LESSONS FOR ARMENIA FROM "THE ART OF WAR"

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Category: Opinions



By Ted Tourian LLM, Sacramento, 24 September, 2013

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The Need To Adapt

The issues affecting the Diaspora and citizens of the Republic of Armenia are numerous. The following analysis is limited to the "White Genocide", economic stagnation and food security in Armenia, and the threat of constant war faced by citizens in Armenia and the Republic of Mountainous Karabakh (Artsakh). The common principle concerning the mismanagement of resources on these issues is our inability to adapt to the world around us.

"White Genocide" is Armenian cultural assimilation. It is the process where Armenians lose their identity by resorting to western ideals. Recently, commentators in Keghart.com provided an in-depth look at one of the causes of White Genocide–the lack of attendance of Armenian schools by Armenian students. The commentators discussed that part of the problem with Armenian schools is infrastructure–Armenian schools are brick-and-mortar schools which cost a great deal of money, and may not be feasible to attend as Armenians themselves are no longer in centralized locations.

If an impediment to Armenian education is infrastructure, maybe it is time to change the infrastructure to an online home-schooling system to cater to Armenians in the Diaspora. One of the recent success stories of online schooling is the Ron Paul online curriculum. By creating an online presence, the Armenian community can reach out to Armenian students, irrespective of geographic

location. Money can also be saved by focusing finances on the curriculum itself, rather than the maintenance and building of brick-and-mortar schools.

Economic stagnation, food security, and the threat of constant war are intertwined realities. These problems are a result of the Turks and Azeris employing philosophies found in *The Art of War.* The strategy of starving Armenians works as 94% of the Armenians who left Armenia did so for economic reasons.

For Armenians to stay in Armenia (and re-emigrate from other countries) there needs to be a paradigm shift in the Armenian consciousness. Armenians need to spend on Armenian goods only. By spending money inside their community rather than foreign goods, local Armenians will keep money within their borders, creating economic growth. Every "dram" spent outside Armenia means less dram in Armenia. Every dram remaining in Armenia creates economic opportunity in Armenia, which stems the flow of outward Armenian migration. When Iran wanted to lease pasture land unused by Armenians, the Armenian government should have made it a requirement that only Armenians could be the actual workers. This would create a small industry within Armenia, and prevent Armenians from looking to foreign destinations for economic sustenance.

Armenia has been forced to become more creative due to the illegal blockade. It is one of the leaders in natural gas automobiles. Armenia needs to change traditional food staples in order to ensure food security. For instance, in Bangkok, edible algae known as spirulina has been developed to provide a sustainable source of protein as an alternative to meat. Armenian food security is important. Only by reallocating resources to ensure survival can we hope for our nation to thrive.

Divide and Rule

In the "*Art of War"* Sun Tzu says that one method of defeating your enemy is to divide and conquer them. Time, and time again, we Armenians have done our enemies' bidding. Our division stems from overreaction to niggling matters or discarding important matters by those in positions of authority.

Our division is best satirized in *Piers Plowman's* Prologues of "Who will bell the cat," by William Langland. In the story, a group of mice gather to address a common problem of attacks on them by the local feline, and decide that the solution is to bell the cat. The idea falls apart when the mice do not find anyone with the will or ability to take on the risk of belling the cat. The story continues with a wise mouse providing a hypothetese that if the cat were killed, a new cat would come, or worse, rats would run roughshod over the mice. The moral of the story is to ignore the cat when the damage by the cat is minimal, but to react when the cat's actions threaten all society.

The juxtaposition of Sun Tzu's and Langland's principles is best illustrated by the recent negative focus concerning election fraud, and the government of Armenia's environmental resource mismanagement.

I certainly do not advocate election fraud. The point I am making is that the response to Armenian

election fraud was disproportionate. This includes Raffi Hovanissian's hunger strike, and the constant negative press accompanying the 2013 elections. The constant grating, ***nagging***, has a negative effect on the psyche of the Diaspora and citizens of the republic. Currently, Armenia's adult population is one of the saddest on the planet. What these protests have done is to further jade the population, and enhanced an environment of non-cooperation. Tying this back to Langland, election fraud is not one of the worst things that can happen; it's not as if Armenia is the only country engaged in election fraud. It is foolish to foster an environment of discord with the current regime for something minor in the grand scheme of things. Former U.S. ambassador to Armenia, John Evans, says that cooperation is the right approach, not blame and finger-pointing.

The above does not give *carte blanche* to the current regime in Armenia. Every Armenian regime (whether governmental, religious, charitable, etc.) has a duty to treat the Armenian people fairly. If they do not, the mice ***will*** bell the cat.

Recent civil unrest over proposed mining is absolutely necessary. The effect of mining has been disastrous to local populations, causing cancer, birth defects, and infertility. Several mines are currently exploited in the mountainous areas of Armenia, resulting in dozens of large industrial waste disposal sites in inhabited regions, creating problems for public health. Recently Armenian society has begun to protest proposed uranium mining, and copper mining. Even the Diaspora has begun to voice concern over potential copper mines in the Teghut forest. Lack of foresight by the government regarding the exploitation of natural resources and lack of concern for the local populations will no doubt cause a more turbulent setting socially and environmentally. Endangering the health of the local population for short-term monetary gain is a sure way to seed the eventual destruction of those in power.

Tying the above to *The Art of War*, expending resources on sowing our own division, while the enemy is still at the gate ensures our eventual conquest.

Who is our Enemy?

"If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle" says *The Art of War*.

An appropriate defense by Armenia can only be established if we know how it will be attacked. Resources can properly be allocated to defend what we hold dear. The enemy is creative, with powerful tools at its disposal. Exploring the attacker's perspective helps to identify and qualify the risks facing Armenia.

Keeping this in mind, the Armenian desire for European validation is vexing. Time and again, our collective misplaced trust on European nations has led to dire consequences. When Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire were encouraged to seek basic rights and freedoms at the Berlin Conference of 1878, they were greeted with the Hamidian Massacres from 1893-96. When

Armenians were encouraged by European powers to pursue self-determination within the Ottoman Empire, the result was the Armenian Genocide. After the Genocide, Britain guaranteed Armenian freedom in the Caucasus and the French guaranteed an Armenian Protectorate in Cilicia. Armenia in the Caucasus was divided between advancing Soviet and Turkish troops, and Armenian Cilicia was short-lived, swallowed by the Turkish Republic. When Gurgen Margaryan was killed by axe murderer, Ramil Safarov, during NATO's "Partnership for Peace" program in Hungary, the Hungarians released him to Azerbaijan. When the European Union seeks to uphold Azerbaijan's supposed "*territorial integrity*" in pressuring the Republic of Mountainous Karabagh to unilaterally cede its sovereignty to Azerbaijan, it ignores the rights to self-determination of the local population of Artsakh, and ignores the past plight of Armenians who had lived under Azerbaijani rule in Nakhichevan.

It is true that the Turks, Soviets and Azeris were the ones who wielded the "axe" during the most unfortunate recent chapters of Armenian history, but the axe was wielded under the pretext of European hospitality. It is under this purview that we should analyze any overture by Europe.

When Europe is stunned that Armenia chose the Russian Customs Union rather than sign association and free trade agreements with the European Union, is it actually disappointed that it has not found the next Portugal, Italy, Greece, or Spain? Where Europe has put Greece under harsh austerity measures, it is Russia that is trying to help the Greeks find a way to financial solvency. If Armenia were to be insolvent within the EU context, would the EU unofficially require Armenia to abandon the Mountainous Republic of Karabagh as an austerity measure? If past behavior is a good indicator of future behavior, we should kiss Karabagh goodbye if we want to cooperate with Europe.

Conclusion

Where there is weakness, there is also an opportunity for growth. Our greatest resource has been our people. Time and again, it is this resource that has not been allocated properly, attacked, and ethnically cleansed. It is not too late to reverse the tide. Proper resource allocation can rectify past mistakes. And to those in position of power (whether governmental, religious, charitable, etc.), I would like to point out the following passage from *The Art of War, with Notes, Commentaries from the Chinese Masters, and an Appendix by Lionel Giles and Dallas Galvin*:

"X terrain; point 25: Regard your soldiers as your children, and they will follow you into the deepest valleys; look upon them as your own beloved sons, and they will stand by you even unto death."

Tu Mu draws for us an engaging picture of the famous general Wu Ch'i, from whose treatise on war I have quoted: "He wore the same clothes and ate the same food as the meanest of his soldiers, refused to have either a horse to ride or a mat to sleep on, carried his own surplus rations wrapped in a parcel, and shared every hardship with his men.

"One of his soldiers was suffering from an abscess, and Wu Ch'i himself sucked out the virus. The soldier's mother, hearing this, began wailing and lamenting. Somebody asked her: 'Why do you cry?

Your son is only a common soldier, and yet the commander-in-chief himself has sucked the poison from his sore.' The woman replied, 'Many years ago, Lord Wu performed a similar service for my husband, who never left him afterwards, and finally met his death at the hands of the enemy. And now that he has done the same for my son, he too will fall fighting I know not where.'"

The Art of War, VI. Weak Points and Strong; 33. He who can modify his tactics in relation to his opponent and thereby succeed in winning, may be called a heaven-born captain. (Unless stated otherwise, all references are to the *Art of War*).

See: The Wobbling Pillar & Wobbling Pillars II

Armenian schools were easier to maintain in Bourj Hamoud or Aleppo, where the Armenian population was centralized. In North America, the Armenian population is highly mobile and decentralized. Even traditional Armenian centers like Glendale, California, are losing its Armenian majority due to migration of the population seeking better job opportunities.

See: The Ron Paul Curriculum

Chapter III; Attack by Stratagem, point 2, provides "to fight and conquer in all your battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy's resistance without fighting." Both Azerbaijan and Turkey have used this strategy through an illegal blockade of Armenia with the hopes of Armenia eventually succumbing to pressure.

Azerbaijan also continues to assert military might where it in fact does not yet have the strength. In Chapter I Laying Plans, point 18 and 19, the Art of War provides that "ll warfare is based on deception. Hence, when able to attack, we must seem unable; when using our forces, we must seem inactive; when we are near, we must make the enemy believe we are far away; when far away, we must make him believe we are near." Currently, Azerbaijan does not have the high-ground in the military conflict with Armenia, and the border area is filled with mines. As well, much of the military weaponry Azerbaijan has recently bought, like submarines and anti-mine vessels, will be used in the Caspian, which Armenia does not border.

See: Migration & Development - Armenia (pg 1)

This question has been researched and discussed *ad nauseum*. There are no simple answers.

"The Ballot or the Bullet" by Malcolm X, delivered on April 12, 1964 in Detroit, Michigan, provides the following:

"The political, the economic philosophy of Black Nationalism only means that we have to become involved in a program of re-education to educate our people into the importance of knowing that when you spend your dollar out of the community in which you live, the community in which you spend your money becomes richer and richer; the community out which you take your money

becomes poorer and poorer. And because these Negroes , who have been mislead, misguided, are breaking their necks to take their money and spend it with The Man, The Man is becoming richer and richer, and you're becoming poorer and poorer. And then what happens? The community in which you live becomes a slum. It becomes a ghetto. The conditions become run down. And then you have the audacity to complain about poor housing in a run-down community. Why you run it down yourself when you take your dollar out."

See: Iran Wants ...

See: The world leader in natural gas vehicles: tiny Armenia

See: Rooftop urban gardeners in Bangkok

See:Armenian Biodiversity & Food Security

Algae can also be used for biofuel

Chapter VI, Weak Points and Strong, point 13, provides: "By discovering the enemy's dispositions and remaining invisible ourselves, we can keep our forces concentrated, while the enemy's must be divided."

See: The Chaucer Page

See: Armenian Authorities Put New Face on Election Fraud

& Amnesty Urges Investigation into Armenia Voter Fraud

See: The Happiest (And Saddest) Countries In The World

It might be a fruitful endeavor to research where election fraud does not exist, and analyze why that is case.

John Evans served as United States ambassador to the Republic of Armenia from June 25, 2004 to May 24, 2006, and was terminated for undisclosed reasons. (John Marshall Evans) It is alleged that those undisclosed reasons are his reference to the Armenian genocide, which is still not currently recognized by the United States. (Deborah Lipstadt's Blog)

In the article Hovannisian to End Hunger Strike Sunday one of the comments is claimed to be from John Evans, which provides the following statement:

This article and the situation in Armenia today make me very sad. I know both Raffi and Serzh, and I believe they are both patriots of their country, the Republic of Armenia. They have very different life experiences, obviously, but neither one of them is either a devil or an angel. It is most unfortunate that they have not yet found a way to join arms and work together for the improvement of the conditions of life in Armenia, which, as anyone who has been there knows, do need improvement. **Still, blaming others and finger-pointing is not the right approach. There are many good, sensible**

things that can be done, but miracles are not in the offing. Let's hope that Spring and Easter will bring some enlightenment.

The comment is also similar to another comment in The Armenian Weekly. It is unconfirmed whether these comments do in fact belong to John Evans, former U.S. Ambassador to Armenia.

See: CNN & You Tube

See: Assembly

See: Eurasianet

See: The Armenian Weekly

See: ArmeniaNow

See: Armeniapedia

In May 1919, the Armenians declared an independent state in Cilicia. However this state was short lived as France disbanded the Armenian Legion and recognized Turkey's sovereignty over the region in 1920. See: Armenian Legion

See: BBC News

See: President

See: EU Stunned

See: Gainspainscapital

See: Voice of Russia