CONSTRUCTING DENIAL

Posted on March 23, 2026 by Keghart



Category: Editorials

Keghart.org Editorial by Margarita Krtikashyan, 23 March 2026

A recent article published on the Azerbaijani news website *Today.az* (https://www.today.az/news/politics/266535.html) titled *"Pashinyan Cut the Umbilical Cord of the Diaspora,"* and appearing in the context of the controversy surrounding the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute and the dismissal of its director Edita Gzoyan, is not merely another instance of hostile rhetoric. It is a structured and purposeful intervention into the field of historical and political discourse that seeks to redefine how Armenian history, identity, and memory are understood at a moment of political sensitivity.

What is presented as commentary is, in fact, a constructed narrative designed to strip Armenians not only of historical truth, but of legitimacy itself.

The text adopts the outward form of analysis. It invokes the vocabulary of intellectual inquiry, "ideological transformation," "historical narratives," "state-building," suggesting the presence of argument. Yet this form is deceptive. The article does not investigate; it asserts. It does not examine evidence; it circumvents it. Its conclusions are not the result of reasoning; they are embedded from the outset.

This is not journalism. It is narrative construction.

Its language is central to this construction. The use of degrading and biologically suggestive expressions is not accidental, nor is it merely polemical. It is functional. It recasts an entire people's historical memory as irrational, fabricated, and even pathological. In doing so, it removes Armenians from the category of legitimate historical actors. Once that shift occurs, argument is no longer required; dismissal replaces engagement.

Such language does not merely insult; it dismantles the very foundation on which any meaningful dialogue based on dignity and mutual recognition could be built.

This is not a lapse in tone. It is a deliberate discursive strategy.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the treatment of the Armenian Genocide. Rather than engaging with one of the most extensively documented and researched episodes of mass violence in modern history, the text bypasses the field altogether. It neither addresses archival evidence nor engages with diplomatic records, contemporaneous testimonies, or the vast body of international scholarship. Instead, it replaces inquiry with categorical denial, presenting the genocide as a constructed "myth."

Such a position does not represent an alternative interpretation. It represents a refusal of the very conditions under which interpretation becomes possible.



1915

The events of 1915 are documented through contemporaneous diplomatic correspondence, missionary accounts, and international reporting, and have been examined through sustained scholarly inquiry over the course of a century. The existence of a broad international consensus is not a matter of political preference, but the result of accumulated and converging evidence.

To deny this is not to engage in debate. It is to reject the epistemological framework of history itself.

The article extends this logic by targeting the Armenian diaspora, presenting it as a monolithic and manipulative entity responsible for constructing and disseminating historical narratives. This framing performs two functions simultaneously: it detaches Armenian memory from lived experience and relocates it within the realm of fabrication, while also attempting to weaken the conceptual and emotional connection between Armenia and its global communities.

The Armenian diaspora is not an artificial construct. It is the direct historical consequence of displacement, survival, and continuity following mass violence. It is internally diverse, geographically dispersed, and embedded in cultural, intellectual, and civic life. Its relationship with Armenia is not one of unilateral dependency, but a historical partnership rooted in shared culture, memory, and mutual responsibility.

To portray this relationship as manipulation is not analysis. It is a strategic distortion.

From a Turkological perspective, such discursive patterns are neither new nor incidental. Within

Turkish and Azerbaijani state-aligned narratives, history is frequently treated as an instrument of political management. It is not examined, it is curated. Narratives are constructed, adjusted, and disseminated in accordance with strategic priorities, while competing interpretations are not debated but delegitimized.

Within this framework, the Armenian diaspora becomes a target not because of its structure, but because of its function: it sustains memory, maintains transnational presence, and preserves historical continuity.

The article's attempt to discredit the Armenian Apostolic Church must be understood within the same logic. The Church is not merely a religious institution; it has historically functioned as a central pillar of Armenian identity, particularly in periods marked by the absence of statehood. It preserved language, education, culture, and collective memory across centuries. To portray it as a source of "hatred" is not a critique; it is an attempt to undermine one of the foundational structures of Armenian continuity.

The treatment of recent developments in Artsakh further reveals the internal coherence of the narrative. The forced displacement of over 100,000 Armenians in 2023 is presented in dismissive terms, stripped of its human dimension and reframed as calculated behavior. In this formulation, suffering is recoded as performance, and displacement as strategy.

This is not merely ethically problematic. It is structurally necessary.



2023

A narrative that seeks to deny responsibility cannot accommodate human reality. The lived experience of displacement, loss of homes, communities, and continuity must therefore be removed. What remains is a simplified and controllable account.

Such a framework renders any meaningful discussion of peace impossible.

Within the article, “peace” is not articulated as a process grounded in recognition, dialogue, or reciprocity. It is framed as a condition achieved through the silencing of one side’s historical memory and political claims. Stability becomes synonymous with erasure.

This is not peace. It is narrative dominance.

Peace cannot be constructed on denial, nor sustained through the suppression of memory. A durable and meaningful peace requires acknowledgment of historical realities, respect for human experience, and engagement between equal subjects, not the elimination of one side’s discursive presence.

At the same time, the text incorporates internal developments within Armenia into its broader argument, presenting them as evidence of an ongoing "correction" of national discourse. This move is particularly significant. It demonstrates how internal processes can be appropriated, reframed, and instrumentalized within external narratives.

Such reinterpretations are not neutral. In a region defined by geopolitical volatility and unresolved conflict, they become tools of influence. When internal debates are mobilized to validate external narratives, they acquire implications that extend beyond their immediate context.

The article from *Today.az* must therefore be understood not as an isolated text, but as part of a broader discursive strategy. Its significance lies not only in its claims, but in the structure through which those claims are produced through omission, inversion, and the calculated use of language.

To respond to such a text is not simply to correct inaccuracies. It is to expose the mechanism itself.

This is not a disagreement over facts. It is a contest over meaning, legitimacy, and the right to historical existence.

A discourse that denies history while dehumanizing those who carry it does not open space for dialogue. It forecloses it. And, any serious effort toward peace, stability, or coexistence must begin by recognizing that reality.

*****

Margarita Krtikashyan *is a PhD candidate in Turkology at the Faculty of Oriental Studies, Yerevan State University. Her research focuses on cultural policy, the role of music in diplomacy and politics, Armenian-Turkish relations, the issues of Armenians living in Turkey, and the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople. She is also interested in religion, culture, and music. e-mail: margaritakrtikashyan@gmail.com*



Comments



Nurnisa Erismis – 2026-04-02 06:13:15
Selim, As Vahakn has already noted, the suggestion of irony is easy to make, but harder to sustain without argument. If you believe the article mirrors the discourse it critiques, could you please clarify where and how?

Vahakn – 2026-04-01 15:10:41
Selim, Please elaborate your statement.

Selim – 2026-03-31 22:23:01
You don't see the irony of your article doing exactly that which it accuses the other one of doing?



Nurnisa Erismis – 2026-03-23 09:41:56

Margarita, I would like to begin by thanking you for this text; it offers not only a strong response but also a remarkably clear and incisive analysis. This piece goes beyond responding to the article published on Today.az; it reveals how that text is constructed in the first place. What is particularly striking is that the article is not treated merely as a polemic containing inaccuracies but as a deliberately structured narrative. This shift moves the discussion beyond the level of "right versus wrong" and directs attention to the way discourse itself operates. In this regard, the analysis of language is especially important. The text demonstrates convincingly that degrading and dehumanizing expressions are not simply matters of tone but serve a specific function: to weaken the position of Armenians as legitimate historical and political subjects. In doing so, it clearly exposes the relationship between language and legitimacy. Similarly, the treatment of 1915 is revealing. Rather than engaging with the historical record, the article bypasses it entirely and replaces it with categorical denial. What emerges here is not a difference of interpretation but the removal of the very ground on which interpretation could take place. A comparable logic is at work in the discussion of the diaspora and Artsakh. In particular, the framing of displacement from Artsakh as "calculated behavior" is shown to be more than a distortion—it is a discursive mechanism that effectively shifts responsibility onto those who have been displaced. One of the most important contributions of your text, in my view, lies in how it reframes the notion of "peace." If peace is understood as the withdrawal of one side's memory and its erasure from the public sphere, then what is being proposed is no longer mutual recognition but a unilateral demand for silence. For this reason, your article should be read not simply as a response but as an intervention that renders visible a broader mode of discourse. At stake here is not only the interpretation of history but the very right to speak from within it.