POWERFUL TURKISH CINEMATIC CONDEMNATION

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of State-organized Genocide

by Prof. Hovhannes I. Pilikian, London, 10 February 2012
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British Gala Night; 23rd February, 2012; 7.30 pm. at the Cineworld, Wood Green Shopping Centre, London.

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The Horse successfully avoids the first shot, but on the second he finally falls, blood down his beautiful belly, like a pregnant woman, struggles to get up to fight another day, but sadly it cannot because of a third shot from an invisible sniper, and gradually, slowly with his back turned to the viewer ***as if in deep shame that he could not survive***, stretches his legs and dies like a Swan, like a

Tchaikovsky-ballerina in a most beautiful breathtaking posture … the film-director has succeeded in a most remarkable way to instantly create an immediate ***emotional*** bond between his film and the viewer, something Anglo-Saxon film-directors have yet to learn to achieve in Hollywood!

Alper's Horse is as much a classical symbol and the metaphor for human freedom. As my psychologist wife, **Clare Pilikian** confirms; you can lasso a wild horse to tame it, but kill it? Never! To kill a horse is the lowest point of barbarism and criminal depravity … only inhuman wretches of genocidal intent are capable of such an atrocity.

And you would not be wrong to presume as much, as during the film you will soon discover through the eyewitness accounts that such a genocidal crime was indeed committed by the Turkish army, during the 1990's, under the very filthy noses of our Western imperialist governments tacitly encouraging the Turkish State, arming it to the teeth to wipe off 8 thousand Kurdish villages off the map of central Anatolia, once the lands of very ***ancient Armenia … where the horse was first 'domesticated' historically***. Rock-carvings, archeological bones-evidence, backed by classical literary reference (Xenophon's ***Anabasis***) prove the existence of ***horse-cults in the Armenian Anatolian Highlands, precisely where the Kurdish horses are being slaughtered in this film today***.

The ***greatest single obscenity of modern imperialist history is the fact that the Kurdish people***, a huge majority of perhaps ***60 million***, spread through several countries of the Middle East, ***still lack a homeland***.

The Ottoman ***Young Turks*** that attempted to genocide the Armenians in 1915 ***intended to do the same to the Kurds*** after abusing their unsophisticated, un-educated, illiterate tribal leaders to do their genocidal dirty job. The present-day enlightened Kurdish leadership (their Parliament-in-exile) has already apologized profusely and profoundly to the Armenian people for their earlier leaders' ignorant participation in the ***Young Turk*** crime, having understood ***today*** that the Turkish state did finally come round to doing the same to them ***in our own days***, when Kurds were arrested and tortured and killed in prisons ***for merely speaking Kurdish at home.*** And the first national hero of the Kurds who could transcend tribalism and medieval ***Sharia*** laws against women, **Abdullah Őcalan**, who could bring total peace and democratic federalism to Turkey has been in solitary incarceration on the *Imrali island* in the *Sea of Marmara* since 1999 … hilariously, ***1000 military personnel guard him –*** How more ridiculous the Turkish State-genocidal madness can be! Őcalan's first Islamic name in Arabic means ***God's slave***, not Mr. Erdogan's slave … unless of course the latter thinks he is ***Allah*** himself, which is not unlikely.

The Turkish State has this strange Sado-Masochist habit of killing their friends … it is what the ***Young Turk*** Leaders did to their Armenian ***Masonic*** bosom friends, ignoring and betraying their ***Masonic***

obligation to protect them at all costs from such violence! They killed **Hrant Dink**, their greatest Armenian friend trying to forge a brotherhood with the Turks! They made a song and dance for decades about Kurds being ***"Mountain Turks"***, only to kill even their … horses!

Sitting before a wall of thousands of passport-sized photographs of victims, the survivors tell the camera of their true experience of the Turkish soldiery invading their villages, separating men from women and children, and simply ***massacring them for absolutely no reason***… when all alive are dead, they attack the stables, their horses!

The Turkish army would enter a Kurdish village; give the inhabitants an hour to desert their homes, before they burn down the lot, thus creating 4 million refugees of Kurds within their own ***homelands, anciently of Armenia***.

In a blue-tinged documentary film within the film, you witness tanks with ***Polis*** (in Turkish) inscribed on them, stopping in a village, soldiers jumping out of their tank-holes with machine guns, tearing boys from their screaming mothers and beating them to a pulp before your very eyes! ***"By 1992, a way of killing people was found fit for Kurds, called murder by unknown assailants"*** … I could ***'see' my very own maternal grandmother*** named ***Isgouhi*** (= *the true one*) ***Der-Arsenian*** (= *of the Male God*) sitting there with the same black scarf covering her head, looking like a raven, telling us how the Turkish *gendarmes* came to their village ***Khassgal-Izmit*** searching for … weapons. They dragged out her teenage sons, beat them mercilessly and pointlessly … My grandparents later had to buy some rusted gun-bits from some *bashibozuks* to hand them over to the Ottoman cut-throats in case they returned for future inspections.

And my grandmother ***Isgouhi Der -Arsenian*** used to sing those heart-braking laments and lullabies, which did not sound like true lullabies, but more like goodbyes to the dead children … from murdered mothers – precisely what the Kurdish women do in this film in front of walls covered with a thousand faces … And Sumru (played Oscar-winningly by **Gaye Gűrsel**), a shapely young university post-graduate from Istanbul, records them with shocked intensity, although she is a kind of Turk, and does not know Kurdish. Cut to a scene on a train, the window imprinted heavily with the Turkish nationalist Crescent silhouetted through a succession of mountainous landscapes and a lake (***Van***?) The Crescent finally disappears – we are traveling through (Armenian) Kurdistan – while Sumru reads a sweet sad letter from Harun informing her that he had to go … he knows he is not coming back because he will be killed – ***the violence of the state is always incomparably greater than that of the rebels*** – nevertheless, he hopes, just hopes against hope that perhaps … he'll see her again one day, perhaps in another world, and signs "your lover from the Mountains"!

Sumru (whose name means *Summit*!) gets out at Diyarbakir, today the capital city of the non-existent

Kurdistan, yesterday's ***Tigranagert*** (= build by **Tigran**) **the Great**, the capital city built by the Armenian King whose empire in 180 BC stretched down to ***Palestine, from where*** **King Tigran** had ***transported a whole community of Jews*** to enliven with trade the very life of his brand-new city … The speakers announce that trains have arrived from Istanbul, Ankara and Malatya, establishing Diyarbakir as the multi-ethnic hub joining major sections of the Turkish map. Yet, the camera pulls back to show you a blue-uniformed Turkish policeman on the platform watching the crowds intently … Such telling details are abundant in this film – **Alper**, like all great creative artists, couples with his perfect grasp of the overall image, a masterly eye for the constituent detail.

Sumru reassures her mother by mobile that Diyarbakir is not as dangerous as the Istanbulis think it is … no bombs exploding in the streets, even though her own heart is shattered by the absence of her Kurdish boy-friend who had left her three years ago to join the **PKK guerillas** in the mountains. She has had no news from him since.

As if to avenge herself on the people, Sumru goes around with her tape-recorder documenting the sounds of the city, holding her high-tech microphones at waist-level pushing it forward ***like a small machine-gun*** startling the war-worn inhabitants … the city with its famous black basalt walls can suddenly throw up a Roman ruin still habitable. Sumru finds the film-maker Ahmet (played perfectly by **Durukan Ordu**), who fancies himself as the 'Turkish' *Al Pacino*, but instead has been documenting the eyewitness accounts of the current genocide his people are undergoing by the post-modern Turkish state. The Turkish state can deny the genocide of the Armenians in 1915 all they want, argue that it could have been a massacre – as if a massacre being less than a genocide were permissible … but surely, no sane person could deny that ***the Kurds today***, on the watch of the Anglo-American imperialists ***are being massacred only and only for the sole reason of being … Kurds***! If that is not genocide, then Turkey's Prime Minister Mr. Erdogan is the … Vatican Pope – Hear ye, Dan Brown, a new international bestseller for thee about a crypto-Turk as a Catholic Pope, shot by an **ASALA** crypto-Armenian as a Mountain-Turk terrorist!

Love Impossible

There is an intense attraction between Sumru and Ahmet, but the genocidal context of their relationship is such that the two can never develop any natural human warmth into any form of sexuality. This secondary theme of the film is developed so skillfully and sensitively as to be one of its most original aspects – ***the impossibility of love developing*** let alone blossoming, even though the desire is there all along haunting their every waking moment. I shall be seventy soon, and have seen a thousand films, but have not seen yet another film on the subject, tackled with such intense humanity, sadness and compassion for the young potential lovers.

Sumru decides to exorcise the ghost of her boyfriend, by a final search, and asks Ahmet touchingly

to drive her to a very dangerous area of high genocidal activity. Ahmet refuses point blank. Sumru has even a telephone conversation with Ahmet to thank him for his intellectual help and to say goodbye. But a jump cut suddenly shows us an endless seeming road, a close up on Sumru as the passenger in the front seat, and finally a camera shift to the driver being … Ahmet. We now hear that Ahmet's Dad was a truck-driver working on the roads to Iran, one of the countries that harbor a considerable population of Kurds (the film is dedicated to two Iranian film-makers in-prison). As a child, Ahmet had witnessed the death of his father shot from behind in the public square of their village – obviously another *peshmerga*-victim by unknown assailants…

O-ro-ro-tsa-yin – the Armenian Lullaby

The socialism-dreaming Ahmet drives Sumru at dawn to the local cemetery covered in snow and romantic mist (for which the climate in the *Rize* district of ***Hamshen*** is famous).Ahmet, in deep sensitivity gives Sumru space to look for Harun's grave, while he like the mountain-Kurd that he is wanders off into the beautiful landscape. Sumru, skillfully underplayed by the actress, goes from grave to grave, almost (you feel palpably) hoping that she would not find it … and alas, alack unfortunately she suddenly hits upon it … a gradual sob bursts on her face, pulling her up and pushing her into the opposite direction Ahmet had taken … You know that their love shall be even more impossible now … a wild black horse on white snow wanders aimlessly …

On a long shot, the couple getting gradually more lost in the mountain fog and mist developing, the film soundtrack plays a most beautiful Armenian lullaby, accompanied on ***saz*** (recorded by **Ludvig Durian**, music by **Khatchatur Avetissian**) orchestrated with a haunting *melisma* (sang majestically by the *Chamber Music Choir of Radio Yerevan*), rendering the last five minutes of the film as un-missable as its first five minutes … and the gems in between.

And the greatest of these gems is the one, right in the mid-stream of the film-flow, transforming it into a most complex and skillfully constructed film-script of immense depth and historical significance – and here is how;

Sumru, whether by luck or by design, playing as intelligently ambiguous as possible, comes across the ruins of a dilapidated Armenian church, ***Sourp Giragos, Ermeni Kilisesi, Dyarbakir*** in the care of an old Armenian (played by **Sarkis Seropyan**, a colleague of the murdered Hrant Dink). His script-name ***Antranig*** in Armenian has several semantic referents, most importantly meaning ***the First-born … (here) of Anatolia***.

The people of Turkey do know that ***the Armenians were the very first people in Anatolia, and they were there as late as in 1915, and they are still there as crypto-Turks, born of the thousands of the***

stolen young girls during the genocide … Talaat, the great genocider and the grand Vizier of ***the Young Turks*** wanted only ***a single Armenian left on this planet, to be skinned and stuffed as a Museum piece!*** Today, there are 10 million the world over, plus perhaps 3 million as crypto-Turks, the Turks of Hamshen ***all*** being such …

Antranig was also the famous guerilla commander, ***the Őcalan of the Armenian people*** fighting for survival. The *bekji* (= caretaker) Antranig of the Diyarbakir-church has daughters in Switzerland, but refuses to join them for a comfortable old age, and tells Sumru remarkably incredibly ***precisely what*** … ***Hrant Dink himself told me*** once in Istanbul explaining why, oblivious for his own personal safety, he would never leave Turkey; "***anonts vosgornereh ais hoghin dag en***" = *their bones* (implying the bones of our ancestors, let alone the massacred ones) *are under* ***this*** *earth* (buried in this land). The Turkish Deep-State made sure that Hrant Dink's bones joins them!

Antranig says to Sumru in Turkish, "you look like our girls". And in an absolutely masterly *coup de theatre,* the film-director suddenly lets Antranig ask ***in Armenian***, "***Haieren kidess?*** = *Do you know Armenian?*", and Sumru answers in (I don't know if you guessed it, yes!) in fluent … Armenian, to tell us that she is actually – a second lightening! – ***Hamshentsi*** … a crypto-Turkish Armenian.

The genius of this film-director shines brilliantly in the skill of inventing meaningful and conceptually original complexities with minimal means; suddenly, the present genocide attempted on the Kurds is superimposed on the genocide of the Armenians, the first-borns of Anatolia, of which the Armenian-speaking *Hamshentsis* are a living proof of the plan's total failure. ***Genocides in history have never succeeded, and will never***! The Kurds ***will have*** their country in the end. The pity of it is the waste of priceless human blood spilt, and precious human beings – god's children all – swallowed up by Satan, the military junk-heads of this world.

There is a clever third strike of a cinematic lightening in the above scenes – Sumru pleads with Antranig to look for and find for her his mother's recorded voice singing a mournful *Elegy* … Antranig is reluctant initially, but eventually, on Sumru's third visit, plays the tape for her, on the porch, as ***rain falls heavily everywhere like the tears of all the Armenian and Kurdish mothers lamenting for their murdered children***, while Antranig explains in Armenian that his own singing-mother was sacrificed during the 1915 ***chart*** … subtitled as ***genocide*** in English, the exact translation of which in Turkish would have been ***soykırım*** – the most dreaded and denied word of the post-modern Turkish state-vocabulary.

For this fact alone, this film can be regarded as the most aesthetically satisfying ***political*** art-film of the last two decades of world-cinema, which brings me to the beginning of the film, on a par with perhaps the greatest political film of all time, Sergei Eisenstein's ***Battleship Potemkin*** (1925). Its world

famous sequence of sheer genius and total originality is the five minute sequence of ***The Odessa Steps***; the Tsar's soldiery, in their light white summer tunics march down seemingly endless stone-steps rhythmically, robotically, with their bayonets stuck out like their penises, massacring the revolutionary demonstrators … a jump cut on a close-up of a mother pushing a baby in a pram, falls to the ground shot dead. The pram then rolls down the steps into the scattering panicked crowd!

Alper's ***horse-genocide sequence*** will go down in film-history as being on a par with Eisenstein's, I am certain.

Armenian communities throughout the world should make an urgent effort to see this most beautiful, politically powerful, educationally visceral, aesthetically sensational great film in local cinemas – For all enquires to organize a local /community showing, see Contact below;

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