions. It was a methodically pre-planned scheme of extermination according to which the first and effective step to wipe out Armenians was to behead the nation by murdering its intellectuals (according to R. Suny 235 in number, though according to official Turkish data, 2345 prominent Armenian intellectuals, politicians, national and religious leaders, writers, teachers, doctors and other professionals were arrested and exiled (as the Turks declared), but in fact – brutally murdered) (Melkonyan 2015: 180–185).

Suny’s arguments are pursuing one goal: to convince his readers that the Russian army, on the one hand, the French and British fleet, and the revolt in Van, on the other, pushed the Ottoman Empire into a desperately critical corner. The government «had no other choice,» and launched massacres of innocent people, ethnic Armenians, brutally murdering the elderly and children, men and women.

With the use of the negative «seasoning» (expressed in word sequences like: the government was brutal, were arrested and exiled, were immediately executed, deportation marches, inhuman policy, to eliminate a people) Suny is trying to make the impression that he is unbiased and condemns the inhuman policy of the Turkish government. But this is a seeming impression only. The inherent
tendency of the passage is that he justifies the actions of the Turkish government by «conditioning» them with their desperate and panic psychosis (were taken in desperation and panic). Curiously enough, next to this «fair assessment» Suny does not forget his crucial mission of distorting the Armenian history and playing into the hands of the Turkish ideology by stating that Armenians had lived in the area for about a thousand years before Turks appeared (a people who had lived in eastern Anatolia for nearly a thousand years before the Turks arrived). For Suny it is certainly disadvantageous to accept that Armenians had lived there for not just a thousand years, but for millennia, long before the 9th – 6th centuries BC, even well before the existence of the kingdom of Urartu, otherwise how would he be able to defend the viewpoint of Armenians as newcomers in the region directly stemming from the official Turkish-supported idea of genocide, a statement which has revealed its true nature as disingenuous and unjustified in quite a number of historical and linguistic studies.317

Another fact in R. Suny’s «Looking Toward Ararat» that deserves attention is that he uses the word genocide at every step in his narrative and makes the false impression that he undoubtedly recognizes the genocidal nature of the events. However when we read «Rethinking the Unthinkable: Toward an Understanding of the Armenian Genocide» in one of the subtitles of his book «Looking Toward Ararat» the strategy of his manipulative approach to the question immediately reveals itself, for if you offer to rethink something then you are not sure of what is said. Moreover, by using the indefinite article in the second part of the subtitle he, thus, opens a door to a new understanding of the question and puts forward the idea of a new interpretation which he, together with his co-author and co-editor Fatma Göcek, presents in the introduction of the book «A Question of Genocide», where he raises the question of whether to call the mass killings genocide or not.

Coming to the linguocognitive study proper of interpretations of the Armenian Genocide, I make use of the opportunities offered by the theory of frame widely applied in cognitive linguistics. It is established that in surveys on problems of gnoseology and cognitive linguistics in particular, the anthropocentric approach and the cognitive orientation of studies, largely speaking, allow to reveal the correlation of linguistic phenomena and the human knowledge accumulated from the objective reality by personal experience, as well as expose the mechanisms underlying the cognitive processes. As a result, speech is viewed as a process reflecting public behaviour which rests upon cognitive structures fixed in human brain and deduces the «inner mind» formed therein. The application of this approach gives us a chance to reveal the contrived and fabricated nature of the denial propagated through some interpretations of the Armenian Genocide. The advocated denial, apart from everything else, overlooks the very important fact that the information stored in the memory of not only Armenians but humanity at large, is by no means in favour of the Turks, for the events of the dawn of the century in Western Armenia and the Turkish policy in general have forged certain cognitive models in the field of human perception and left such a deep imprint on the worldview of mankind (first of all on the worldview and cultural outlook of the dispersed Armenian ethnicity), that the neglect of this factor is unacceptable, to say the least.

Indeed, in the process of proper perception and interpretation of the events the adequate evaluation of the terms Armenian and Turk has an important background significance, and in this very matter the theory of frame comes to aid (Kubryakova, Demyankov, Pankrats, Luzina 1997). We know that the cognitive model may be defined as a knowledge forming mechanism, a structure comprising the total of knowledge and experience in the human consciousness which has a situational cultural background; it can contribute to the cognition of various typical situations and phenomena presenting the essential, inherent and possible set of various concepts.

The first stage of investigating the concepts Armenian and Turk reveals the stylistic neutrality of these units for they are concepts which first and foremost indicate ethnic identity.318 Nevertheless, the names of both nations are destined to be interrelated. In the Armenian linguistic conscience the first member of this pair is positive, while the second one is perceived as most negative. This contrast exists in the Turkish mindset as well but with the opposite placement of the members. Yet in the first case it is the result of a bloody collective experience which has engendered an adequate state of mind in Armenians to become an integral part of their national identity, while in the latter it is the result of misleading propaganda caused by the psychological impediments and pragmatic concerns, which together


318 In most English dictionaries the mentioned units are interpreted as follows: Armenian – a member of a people dwelling chiefly in Armenia but also dispersed throughout the Middle East and emigrated to the New World; Turk – a member of any of numerous Asiatic peoples speaking Turkic languages who live in the region ranging from the Adrianic to the Okhotsk and who are racially mixed but are held to have risen in the Altai mountains and western Siberia. (Cf. Webster’s Third New International Dictionary. Massachusetts: Merriam-Webster Inc. Publishers, 1981, p.119, p. 2465).
preclude their taking the responsibility for crimes committed by their ancestors. Perhaps it can be said that Armenian and Turk are not merely separate concepts; their contraposition forms a complex conceptual sphere on the cognitive level. And if the concept Turk is presented with conceptual frames like Turk – enemy, Turk – barbarian, Turk – murderer of a nation, which may be generalized by the frame Turk – menace, the concept Armenian in the Armenian linguistic conscience and in general exists in frames like Armenian – creator, Armenian – Christianity/ Christian, Armenian – victim, Armenian – grief. I should hasten to add that it took quite a long time for Armenians to overcome the last two complexes.

Deep in the national conscience of Armenians are also rooted the frames Armenian – subsistence, Armenian – survival. If we rely upon the image of an Armenian depicted in Byzantine sources (the concepts Armenian and brave were known to be synonymous in the Byzantine Empire («Byuzandakan aghbyurner», vol.V, p.313)), the mentioned sequence of conceptual frames will be completed with Armenian – valour the validity of which is also borne out by our national liberation movement, as well as the freedom struggle of Artsakh.

In the semantic structure of the word Turk the following metaphorical meanings are highlighted: «one who is cruel, hardhearted, or tyrannical» 319 or «applied to anyone having qualities attributed to Turks: a cruel, savage, rigorous, or tyrannical man». Interestingly, in various surveys, studies and fiction as well, these two concepts indicating the two ethnic identities have almost always been presented in two diametrically opposed ways.

As early as in 1853 in an article in the American Daily Tribune Karl Marx expresses the idea that the Turkish presence in Europe seriously hampers the development of the region (the presence of the Turks in Europe is a real obstacle to the development...), and the unreasoned religious fanaticism of the Turkish mob is able to undermine any progress (the fanaticism of Islam supported by the Turkish mob... to overturn any progress...).

Another mention of the image of Turk is found in Victor Hugo’s poem «L’Enfant» (The Child): «Les Turcs ont passé là. Tout est ruine et deuil» (Turks went through there; All is ruin and sorrow). In these lines the stylistically neutral narrative utterance Turks went through there followed by the utterly negative image all is ruin and sorrow indirectly, yet clearly, draws the picture of a Turk in the reader’s imagination – ferocious as it could be that it would brutally trample even the juvenile innocence on its way to suppress the liberation struggle of the Greeks. We can also recall here A. Pushkin’s «Tazit», Dostoevski’s «Karamazov

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