

Armenian crafts in the Ottoman Empire: Armenian identity and cultural exchange

Nora Khatcherian

To cite this article: Nora Khatcherian (2018): Armenian crafts in the Ottoman Empire: Armenian identity and cultural exchange, *National Identities*, DOI: [10.1080/14608944.2018.1504013](https://doi.org/10.1080/14608944.2018.1504013)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14608944.2018.1504013>



Published online: 08 Aug 2018.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 66



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



Armenian crafts in the Ottoman Empire: Armenian identity and cultural exchange

Nora Khatcherian

School of International Service, American University, Washington, DC, USA

ABSTRACT

This article analyzes how the dominant narrative of Armenian national identity shapes perceptions of Armenian culture and offers examples of Ottoman Armenian craft art to bring to light an under acknowledged, yet intrinsically valuable, dynamic within Armenian cultural identity. Within studies of art history, cultural exchange between Ottoman Armenians and Turks has been ignored due to its inconvenience to the conflictual understanding of Armenian-Ottoman relations central to Armenian national identity. These artifacts speak out against reductive norms and offer an important addendum to the understanding of what it meant and continues to mean to be Armenian.

KEYWORDS

Identity; Armenia; ottoman empire; cultural exchange; craft art; material culture; art history

The National Museum of Armenian Ethnography is a beautifully constructed building in Araks, Armenia. The plaque on the facade reads: Memorial Complex of Sardarapat Battle, and in smaller font: National Museum of Armenian Ethnography. This typographical hierarchy corresponds to the landmark's size, layout, and symbolic importance. When one arrives, the iconic bell tower and winged bulls commemorating the Armenian victory over an invading Ottoman army in 1918 is the first visible landmark and is a short walk, through a row of stalwart stone eagles and past a wall depicting heroic winged horses trampling serpents, from the humble museum of crafts. The museum first opened in 1978, ten years after the construction of the Sardarapat memorial. The museum features an exhibit on the 1918 victory as well as ethnographic displays on food, clothing, metal work, carpets, and other handicrafts. Labeling of the items and their geographic origins suggested that many of the crafts were likely made by Ottoman Armenians, but there was little mention of Armenians' centuries of shared history with Ottoman Turks, except in the chamber dedicated to their defeat in the Battle of Sardarapat in 1918. In the national museum dedicated to the presentation of Armenian material culture, Armenia's cultural history is synonymous with a struggle against Ottoman Turks.

The official Turkish depiction of art from the Ottoman period also ignores this relationship. In 1973, the Smithsonian Institute and the Cultural Affairs Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey published *Exhibition Catalogue of Turkish Art of the Ottoman Period*. The author argues that

there has been unnecessary debate on the origin of artists who executed early Ottoman tiles and pottery ... the Ottoman world was attracting great quantities of people escaping from the unrest in the East and, due to the expansion of the empire, various ethnic groups were being assimilated into the system. (Atil, 1973, p. 24)

The author elaborates, 'ethnic origin was of no consequence as all who lived within the Ottoman Empire were given the chance to be an Ottoman' (Atil, 1973, p. 28). This claim is misleading because the existence of distinct ethnic groups was reinforced by the Ottoman state through the *millet* system.¹ Even after reforms in 1839, 1856, and 1875, designed to expand legal equality, freedom of religion, and equality of opportunity, 'Ottomanism, the common identity being promulgated for all the people of the Ottoman Empire, remained identified with Islam and Ottoman Turkish language and culture' (Arkun, 2005, p. 71). Stating that all Ottoman subjects were *de facto* Ottomans, therefore claiming that the origin and ethnicity of these craftsmen is 'unnecessary', obscures the historical realities of ethnic diversity.

Many authors have rejected this characterization of art, such as contributors to the 2015 issue of *Etudes Arméniennes Contemporaines*, 'Towards Inclusive Art Histories: Ottoman Armenian Voices Speak Back', Vazken Davidian, Alyson Wharton-Durgaryan, and David Low. Davidian criticizes interpretations of both Turkish and Armenian art history, stating 'while the former constructs an artificial Turkish-Ottoman art historical canon, aimed at specifically eradicating all non-"Turkish" Ottoman artists, the latter privileges the output of mostly Russian Armenian artists as subservient to the cause of an imagined national liberation ideology' (2015, p. 10). Wharton-Durgaryan, whose work will be discussed in greater detail in the architecture section below, gives voice to the contribution of craftsman Sopon Bezirdjian as 'the sultan's decorator' who was an 'orientalist, Ottoman, but, primarily Armenian' (2015). Low argues against exclusivity in Ottoman photographic history. His analysis of a photograph of provincial Ottoman Armenians aims, 'not to understand one "site" but a wider history' of the missing yet culturally rich 'Ottoman Armenian "image world"' (2015). Emphasizing Armenian voices within Ottoman society is not meant to claim Ottoman culture as utterly Armenian, as suggested by author Arshag Mahdesian who claimed that 'the embroideries, the tapestry and the jewelry admired in Europe and America as Turkish products are almost exclusively manufactured by Armenian', but to demonstrate the ways in which Armenians and Ottoman Turks' unique cultures interacted through art, adding new dimensions to their respective cultural identities (1917, p. 462).

Like many forms of art, handicrafts are a physical manifestation of culture, constantly changing through production and reproduction. Hope Irvine states that

a craft reflects the influence of the tradition to which it relates, a considered use of materials employed with a degree of skill and concern for the function of the object, and traditional or personal aesthetic judgements as evidenced in the creative individual interpretation of the object by the artisan. (1985, p. 46)

The *khatchkar*, or cross stone, demonstrates Armenian Christian tradition, requires a certain skill and artistry in carving, and serves a certain purpose, often as a commemorative marker or gravestone. Other important artifacts made by Armenian craftsmen, such as textiles, ceramics, and silver, also required an intersection of skill, tradition, and individual interpretation during their production. Each craft provides a snapshot of the

ethnic and cultural identity of the person who made them, within their specific cultural milieu. These artifacts served every day functions, exhibiting their importance to the family laying the table for supper with a salver, or the young man proposing to his beloved with an engagement box, or the clergyman lighting the candle in a ceramic lamp before service.

The first section of this article outlines the literature on cultural, ethnic and national identity, then offers an analysis of the academic treatment of Armenian identity, specifically. This includes a review of key contributing factors to Armenian identity, as well as a description of how the dominant narrative of national identity reinterprets cultural histories to exclude Ottoman Armenians. The second section explores examples of Armenian craft art that fall within the Ottoman period, from 1453 to 1918, because of their potential contribution and current under appreciation in Armenian cultural identity and art history. The portrayal of Armenian crafts without their Ottoman past, or Ottoman crafts without their Armenian history, overlooks a vibrant relationship. Armenian motifs on mosques and Arabic lettering on Armenian plates, as well as other examples to be explored in the sections on *khatchkars*, textiles, architecture, ceramics, and metalworking, reveal a creative bond between Armenian and Turkish culture vital to the study of Armenian identity.

Ethnic, cultural and national identity

Identity can be understood as the intersection of cultural and ethnic identity with national identity. Though cultural and ethnic identity are not synonymous, potentially having different bounds and features, they do overlap substantially in terms of scholarly definition and the ways in which people experience them. Both contribute greatly to national identity, which draws from their richness, and adds conditions relating to the economy, governance of the nation, and territory (Smith, 1991). However, national identity itself can change and limit the interpretation of cultural and ethnic identities.

Anthony Smith robustly defines ethnic identity as ‘a named human population with myths of common ancestry, shared historical memories and one or more common elements of culture, including an association with a homeland, and some degree of solidarity, at least among the elites’ (1999, p. 13). This definition couches ethnic identity in terms of cultural, largely imagined features such as myths and memories, and to some extent solidarity and association with a homeland. Richard Jenkins gives a definition similarly intertwined with culture, including the shared meanings, production, and reproduction of culture (2008, p. 169). Stuart Hall offers two interpretations of cultural identity. The first defines identity as a sense that shared culture and history creates “one people”, with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history’ (1990, p. 223). Though the first definition has applicability and importance to cultural rediscoveries, Hall emphasizes that the second definition offers a more accurate characterization of the nature of identity, of “becoming” as well as of “being” (1990, p. 225). This characterization adds to Smith’s interpretation, assenting to the imagination of identity, and including the notion of dynamism. In the ‘continuous “play” of history, culture and power’, cultural identities are ‘the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past’ (1990, p. 225).

Numerous authors have taken a similar stance on primordial, essential, and static approaches to ethnic and cultural identity (Barth, 2006; Bhabha, 1990; Karner, 2010; Patterson, 1975; Sollors, 1991; Yancey, Ericksen, & Juliani, 1976). The ultimate addendum to previous conceptions of an unchanging, distant and historically informed identity is the inclusion of quotidian volatility, 'despite the often long shadow of the past' (Song, 2003, p. 17). Culture is 'inescapably a matter of everyday banal social reality' (Jenkins, 2008, p. 172). Ethnicity does place limits on individuals' imaginings of their relationships to others, themselves, and their communities, but these relationships can change over time (Jenkins, 2008, p. 173). Key aspects of culture may remain important for extended periods, as will be explored with Armenian identity, but the agency of individuals and how they navigate discourses that influence them and their culture on a day to day basis matter. For example, during the *vorpahavak*, or 'the gathering of orphans' campaign that worked to liberate children and women who had been abducted during the Armenian genocide, having an Armenian father, previously an important ethnic characteristic, softened to include children born to Armenian women of Muslim fatherhood (Ekmekcioglu, 2013, p. 544).

Smith defines national identity in much the same terms as ethnic identity as 'as a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members' (1991, 14). Benedict Anderson defines the nation as an imagined political community, imagined because most members do not personally know each other, yet feel kinship towards one another, which grew out of cultural and religious roots (1991, p. 6). Both authors assert the imagination of national identity. However, the differences between imagined national and imagined ethnic identities persist. Smith is cautious to assign the label of national identity to antiquity, because 'nationalist ideologies and the vast majority of nations can be shown to be of much more recent vintage, including all those nations of design' (1999, p. 6). Comparing Smith's two definitions, two major differences arise. First, for ethnic identity, the group maintains an association with a historic homeland. Within national identity it is the homeland itself, rather than this association, that is shared. This difference is palpable for Armenians who lived in the Ottoman Empire, longing for, rather than claiming, ownership of their historic homeland. Second, national identity adds the conditions of a common economy, legal rights, and duties. Although Ottoman Armenians did share these conditions to a certain extent, it was as a *millet* and not as a sovereign nation. For these reasons, the identity of Ottoman Armenians should be considered ethnic and cultural, rather than national.²

Drawing from cultural elements of ethnic identity, national identity is contingent upon the establishment of a formal institutional arrangement between peoples of an ethnic group. However, national identity is often intertwined with the politics of the nation-state, and is therefore not only a foundation of nation-building, but a potential tool of state consolidation. This is not to assert that national identity is not genuinely felt by the peoples of a nation, or is a conspiracy of national elites, but to emphasize that national identity, used with political motives, can have an impact on perceptions and interpretations shaping the ethnic and cultural identity from which it sprung, for example in museums (Anderson, 1991, p. 178). The impact of Armenian national identity on the academic discourse of the past will be analyzed in the following section.

Characteristics of Armenian identities

Armenian cultural, ethnic, and national identities do share common characteristics, as described by previously mentioned scholars. Razmik Panossian eloquently says of the relationship between Armenian ethnic and national identity,

Pillars of the distinguishing features of Armenian identity—the building blocks—were laid in ancient times: religion, language, territorial basis, myths and symbols. These objective historical characteristics of ‘Armenianness’ enabled the group to survive into the modern period when the subjective dimension was introduced on the road to nationhood, transforming the collective from an ethnic group into a nation. (2006, p. 23)

Three formative pieces of Armenian ethnic identity were the conversion of the Armenian people to Christianity around 314 AD, the creation of the Armenian alphabet by Mesrop Mashtots, and the cult of martyrdom and ensuing diaspora that sprung from the loss of the Armenian homeland in the Battle of Avarayr in 451 BC (Smith, 2003, p. 67).³ Many authors, though offering their own analysis of Armenian identity, agree with this characterization, citing at least two if not all of these events as critical (Abrahamian, 2001; Bournoutian, 2002; Gevorgian, 1997; Herzig & Kurkchian, 2005; Khorenatsi & Thomson, 1978; Lang, 1982; Mahdesian, 1917; Panossian, 2006; Shant, 1999; Zolyan & Zakaryan, 2008). Additional myths and memories from antiquity hold a place on the shelf of Armenian identity, such as Hayk as primogenitor, the reign of Tigranes II, the Great, and the legend of Mount Ararat (Abrahamian, 2001, p. 14, 36; Khorenatsi & Thomson, 1978).⁴ Armenian identity was not uniform for all Armenians, who shared cultural and ethnic characteristics, such as Armenian Orthodoxy, but were divided due to their disparate geographic and cultural contexts, for example between Russian Armenia and Ottoman Armenia (Herzig & Kurkchian, 2005, p. 5; Panossian, 2006, p. 3). However, the embrace of Armenian identity belonged to each of these diaspora populations, and each, in turn, contributed to Armenian culture. Scholars of Armenian identity also vary in their opinions of what matters in its identity.⁵ Despite the distance intentionally placed between Armenians and Iranians after the adoption of Christianity highlighted by Smith, Nina Garsoïan highlights the importance of Iranian culture to Armenian civilization (1985, p. viii). Some scholars have discussed the influence of Hellenism on Armenian culture, to which the Temple of Garni is a monument (Abrahamian, 2001; Panossian, 2006; Terian, 1980).

Of course, the Armenian genocide, resulting in the deaths of an estimated 1.5 million Armenians at the hands of the Turkish government in 1915, caused mass displacement and loss of the historic homeland, leaving a dark mark on the collective memory of the Armenian people.⁶ After the genocide, antipathy towards the perpetrators of the atrocity and their descendants became one of the most prominent characteristics of what it meant to be Armenian for survivors and their descendants. The telling and retelling of the horrors solidified the importance of an ‘us’ vs ‘them’ dichotomy throughout the diaspora, in which ‘the Turks were constructed as an enemy group, forever dangerous, with their state pictured as an oppressive, backward-looking power’ (Herzig & Kurkchian, 2005, p. 8). During the Soviet period, due to its inconvenience for Turkish allies, the Soviet state-enforced censorship on the Armenian genocide, which diminished its importance in the Armenian national self-image (Herzig & Kurkchian, 2005, p. 11). Once this position was reversed, following a break between the USSR and Turkey after 1945, the Armenian genocide became prominent yet again, resulting in public demonstrations in the 1960s in the

streets of Yerevan (Herzig & Kurkchian, 2005, p. 11).⁷ Among the challenges to the republic after its independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the preservation and assertion of Armenian culture were very important. Authors Mikayel Zolyan and Tigran Zakaryan describe how certain historical events, such as the adoption of Christianity and the creation of the Armenian alphabet, lost ground in a national identity rooted in ‘the opposition of a (mostly positive) self-image – a people struggling for national independence, and a (mostly negative) image of “the Other” – an alien empire that tries to subjugate the nation’, with regard to the Ottoman Empire and its successor, modern Turkey (2008, p. 785). Writing in 1999, Lendrush Khurshudian agreed with the notion that cultural elements play a role in national identity but advocated them to consolidate nationalism in the fight for preservation of the nation, including protection from external and internal enemies, namely Turkey (1999, p. 15, 219, 240). This imagination and reimagination, as well as the very powerful impact that the genocide had on the ethnic identity of Armenians, pushed Armenians toward an increasingly consolidated national identity that would isolate their culture and transform their history.

Smith states that ‘the typical demand of cultural nationalism and its intellectual representatives’ is to emphasize difference, which requires ‘the cultivation of an individual style of creation and action – in food, dress, customs, leisure activities, work, morals, and politics’ (1991, pp. 68–69). When elements of cultural identity are reframed through the lens of national identity, important cultural elements can be excluded or devalued. Levon Abrahamian states of the Ottoman period in *Armenian Folk Arts, Culture, and Identity*, ‘Armenia stagnated in subordination ... barely sustained by the aging relics of its previous enlightened culture’ (2001, p. 20). Panossian describes the *ethnie* within the Ottoman Empire as “frozen” —at least until the “age of nationalism”, beginning in the late nineteenth century’ (2006, p. 71). The Ottoman period prior to the Armenian genocide was not without struggle for Armenians who were effectively living as second class citizens (Arkun, 2005, p. 71). However, the Armenian people and their culture was anything but frozen. Panossian himself states that Constantinople was ‘the most significant Armenian centre in the world —much more so than towns in historic Armenia and other diasporan communities’ because Armenians reached prominent positions as artisans, government officials, and *amiras*, or merchant-bankers (2006, p. 84). However, Panossian does not articulate the fact that that this thriving Armenian community developed and expanded the bounds of Armenian culture before both the ‘age of nationalism’ and Armenian independence.

It is worth noting that examples of Ottoman Armenian art are difficult to identify, because of their absorption into a generalized Ottoman canon, their location outside of Armenia’s borders, and their intercultural nature. However, the lack of recognition of these crafts comes less from the challenge of finding them, and more from the challenge they present to national identity. In his analysis of Armenian painters, Davidian argues that

any representation of, and interaction with, the artists’ Ottoman context and cultural environment complicate myopic nationalist Armenian views, bolstered through the additional traumatic prism of the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1916, that render all aspects of Ottoman and Armenian coexistence, integration and experience as negative. (2015, pp. 10–11)

Thus, the lack of representation of Ottoman Armenian art is a fault of nationalist presentation of culture revising elements of the cultural and ethnic identity that once informed itself.

Ottoman Armenian crafts

Edik Hovhannisian stated that within Armenian national identity, ‘the past speaks, as well as the puzzling future. It is not just human generations that constitute the nation, but *‘khachkars, churches, miniature paintings, ancient manuscripts, books, songs’* (1979, pp. 166–167). If the everyday is ‘the stage on which history is lived and performed’, then crafts are the masks worn by the actors, vital during the performance and crucial to understanding its context and intricacies after the curtain has fallen (Karner, 2010, p. 166). The following sections provide examples of Ottoman Armenian crafts that belong within the scope of Armenian cultural and ethnic identity, but have not found a place within national identity. Though they are by no means exhaustive of Ottoman Armenian crafts, each section provides a unique glimpse into historical constituents of Armenian identity. Bringing these artifacts to light offers the opportunity to revisit Armenian identity from a fresh perspective, unencumbered by the ‘us’ vs. ‘them’ dichotomies. Of course, identity does create and reinforce distinctions between ethnic groups, and the Armenian genocide has had a profound impact on Armenians’ understandings of themselves and others (Jenkins, 2008, p. 172). These distinctions, though painful, should not be cast in such a way as to ignore beneficial and beautiful cultural interactions between ‘us’ and ‘them’ that fill an existing gap, adding richness and depth to the Armenian artistic tradition.

The *Khatchkar*

The combination of the rich crafting tradition of Armenia and the importance of religious beliefs physically manifests in the *khatchkar*, or cross-stone. There is a broad spectrum of sizes and patterning of *khatchkars*, but they all have the common central element of a cross, typically over a round symbol for eternity. *Khatchkars* are found in large quantities carved into the walls of churches, or standing nearby within monastic compounds, but they also appear in cemeteries, by springs, and at cross roads (Abrahamian, 2001, p. 60). By the seventh century, the art was standardized to a flat rectangular rock carved on one side to depict a cross with vegetal patterning, resurrecting both biblical symbolism of the Garden of Eden as well as reflecting the cultural significance of agricultural life (2001, p. 63). These cross-stones are found in modern Armenia as well as in many of the territories where Armenians lived in diaspora communities, including the former Ottoman Empire and Safavid Iran. Most crafts are assumed to be important to cultural heritage, but the contribution of the *khatchkar* was formally recognized by the international community upon its addition to UNESCO’s Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2010 (n.d.).

Despite their Christian roots and recognized uniqueness to Armenian culture, *khatchkars* had an influence on Ottoman art. They contained the first chip-carved rosettes, a spiral ornamentation, developed in Jerusalem in the mid-fifteenth century (Rahmani, 1988, p. 68). Early examples of this type of rosette have been documented on *khatchkars* set in the wall facing St. James’ Cathedral at the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem (Rahmani, 1988, pp. 68–69). The Mamluk Sultanate controlled Jerusalem during the development of this technique, but after Ottomans conquered the territory in 1517, chip-carved rosettes were added to the entrance to the Ribat of ‘Ala’ al-Din by Ottoman Turks, as seen in Figure 1 (Rahmani, 1988, p. 69). Thus, an ornament developed by a Christian people in



Figure 1. Lintel over the Ribât of ‘Alâ’ al-Din in Jerusalem, fifteenth–sixteenth centuries.

their presentation of the cross was adopted by the ruling Islamic elites to decorate their own building.

The town of Julfa, located on the Ottoman–Persian border in what is present day Azerbaijan, was once an Ottoman possession occupied by many Armenian merchants and artisans (McCabe, 2012). Works created before the seventeenth century conquest by the Persians are of the Ottoman period. Compared to *khachkars* dating from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in various Armenian communities, particularly those found in Armenia today, sixteenth and seventeenth century *khachkars* from Julfan cemeteries contain artistic elements not found within Armenian patterning tradition. Some examples, as seen in Figure 2(a), feature four smaller crosses, each carved within a thin rectangle with an onion shaped tip, like common Ottoman architectural elements, such as the minaret (Azarian, 1977, p. 57). Figure 2(b) shows another Julfan *khachkar* that was relocated to

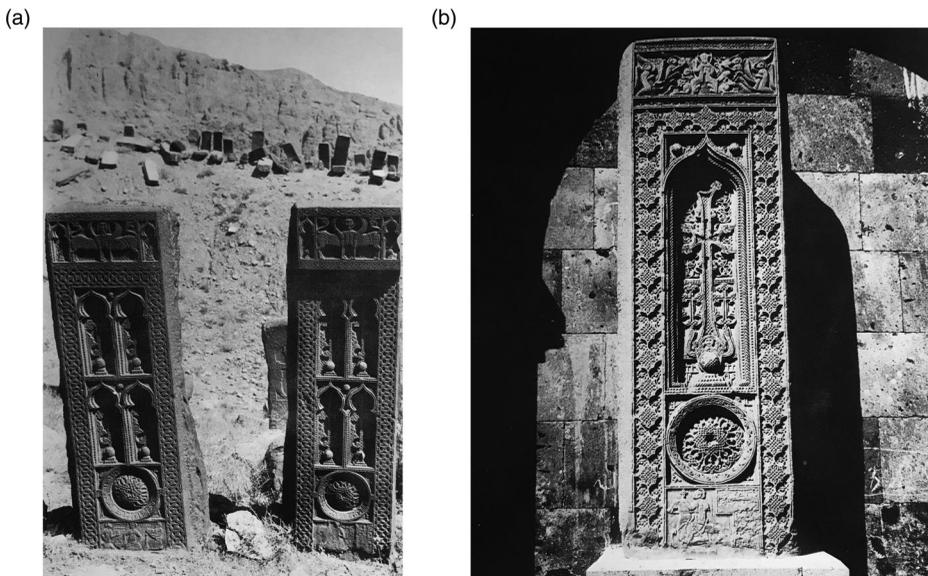


Figure 2. (a) *Khachkars* from Julfan Cemetery, Julfa, Azerbaijan, sixteenth–seventeenth centuries. (b) *Khachkar* from Julfan Cemetery located at Echmiadzin, Vagharshapat, Armenia, sixteenth–seventeenth centuries.

Echmidzin in Armenia and has one cross, but repeats this integration of Ottoman style in this fundamentally Christian craft. The incorporation of patterns from Muslim Ottomans is found on numerous *khatchkars* in the cemetery, giving permanence to a powerful example of cultural exchange (Azarian, 1977, p. 58).

Though pointed arches can be seen on some Armenian churches, such as the chapel of Grigor the Enlightener in the Tavush province of modern Armenia, they were not common features on buildings and were absent from *khatchkars* located in non-Ottoman localities where the cross is covered by a rounded, square, or fitted top and design is vegetal rather than geometric (Abrahamian, 2001, p. 67). These Julfan cross-stones retain many artistic elements central to Armenian design tradition, such as the vegetal carving, traditional iconography, and the circular symbol for eternity. Julfan *khatchkars* are one example of an assertion of Armenian cultural and ethnic identity that was reconciled with Ottoman Turkish culture for individuals in both life and death.

Textiles

Carpets and rugs, though often used as interchangeable terms, are two distinct crafts within the Armenian weaving tradition. Carpets are made by weaving or braiding threads of different colors together, resulting in a flat fabric resembling a tapestry. Rugs are made by double knotting individual colored thread around the front and back of a loom. The oldest known rug, the 'Pazyryk' rug, dates to the fourth or fifth century BC. Though its origins are debated, it has been proposed that it was produced by artisans of Urartu, often cited as the first Armenian kingdom, because it depicts bucks and griffins consistent with Urartian iconography (Gantzhorn, 1998, p. 50). Even if the 'Pazyryk' rug is not Armenian in origin, evidence suggests that Armenians produced rugs as early as the first millennium, BC (Gantzhorn, 1998, p. 50).

Ottoman Armenians continued this textile lineage, but also added elements of Ottoman Turkish culture into their designs. Ottoman Armenians often spoke Turkish and Armenian, merging the two languages and adopting family names based on Turkish words. A double prayer rug featured in a collection compiled by Lucy Manuelian and Murray Eiland, which is ripe with examples of rugs with Armenian and Turkish elements, serves as an example of linguistic coexistence in words woven together by an Ottoman Armenian artisan. The inscription, found between the two rugs, contains words derived from the Turkish language written in Armenian script. The inscription reads 'D. Tishekezekian [man with a broken tooth], 1909 January 12, Ghevond Tuybeyekian [man with a fine mustache], Ez [Abbreviation of Erzeum, the city of production]' (Manuelian & Eiland, 1984, p. 176). These rugs also feature hanging lamps and cross panels, common features in Turkish prayer rugs that are uncommon among Armenian rugs. Another prayer rug, from the nineteenth century, more closely follows the compositional format of prayer rugs of the Ottoman court, derived from the architecture of mosques (Manuelian & Eiland, 1984, p. 172). Design elements such as the palm leaf border, floral panels, and columns are Ottoman, but beneath the columns, Armenian text is visible. The text translates as 'hena' and 'zang'. Together they make the Armenian word for obedient, implying the rug had religious significance for the characteristically Orthodox Christian Armenian artisan or client, in spite of the inclusion of Islamic artistic motifs (Manuelian & Eiland, 1984, p. 176).

Clothing worn by Armenians in the Ottoman Empire was influenced by official regulations and by fashion trends. The clothing laws of both Sultan Osman III, 1754-57, and Mustafa III, 1757-74, specifically targeted minorities as a way to demonstrate power, especially in times of uncertainty (Quataert, 1997, p. 410). Sixteenth-century laws required Armenians to wear certain colors and materials, such as 'skirts of a particular Bursa fabric dyed blue, black or navy' (Faroqhi, 2004, p. 25). In 1829, Sultan Mahmud II dictated the clothing to be worn by civil servants, including those belonging to *millet*s, which would include the plain fez, and 'restructured the Ottoman state on a completely new footing—one that was no longer religious in its distinctions but nonreligious in its uniformity' (Quataert, 1997, p. 413). A photograph from 1898 shows Armenian cloth makers, members of a wealthy merchant class, wearing the fez (Quataert, 1997, p. 416). Non-Muslim merchants donned clothing typically worn by Muslims because it allowed them to enter government positions and differentiate themselves from lower class people of all faiths (Quataert, 1997, p. 414). In terms of fashion, embroidered silk scarves, typically made with a Turkish technique known as *mushabak*, were popular as a headscarf and belt among Ottoman Armenians (Hovannisian, 2012, p. 96). Such scarves can be found in photographs of Armenians in Smyrna, or Izmir, Turkey, in the nineteenth century (Hovannisian, 2012, p. 96).

Clothing differed greatly between Armenians living in territory controlled by the Ottoman Empire, referred to as Western Armenia, or by Russia, Eastern Armenia, due to official mandates, unofficial trends, and the cultural milieu in which Armenians found themselves. An article present only for Ottoman Armenian women was the apron, or *gognots*, which was worn outside the home as a symbol of marriage (Abrahamian, 2001, p. 185). Headdresses from Eastern Armenia were typically made from stiff velvet or cloth and were much less ornate than those from Western Armenia which featured silver netting and embroidered adornments (Abrahamian, 2001, p. 182). Men's clothing also differed. In Eastern Armenia a long jacket, or *chukha*, and fur cap was customary, but in Western Armenia short jackets and felt caps were common (Abrahamian, 2001, p. 181). As demonstrated by Figure 3, a stamp from Armenia showing Western Armenian dress, costumes from both regions are considered 'native dress'. However, explanation of the reasons for variation are often undercut by the negativity used to reference the Ottoman Empire, obscuring the reality that what are now seen as traditional costumes were prescribed not only by their own communities within an Ottoman *millet* framework, but also influenced by state power and conceptions of what was appropriate clothing for Armenians.

Architecture & interior design

Architecture, though considered a finer art than many of the crafts discussed in this article, can still be considered a craft according to Irvine's definition because it involves objects made from materials employed with skill so that they may serve a function, that reflect cultural influence and personal artistic decisions on the part of the craftsman. Armenia is home to dozens of beautiful churches, which typically are constructed from stone or carved into solid rock, are uniformly colored with minimal ornamentation aside from carvings, some frescos, and *khatchkars*, and are usually formed from a large central building, flanked by smaller additions with pointed roofs, from which rises a cylindrical structure topped by a pointed, conical roof and cross. Some exceptions exist with regard to quantity



Figure 3. Postage stamp depicting Western Armenian dress from Vaspurakan dating to the nineteenth-twentieth centuries, designed by Ruben Ghevondian, 1998.

and type of ornamentation, such as Echmiadzin or the ‘Church of the Smaller Quarter’ in Meghri, Armenia dating to the seventeenth century, but by and large the great buildings of Armenia were churches and these temples followed a tradition, maintaining a simple, monastic quality (Abrahamian, 2001, p. 50).

Buildings designed by Ottoman Armenians look immensely different, offering examples of grand buildings informed by multiple cultures. The Balyan family was instrumental in the design and construction of many nineteenth century Ottoman buildings, reaching peak prominence in the 1860s and 1870s (Tuğlacı, 1990; Wharton-Durgaryan, 2005; Alioglu, 2015). Even as members of a minority without equal legal footing, the Balyans were able to rise to great standing, creating mosques and palaces of magnificent elegance. Sketches of the Çırağan Palace bear Serkis Balyan’s signature, suggesting the unofficial Imperial Architect had significant latitude over, as well as a personal connection with the design of both the interior of the palace and the furniture that filled it (Wharton-Durgaryan, 2005). Balyan’s importance to Ottoman society can be seen from his ‘description as a functionary of the imperial household, seated behind Abdülaziz’s throne’ during the opening of parliament in 1877 (Wharton-Durgaryan, 2005). He was an Armenian, but his identity involved daily engagement with Ottoman culture, laws, and society.

According to his biographer, Teotoros Lapçinciyan, Sapon Bezirdjian was a designer for Balyan and the ‘Sultan’s decorator’, an honorary title given for his service (Wharton-Durgaryan, 2005). Bezirdjian studied iconography from the Islamic Golden Age, incorporating them into his designs and reinvigorating Islamic image traditions (Wharton-Durgaryan, 2005). He also worked on designs for the sultan’s *tughra*, showing the interconnection between Armenians and the upper echelon of the Ottoman state (Wharton-Durgaryan, 2005). Though Bezirdjian designed with Ottoman elites in mind, he also created quintessentially Armenian works that should be considered valuable additions to Armenian art history, such as an interpretation of the iconic piece ‘Ruins of Armenia’, attributed to Chanik Aramian. One such drawing, seen in [Figure 4](#), featured the icon of Mount Ararat, Armenian lettering, and Christian imagery, framed by Ottoman inspired design elements. Bezirdjian navigated two cultures on an everyday basis, negotiating his own Ottoman Armenian identity. Despite his collaborative behavior, he was considered an iconic Armenian artist, highlighted by the fact that in 1902 he was asked to design an altar for the Etchmiadzin Holy See Cathedral, at the request of the Catholicos himself (Wharton-Durgaryan, 2005).

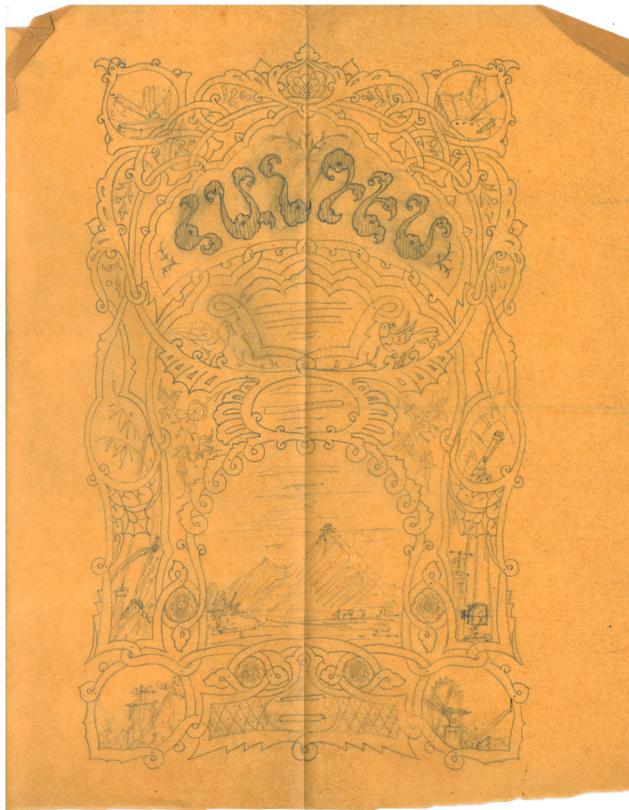


Figure 4. Drawing of Frame with Armenian lettering and Mount Ararat, Sapon Bezirdjian, nineteenth century.

Ceramics

Ceramics have a long history in Armenia. Pottery found at the Erebuni fortress in Yerevan, Armenia traces back to the eighth century AD. At the ruins of Zvartnots, large clay vessels that were used for making wine dating to the fifth century AD, still stand. Pottery shards excavated from the Shengavit settlement in Yerevan, Armenia date to the Bronze Age. Clay *khnotsis*, or butter churns, and the *tonir*, the sunken hearth used to cook *lavash*, a traditional bread, were vital objects in Armenian life due to their importance in traditional food preparation (Abrahamian, 2001, pp. 114–118). This history extends past the borders of modern Armenia. Many of the finest examples of Armenian pottery, such as those shown in Figure 5, can be traced to Ottoman Armenians, who lived and worked alongside Ottoman Turks.

In the late fourteenth century, the predominantly Armenian town of Kutahya, in present day Western Turkey, became an important manufacturer of pottery within the Ottoman Empire. Iznik, a town bordering Lake Iznik in Western Turkey, dominated ceramic production until the eighteenth century, when it was surpassed by Kutahya as the main production center of the Empire (Ribeiro, 2009). Production grew both in scale and quality as many Iznik potters moved to Kutahya, introducing styles and themes that were used to create novel decorations rooted in the Christian tradition (Abrahamian, 2001, p. 119; Atil, 1973). Kutahya continued to develop the craft, including the development of yellow pigment, which was unknown in Iznik (Carswell & Dowsett, 1972).

Kutahya potters made objects of Armenian and Ottoman design, which increased their popularity with religious patrons, who featured their work in both churches and mosques (Abrahamian, 2001, p. 119; Carswell & Dowsett, 1972). The Armenian Cathedral of St. James in Jerusalem features tiles and ceramic eggs made in Kutahya that are stylistically Ottoman but contain biblical scenes and winged cherubs (Yeomans, 2012, p. 92). Ottoman and Christian elements are found on ceramics made for this important Armenian Church,



Figure 5. Glazed pottery, Kutahya, Turkey, seventeenth-eighteenth centuries.

suggesting they could visually coexist. Tiles and oil lamps made in Kutahya adorned mosques, primarily in Constantinople (Kouymjian, n.d.). The Cinili Kiosk featured a number of porcelain eggs, 'some display thin, scrolling, fragile arabesques with leaves and petals ... while others ... are designed for churches, displaying seraphim with wings arranged in a cruciform formation' (Yeomans, 2012, p. 92).

The Armenian salt jar in the shape of a pregnant woman, see [Figure 6](#), emerged in the nineteenth century in both Eastern and Western Armenia (Abrahamian, 2001, p. 127). There appear to be four variations of the salt jar with different degrees of detail and realism. It is unclear why these vessels emerged during this period, though it is known that they were made by women (Abrahamian, 2001, p. 127). With ambiguous origins, it cannot be known if there were Ottoman contributions to the creation of this craft. However, this new form of art emerged during the Ottoman period, suggesting that the atmosphere was open to cultural innovation, even within the Armenian *millet*. Rather than stagnating under foreign dominion, Armenians continued their trades, practices, and crafts, both perpetuating tradition and reinventing the field of Armenian crafts.



Figure 6. Female salt jar with likeness of costume from the village Bambakashat, Ayarat, Armenia, twentieth century.

Metalwork and silver

Copper, silver, and gold were prominent metals used by Ottoman Armenians to make household items, decorative objects, and jewelry. Some metal items were forged for religious rites while others served domestic purposes. Belts were important as a symbol of marriage and virtue for Armenian women (Abrahamian, 2001, p. 200). The salver, a large shallow circular dish, was a common item in Armenian homes in Western and Eastern Armenia in the nineteenth century, though style was distinct in different villages. Because working as a craftsman was seen as beneath Muslims in some communities, minority populations sometimes filled the demand for certain crafts (Tokat, 2005, p. 282). A salver dating to 1477 made by an Armenian artisan in Julfa, now exhibited in the State Historical Museum in Yerevan, features engravings of both Armenian and Arabic script (Kouymjian, n.d.). The presence of both languages, Armenian in a central ring, and Arabic on the outer ring, suggests an Armenian but bilingual client or artisan, one that valued both languages enough for an object of daily use.

The city of Van, in present-day Eastern Turkey, was a major Armenian cultural center. In 1890, the city held 40,000 people, 25,000 of which were Armenian (Tokat, 2005, p. 79). Though many crafts were practiced in Van, the top specialties were gold- and silver-wear. In the second half of the nineteenth century there were 120 jewelry shops and gold- and silver-making factories in Van which produced thousands of crafts for patrons every year (Tokat, 2005). Numerous silver objects, such as tobacco boxes, the water bowl shown in Figure 7(a), and eyeglass cases, stamped with the seal of an Armenian artisan feature not only Arabic script, but also the Ottoman coat of arms. A silver tobacco box made in the mid-nineteenth century by Garabed Balian, an Armenian artisan, features the Dolma Bahche palace as well as an inscription in Arabic. Another box made by two artisans from Van features the Sultan Ahmed mosque. One object from this period has the Ottoman coat of arms on one side, and an Armenian name on



Figure 7. (a) Silver water bowl featuring the Ottoman coat of arms and the port of Van, stamped with an Armenian and Arabic signature, Van, Turkey, eighteenth-nineteenth centuries. (b) Silver engagement box featuring Mother Armenia motif from 'Ruins of Armenia' attributed to Chanik Aramian, Van, Turkey, late nineteenth century.

the other. Though Ottoman imagery is featured on certain works, Armenian imagery continued to persist, such as the motif of the 'Ruins of Armenia', shown in [Figure 7\(b\)](#).

Beautifully nielloed Arabic scripts and Ottoman buildings hold a place in the Armenian artistic experience, calling into question whether Armenian culture is accurately characterized without the inclusion of these examples of cultural exchange. It was not only the products of Van that spread, but the techniques developed there. In the nineteenth century they spread to other cities in the Ottoman Empire, such as Karin, Sebastia, Istanbul, Adana, Baghesh, Triebizond, and Tigranakert. The Arabic word for the niello technique, *savat*, is derived from the Armenian *sevat*, showing evidence of the technique's outward transfer from Van. Armenian artisans were officially celebrated by the Ottoman government, in 1910 'the Turkish government organized an exhibition of works by Van craftsmen, during which Kevork Kuyumjubashion and Sahag Der Arisdagessian were awarded medals of honor' (Tokat, 2005, p. 116).

Julfa and Van were Armenian artistic and commercial centers, but Armenian artisans also practiced their trade as a minority in Istanbul. Ottoman sultans contributed to the presence of Armenian artisans in Istanbul. Sultan Kanuni Suleyman I resettled a large group of Armenian goldsmiths and silversmiths from Van to Istanbul in 1534 and, in 1639, Sultan Murad IV repeated this mandate. Greeks held a dominant position in metalwork in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, however, by 1806, 'of the 18 most well-known goldsmiths and silversmiths in Istanbul, 17 were Armenian and one was Greek' (Tokat, 2005, p. 282). Military medals were made by made by Van artisans.

The medal pictured in [Figure 8](#) reads: 'Van 84 – Long live my emperor. Shaban [the owner]'. Other artisans, such as members of the Duzian family, worked for the state like



Figure 8. Military medal minted during the reign of Sultan Muhammed Kharazm Shah, Van, Turkey, seventeenth century.

the Balyans. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Ottoman Mint was run by the Duzians and employed Armenian artisans who expanded its production. Works made by Armenian craftsmen were so well regarded that Sultan Selim III gifted silver and gold objects created under the supervision of the Duzians to Napoleon Bonaparte. Numerous other artisans worked directly for the sultan, including Artin Bezjian, or Kazaz Artin Amira, who became head of the Ottoman Mint in 1819 and was an advisor to Sultan Mahmud II and Mikayel Kurian who worked for Sultan Abdul Mejid and his mother in the early nineteenth century (Tokat, 2005, p. 48). Contrary to the narrative of conflict supported by Armenian national identity, collaboration did occur between Ottoman Armenians with both Ottoman Turks and the Ottoman state itself.

Conclusion

National identity helps people characterize who they are. It is informed by ethnic and cultural identity and adds crucial elements of the modern nation, including a common economy and legal rights. However, national identity should not overshadow certain aspects of ethnic and cultural identity because they do not reconcile with myths convenient to the establishment of a consolidated, independent nation. This is especially true of the exclusion of Ottoman Armenians, whose rich contribution to Armenian culture carries important implications about Armenian interactions with Ottoman Turks and the Ottoman state. The academic study of this relationship has been shaped by the manner that the Armenian genocide shaped understanding of Armenian national identity.

This article brings to light examples of Ottoman Armenian craft art, such as the *khatchkar*, textiles, architecture, ceramics, and metalworking, to demonstrate that an accurate characterization of Armenian ethnic and cultural identity should include the contribution of Ottoman Armenians, who conducted cultural exchanges with Ottoman Turks. The examples presented here represent a small sample of a larger population of Ottoman Armenian crafts. Armenian people living in the Ottoman Empire had Ottoman motifs on items that they would use daily, such as bowls, tobacco boxes, and clothing, if not for eternity, such as a *khatchkar*. Discounting the role Ottoman Turkish culture had on Armenian society ignores an important part of the culture of those Armenian individuals and obscures a plethora of beautiful crafts and art objects from the artistic history of the Armenian people. Both mistakes should be corrected. Armenians' material culture from the Ottoman period should be more rigorously studied to improve the characterization of what it meant, and continues to mean, to be an Armenian.

Notes

1. Numerous authors, such as Barkey (2009), Jennings (1993) and Kemal Karpat (1982), have analyzed the *millet* system and the causes of its effectiveness. Barkey & Gavriliis (2016) provide an excellent history of the *millet* and an evaluation of its role in current policy debates on non-territorial autonomy. In brief, the *millet* system was created by the Pact of Umar in the seventh century to organize and protect distinct religious communities in exchange for payment of a tax, or *cizye*. The *millet*s communicated with Ottoman authorities through intermediaries, but retained the ability to self-regulate internal matters. Though there were the three main *millet*s, Greek, Jewish, and Armenian, these groups were internally diverse and incorporated smaller minorities (Barkey & Gavriliis, 2016, pp. 25–27).

2. Notable scholar Adrian Hastings would argue that national identity did exist for the Armenian people as of the adoption of Christianity (1997, p. 198). While many of the characteristics Hastings uses to define national identity did exist among Armenians prior to the nineteenth century, such as vernacular literature, calls for ‘the right to political identity and autonomy as a people, together with the control of specific territory’ were absent during extended periods (Hastings, 1997, p. 3). Nationalism defined as ‘the belief that one’s own ethnic or national tradition is especially valuable and needs to be defended at almost any cost through creation of extension of its own nation state’ developed later for Ottoman Armenians, in the late nineteenth century when political parties began to emerge from the previously loyal *millet*, whose demands had centered around fair government rather than independence (Hastings, 1997, p. 3).
3. Armenians’ adoption of Christianity was not instantaneous. This process can be seen through the spread of *khatchkars*, which were carved over *vishaps*, stones featuring a dragon, a symbol of protection for the previously pagan people (Abrahamian, 2001, p. 63). Though Christianity was a formative event in Armenian ethnic identity, the Armenians had been recognized as a people long before, ‘first mentioned in the Behistun rock inscription of Darius I in 518 BC’ (Smith, 2003, p. 67). However, the notion of Armenia as the first Christian nation created ‘a powerful myth of election’ of Armenians as a chosen people, ‘a belief that the Armenian clergy nurtured throughout the Armenian diaspora’ (Smith, 1991, p. 133).
4. An abundance of other myths and historical events prior to the nineteenth century could be mentioned here as well. For a more robust discussion of these features, and how they were consolidated into Armenian identity, see Panossian, 2006. Khorenatsi’s *History of the Armenians* remains an excellent source of many of these myths up to the fifth century (1978).
5. Debates regarding national identity within the literature are numerous and include, but are not limited to, contentions such as the nature of identity for the dispersed Armenian diasporan communities that formed after the genocide, the effect of Armenia’s short-term independence from 1918-1920, the impact of Armenia’s Soviet period, the Nagorno-Karabagh Conflict, and the experience Armenia as an independent nation after 1991 (Panossian, 2006; Herzig & Kurkchian, 2005; Tölölyan, 1996). Though these themes perpetuate and add valuable dimension to the discussion of Armenian identity that is important to the understanding of ‘Armenianness,’ they are less important for the understanding Armenian cultural identity.
6. Considerable effort has been made to describe, analyze, and acknowledge the human tragedy of the Armenian genocide. While a full characterization is impossible here, nuanced approaches have been taken by authors, including historians, political scientists, and genocide scholars, to give the Armenian genocide the thorough attention and solemnity that such a failure of human history deserves (Bournoutian, 2002; Balakian, 2003; Hovannisian, 2005; Lang, 1982). This list by no means exhaustive of Armenian genocide scholarship, in fact it is difficult to find a work on the Armenian people without reference to the Armenian genocide. However, these authors do provide useful insights for beginning to understand this formative period of Armenian identity and the Armenian nation.
7. The discussion here focuses primarily on the effects of the Armenian genocide on national identity within the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic. Though some elements relate to diaspora Armenians, this is by no means a full characterization of their experience. For an in-depth analysis of the effect of the Armenian genocide on the diaspora, as well as analysis of the ways in which the diaspora has changed over time, see Pattie, 2005 and Panossian, 2006.

Acknowledgements

For permission to publish the following figures, I would like to thank the Israeli Antiquities Authority (Figure 1), Edizioni Ares, Milano (Figures 2(a) and 2(b) from Khatchkar), Sam Sweezy (Figure 5), Zaven Khachikyan (Figure 6), and Osep Tokat (Figures 7(a,b) and 8). Figure 4 is courtesy of Manchester Metropolitan University Special Collections. Figure 3 is a public domain image.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Notes on contributor

Nora Khatcherian attended American University where she received her Master of Arts in International Affairs from the School of International Service, U.S. Foreign Policy and National Security program. She graduated from the University of South Florida with a Bachelor of Arts in political science with a minor in economics

References

- Abrahamian, L. (2001). *Armenian folk arts, culture, and identity*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Alioglu, E. F. (2015). Designed by balyan family: The Sa'dabad Mosque. *MEGARON/Yıldız Technical University, Faculty of Architecture E-Journal*, 10(3), 389–409. doi:10.5505/megaron.2015.27247
- Anderson, B. (1991). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (Rev. and extended ed.). London: Verso.
- Arkun, A. (2005). Into the modern age, 1800–1913. In E. Herzig, & M. Kurkchiyan (Eds.), *The Armenians: Past and present in the making of national identity* (pp. 65–88). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Atil, E. (1973). *Exhibition catalogue of turkish Art of the ottoman period*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution.
- Azarian, L. (1977). *Khatchkar*. Milan: Edizioni Ares.
- Balakian, P. (2003). *The burning Tigris: The Armenian genocide and America's response*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.
- Barkey, K. (2009). *Empire of difference: The ottomans in comparative perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Barkey, K., & Gavrillis, G. (2016). The ottoman millet system: Non-territorial autonomy and its contemporary legacy. *Ethnopolitics*, 15(1), 24–42. doi:10.1080/17449057.2015.1101845
- Barth, F. (2006). *Ethnic groups and boundaries: The social organization of culture difference*. Long Grove: Waveland Press.
- Bhabha, H. K. (1990). *Nation and Narration*. London: Routledge.
- Bournoutian, G. A. (2002). *A concise history of the Armenian people: From ancient times to the present*. Costa Mesa: Mazda.
- Carswell, J., & Dowsett, C. J. F., (1972). *Kütahya tiles and pottery from the Armenian cathedral of St. James, Jerusalem* (Vol. 2). Oxford: Larendon.
- Davidian, V. K. (2015). Reframing ottoman Art histories: Bringing silenced voices back into the picture. *Études Arméniennes Contemporaines*, 6, 7–17.
- Ekmekcioglu, L. (2013). A climate for abduction, a climate for redemption: The politics of inclusion during and after the Armenian genocide. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 55, 522–553. doi:10.1017/S0010417513000236
- Faroqhi, S. (2004). *Ottoman costumes: From textile to identity*. İstanbul: Eren.
- Gantzhorn, V. (1998). *Oriental carpets: Their iconology and iconography, from earliest times to the eighteenth century*. Köln: Taschen.
- Garsoïan, N. G. (1985). *Armenia between Byzantium and the Sasanians*. London: Variorum Reprints.
- Gevorgian, H. A. (1997). *Azg, azgayin petutium, azgayin mshakuit* [nation, national state, national culture]. Simferopol: Amena.
- Hall, S. (1990). Cultural identity and diaspora. In J. Rutherford (Ed.), *Identity: Community, culture, difference* (pp. 222–237). London: Lawrence & Wishart.
- Hastings, A. (1997). *The construction of nationhood: Ethnicity, religion, and nationalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Herzig, E., & Kurkchiyan, M. (2005). *Armenians: Past and present in the making of national identity*. New York, NY: Routledge.

- Hovannisian, R. G. (2005). Genocide and independence, 1914-1921. In E. Herzig, & M. Kurkchian (Eds.), *The Armenians: Past and present in the making of national identity* (pp. 89-113). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Hovannisian, R. G. (2012). *Armenian smyrna/izmir: The aegean communities*. Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda.
- Hovhannisian, E. (1979). *Azgayin kaghakakanutian pilisopayutiune [The philosophy of national politics]*. Beirut: Hamazgayini Vahe Setian Tparan.
- Irvine, H. (1985). The Art of crafts. *Art Education*, 38, 44-46. doi:10.1080/00043125.1985.11649695
- Jenkins, R. P. (2008). *Rethinking ethnicity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Jennings, R. C. (1993). *Christians and Muslims in Ottoman Cyprus and the Mediterranean world, 1571-1640*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Karner, C. (2010). *Ethnicity and everyday life*. London: Routledge.
- Karpat, K. (1982). Millets and nationality: The roots of the incongruity of nation and state in the post-ottoman era. In B. Braude, & B. Lewis (Eds.), *Christians and jews in the Ottoman Empire: The functioning of a plural society* (pp. 141-169). New York, NY: Holmes & Meier.
- Khorenatsi, M., & Thomson, R. W. (1978). *History of the Armenians*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Khurshudian, L. (1999). *Hayots azgayin gaghaparakhosutiun [Armenians' national ideology]*. Yerevan: Zangak-97.
- Kouymjian, Dickran. (n.d). *Frescoes, Mosaics & Ceramics, Arts of Armenia*. Retrieved from http://armenianstudies.csufresno.edu/arts_of_armenia/frescoes_mosaics_ceramics.htm.
- Kouymjian, Dickran. (n.d). *Metalwork and Engravings, Arts of Armenia*. Retrieved from http://armenianstudies.csufresno.edu/arts_of_armenia/metalwork_engravings.htm.
- Lang, D. M. (1982). *Armenia: Cradle of civilization*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- Low, D. (2015). Photography and the empty landscape: Excavating the ottoman Armenian image world. *Études Arméniennes Contemporaines*, 6, 31-69. doi:10.4000/eac.859
- Mahdesian, A. (1917). Armenia, Her culture and aspirations. *The Journal of Race Development*, 7(4), 448-466. doi:10.2307/29738214
- Manuelian, L., and Eiland, M. (1984). *Weavers, merchants, and kings: The inscribed rugs of Armenia*. Fort Worth: Kimbell Art Museum.
- McCabe, I. (2012). Opportunity and legislation: How the Armenians entered trade in three Mediterranean ports. In V. N. Zakharov, G. Harlaftis, & O. Katsiardi-Hering (Eds.), *Merchant colonies in the early modern period* (pp. 61-83). London: Pickering & Chatto.
- Panossian, R. (2006). *The Armenians: From kings and priests to merchants and commissars*. London: C. Hurst & Co.
- Patterson, O. (1975). Context and choice in ethnic allegiance. In N. Glazer, & D. P. Moynihan (Eds.), *Ethnicity: Theory and experience* (pp. 305-349). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Pattie, S. P. (2005). Armenians in diaspora. In E. Herzig, & M. Kurkchian (Eds.), *The Armenians: Past and present in the making of national identity* (pp. 126-146). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Quataert, D. (1997). Clothing laws, state, and society in the ottoman empire, 1720-1829. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 29, 403-425. doi:0020-7438/97
- Rahmani, L. Y. (1988). Chip-Carving in Palestine. *Israel Exploration Journal*, 38, 59-75.
- Ribeiro, M. Q. (2009). *Iznik pottery and tiles in the Calouste Gulbenkian collection*. Lisbon: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.
- Shant, L. (1999). *Azgutiune himk martkayin enkerutian [nationality as basis of human society]*. Yerevan: n.p.
- Smith, A. D. (1991). *National identity*. Reno: University of Nevada Press.
- Smith, A. D. (1999). *Myths and memories of the nation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Smith, A. D. (2003). *Chosen peoples*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sollors, W. (1991). *The invention of ethnicity*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Song, M. (2003). *Choosing ethnic identity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Terian, A. (1980). The hellenizing school: Its time, place, and scope of activities reconsidered. In N. G. Garsoïan, T. F. Mathews, & R. W. Thompson (Eds.), *East of byzantium: Syria and Armenia in the formative period* (pp. 175-186). Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks.
- Tokat, O. (2005). *Hay artsatagorts varpetner – Armenian master silversmiths*. Northidge: Van.

- Tölölyan, K. (1996). Rethinking diaspora(s): Stateless power in the transnational moment. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 5(1), 3–36. doi:10.1353/dsp.1996.0000
- Tuğlacı, P. (1990). *The role of the balian family in ottoman architecture*. Istanbul: Yeni Çığır Bookstore.
- UNESCO. (n.d). Armenian cross-stones art [Symbolism and craftsmanship of Khachkars]. Retrieved from <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/RL/armenian-cross-stones-art-symbolism-and-craftsmanship-of-khachkars-00434>.
- Wharton-Durgaryan, A. (2015). The unknown craftsman made real: Soyon bezirdjian. *Armenian-ness and Crafting the Late Ottoman Palaces. Études Arméniennes Contemporaines*, 6, 71–109. doi:10.4000/eac.883
- Yancey, W. L., Ericksen, E. P., & Juliani, R. N. (1976). Emergent ethnicity: A review and reformulation. *American Sociological Review*, 41(3), 391–403.
- Yeomans, R. (2012). *The Art and architecture of ottoman Istanbul*. Reading: Garnet.
- Zolyan, M., & Zakaryan, T. (2008). Representations of 'Us' and 'them' in history textbooks of post-soviet Armenia. *Internationale Schulbuchforschung*, 30, 785–795.