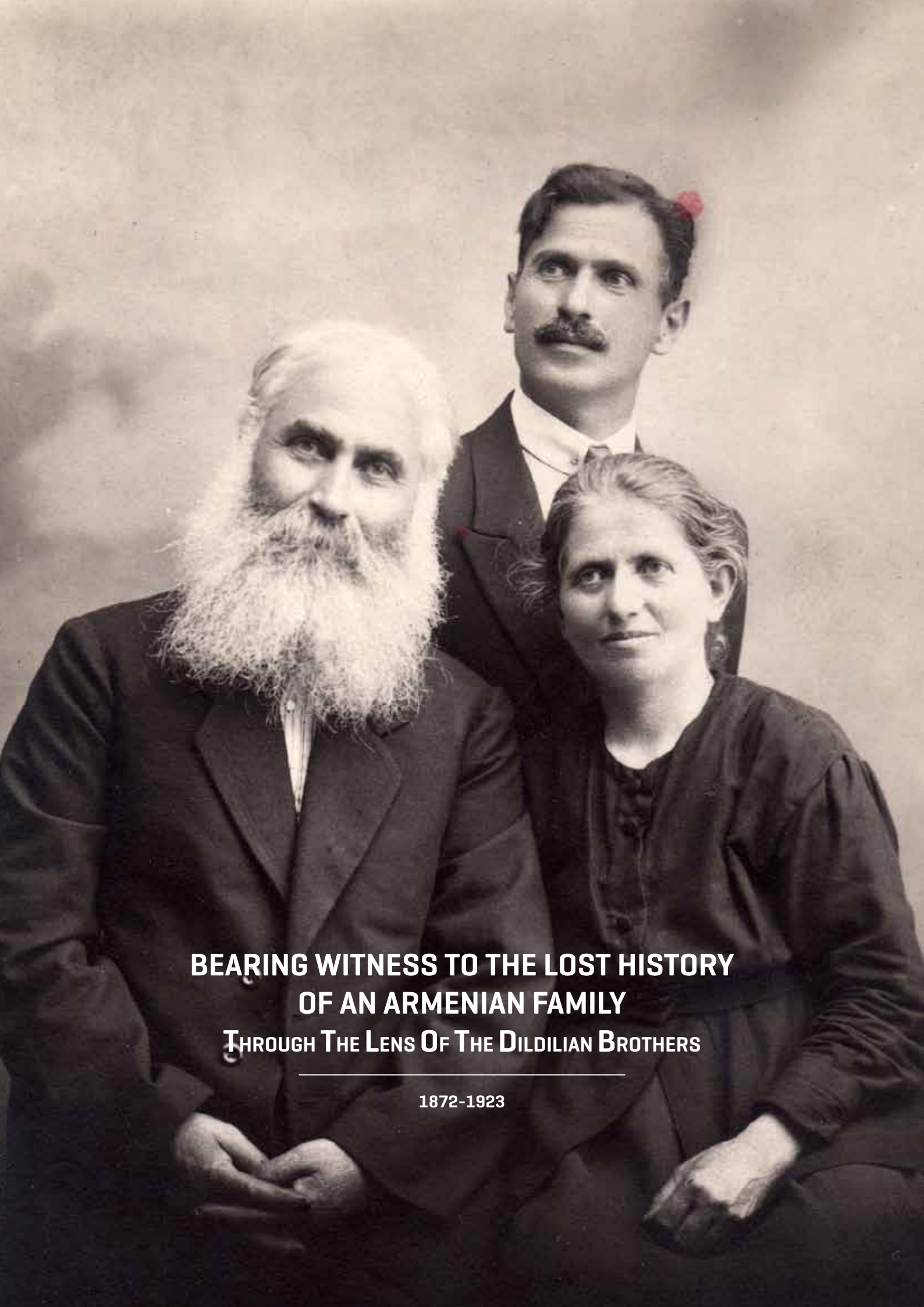
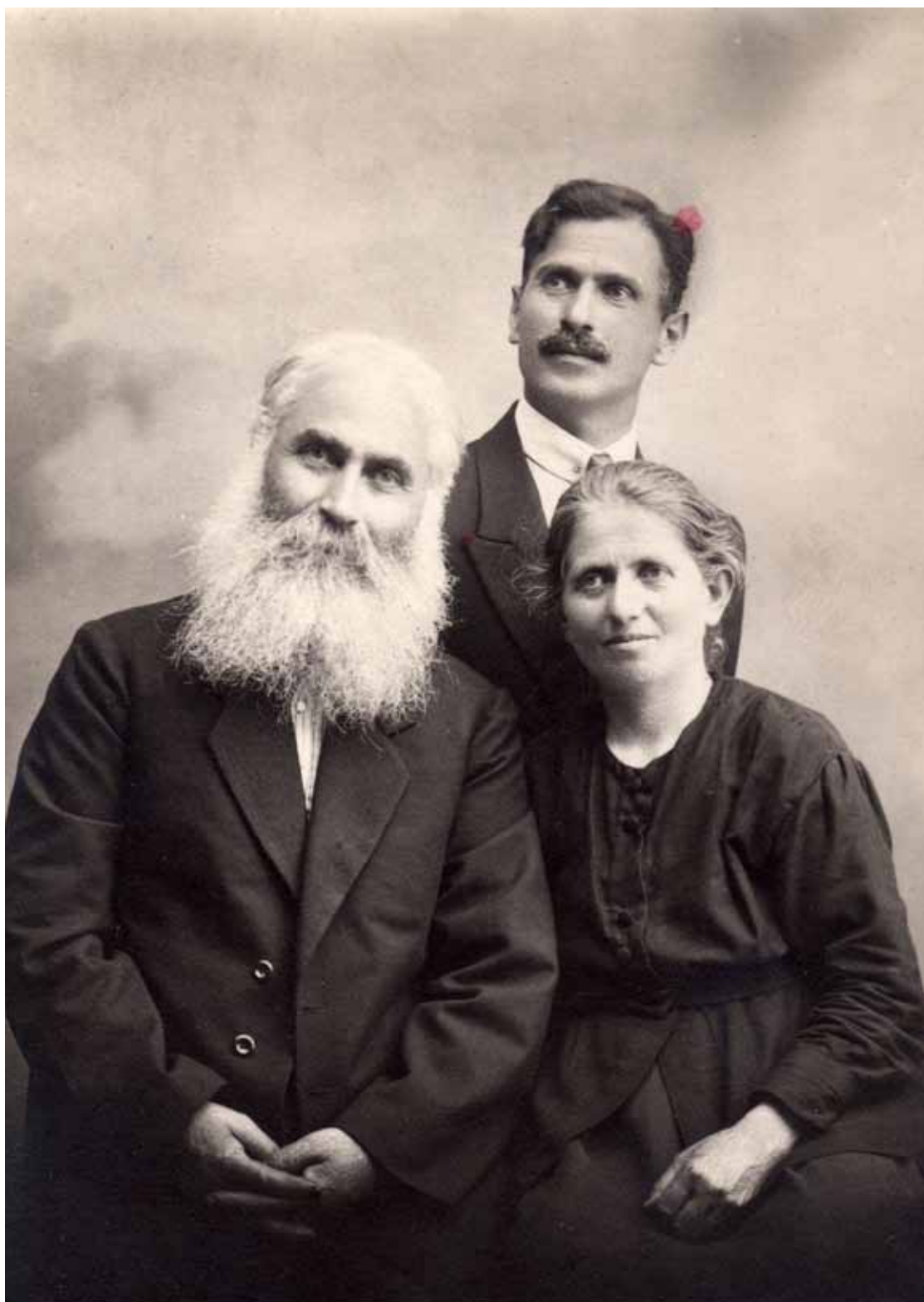




**BEARING WITNESS TO THE LOST HISTORY
OF AN ARMENIAN FAMILY
THROUGH THE LENS OF THE DILDILIAN BROTHERS**

1872-1923



They were born in Yozgat and Sivas, but driven out of their homeland. Tsolag passed away in Athens, Aram in San Francisco, and Haiganoush near Paris.

“Writing one’s memoirs is tantamount to wresting something from the clutch of death,” says one thinker...

The Dildilians did exactly that. While documenting a dark period of Anatolian history in the early 20th century with their cameras, they penned in elaborate detail everything they experienced - wresting it from the clutch of death.

This exhibition tells the story of the Dildilian family, whose members worked as photographers primarily in the cities of Sivas, Merzifon, and Samsun. The backdrop of the story, which starts in 1872 and ends in 1923, consists of a war that ravaged the world and a collapsing empire in death throes. At the center of the story is an agonized nation crushed and annihilated under this collapse.

The exhibition focuses on a painful process, which resulted in the violent eradication of Armenians from their 2,500-year old homeland. But more importantly it testifies to the educational, cultural and commercial achievements of Anatolian Armenians as well as to what has disappeared from Anatolia, and how.

The story of the Dildilians was pieced together from the memoirs of three family members: Tsolag [1872 Yozgat-1935 Athens], the founder of the photography business; Aram [1883 Sivas-1963 San Francisco], who later joined his older brother in the business; and Maritsa Der Médaksian [1901 Merzifon-1987 Épinay-sur-Seine], the niece of Tsolag and Aram, who recounted many of the stories told to her by her mother, Haiganouch Der Haroutiounian [1877 Sivas-1954

Épinay-sur-Seine], the sister of Tsolag and Aram.

The vast body of memoirs and correspondence handwritten by Dildilians in Armenian and English, and the voice recordings and countless photographs of the family members were brought together by Tsolag’s grandson Armen Tsolag Marsoobian to form a coherent whole. During this work, Marsoobian studied numerous historical resources as well as the memoirs of the faculty and missionaries of the Anatolia College to fill in the gaps. Immeasurable assistance was provided by Haig Der Haroutiounian, the grandson of Haiganouch.

The large majority of the photographs gathered for the exhibition were chosen from among those taken by Tsolag and Aram Dildilian over the years, in Sivas, Merzifon, Samsun, Konya and Amasya. These photographs from the family collection number more than 600. The rich photo archive of the Anatolia College was another key resource for the project.

During the preparatory phase, a few additional photographs by the Dildilians found in private collections were included in the exhibition. The exhibition texts draw on the main text written by Marsoobian. Furthermore, various informative notes are provided to shed light on the period and guide the audience.

The Need to Bear Witness

For no man is witness to him that already believeth, and therefore needs no witness; but to them who deny or doubt, or have not heard it.

Thomas Hobbes

41

This exhibition fulfills an unspoken promise I made over a quarter of a century ago. In the mid-1980s my two uncles, Humayag and Ara Dildilian, were working together to write the story of the family, including the important role that photography had played in the lives of many of its members. Between my mother's generation and my grandfather's generation, I can count six Dildilians who practiced the art of photography. Humayag was one of them and the steward of a significant collection of the family's photographs. The sudden death of Ara and the declining health and capabilities of Humayag made their dream impossible to fulfill. The two brothers had gathered together many documents, letters, and memoirs over the course of the years for the purpose of telling this story. These materials and the photography collection were entrusted to me by my uncle Humayag shortly before his death in 1990. I began by saying, "unspoken promise," because while my uncles never explicitly asked me to carry on their work I knew in my heart that I had an obligation that I must someday fulfill. It is this moral obligation that is captured in the title of the exhibition, "Bearing Witness to the Lost History of an Armenian Family."

One might ask why it took me over twenty years to bring this project to this important stage in its fulfillment. Establishing my career as an academic philosopher and beginning a family both played a role in the delay. But I also suppose that there was some trepidation in delving deeply into my family's story, for I suspected that there was much that would be emotionally quite painful in this story. While I knew much about both the Dildilian and the Marsoobian family stories, having parents who openly talked about their family's pasts in the "old country," I did not realize how utterly amazing was their story of survival. The Dildilian story has much in common with the stories of countless Armenians in the diaspora. This is a story forever marked by the horrific crimes of 1915. But there is much that is unique in the story captured in these photographs and the textual material you will read. I had known that my grandfather Tsolag's photography

had played a role in the survival of my family. I had been told that his skills were needed by the government and thus he and his immediate family, including my mother Alice, were saved from the death marches that took place in the summer of 1915. What I did not know was that the family was allowed to convert to Islam and adopt Turkish identities at the very last minute as a condition for exemption from the deportations. They were told by a sympathetic chief of police that the alternative was certain death. Thus they remained in Merzifon, or as Armenians call it Marsovan, during the whole course of the First World War and the years of turmoil that followed it. But the story does not end here. They used their ingenuity to rescue and hide upwards of 30 young men and women over the course of the next three years. Photography was not the only family activity in those years, for the family was active in saving orphans and establishing orphanages. They did much to help rebuild the lives of the few Armenians that remained after the genocide. Their efforts were ultimately not rewarded for they were forced to flee their homes and their homeland by 1923. Thus they began the slow process of rebuilding their shattered lives in Greece, France and the United States.

In putting this exhibition together I see myself as bearing witness to my family's story. Yet it is my grandfather, his siblings, and their children who have done the bulk of the work in bearing witness. Aside from the more than 600 photographs they have left me, they have left behind hundreds and hundreds of pages of memoirs, speeches and letters that provide a truly fascinating account of what their lives were like in the latter decades of the 19th century and the first two decades of the 20th. This is where the Dildilian story is unique and unlike most diasporan Armenian stories. Many such families count themselves lucky to have a few photographs and orally conveyed stories that were snatched from the flames that marked the end of Armenian life on their historic homeland. Our family is privileged to have more, much more, that allows us to reconstruct what their lives were like on

those historic lands. This exhibition marks the beginning of a continuing process in which I will discharge this moral obligation to tell the history of this Armenian family and more importantly, tell the story of the Armenian people during the most momentous time in their history.

Acknowledgements

An exhibition on this scale could not have been accomplished without the help of many individuals. The staff of Depo, especially Asena Günal, the Project Coordinator, were especially helpful. Kirkor Sahakoglu's brilliant design of the exhibition space and presentation of the photographs enhanced the story immeasurably. In Kirkor I have found a friend. Anna Turay took the words I had written about my family's story and with her fine literary touch, gave them emotional poignancy. Most importantly I must thank Osman Kavala whose strong encouragement and commitment to this project has been unwavering over the more than three years of its gestation. Osman has been a friend and a partner.

A note of heartfelt thanks must be given to Ferda Keskin, whose ten-year friendship has made it easy for me to return home to the lands of my ancestors. Whatever anxiety I felt as an Armenian visiting Turkey was soon alleviated by Ferda's warm and welcoming manner. He shared with me the experience of visiting the home that my grandfather built in Merzifon, the home of my mother's birth. Our visit was a moving experience for the both of us, a true sign of the depth of our friendship.

Some of my early work on this project began when I was a Dukakis Fellow at the American College of Thessaloniki, the university component of Anatolia College. Many on the staff there including Emmanuel Maou, David Wisner, and its then president Richard Jackson, did much to create an ideal setting for me to begin my journey. The Trustees of Anatolia College as digital rights holders of some of the photos have given me permission to use them in this exhibit. I would like to single out Stella Asderi of Bissell Library who did much to facilitate my use of their archive and the images themselves. I need to acknowledge Dickran Kouymjian for sharing with me many of my grandfather's photos in his possession, one of which is represented in this exhibition. Also permission to reproduce the postcard images in the panel "Verilen ve dönülen sözler," has been given by the Orlando Carlo Calumeno Collection and Archive.

My university, Southern Connecticut State University, is gratefully acknowledged for providing small research grants to facilitate my work.

My cousin, Haïg Der Haroutiounian, began his journey into the story of the family much earlier than I. His explorations led him to physically traverse the landscape of Anatolia where once the family had lived. He refashioned himself into a first-class historian. I have relied on his language skills and detective-like intelligence to unravel many aspects of the family story. For that and the generous hospitality of all my French cousins, I am forever grateful.

My extended family has been truly supportive of my work but I must single out the late Armen Dildilian and his wife Margaret for special thanks. Armen was the son of Aram, one of the Dildilian Brothers Photographers. He shared with me many of his father's photographs and stories.

Finally, but not least importantly, I must thank my wife Fulvia and my daughter Sarah for the patience and understanding they have shown me over the years of this project. At times they indulged my absences, both physical and temporal. I often traveled far afield pursuing this story but even when I was home, I was sometimes temporally immersed in the 19th or early 20th century while they were living in the present. A loving thanks they justly deserve.

Armen T. Marsoobian

1872

Shoes as light as a butterfly

Tsolag Dildilian's story begins in 1872 in the province of Yozgat. His father Krikor is the most famous shoemaker in Yozgat. However, even before Tsolag turns one, a fire wreaking havoc across the city and the subsequent famine oblige the family to return to Sivas, where their roots lie.

Tsolag's father and uncle jointly set up a workshop in Sivas. Right behind the Taş Köprü [Stone Bridge] on the Mundar River... The shop is named Flower Footwear due to the pots of geranium adorning the windows. They become the first to hang a signboard in Sivas. Their business grows very rapidly and their workforce expands. All the prominent figures in town start wearing shoes made by the Dildilians. Krikor, who learned the art of shoemaking in Istanbul, is a rather ambitious artisan. This ambition is visible in the imprint on the shoe soles. The imprint depicts balanced scales that hold a shoe on one tray and a butterfly on the other.

One day Krikor crafts a pair of shoes for Memduh Mehmet Pasha, the then-governor of Sivas who would eventually become Minister of Interior, since the latter opts for wearing slippers under the pretext that shoes are too heavy. As such, Krikor's shoes "as light as butterflies" help him gain not only a loyal customer but also a good friend. Among the shelves of wooden shoe lasts at the workshop, those belonging to the Pasha and the American Consul are placed side by side.

In time, Krikor comes to expand his social circle. The prominent figures in town, including the governor, frequently visit his shop in the bazaar to enjoy a cup of coffee or a water pipe.

Tsolag thus grows up in the comfortable household of a much respected family, and learns his father's profession. However, his plans for the future do not include shoemaking. His father is not at first pleased with this; however, Tsolag cannot help but dream of becoming a photographer. He eventually manages to convince his father with a little help from his uncle.

1888

The photographer's apprentice

Tsolag gets his first chance at photography at sixteen years of age. A friend of the family arranges for him to become an apprentice to the traveling photographer Djerahirjian, who is in Sivas at the time. In the morning of his first work day, Tsolag wakes up very early, goes running to the Surp Nişan monastery, falls on his knees, prays and takes an oath: If he shall ever succeed in this profession, he swears to take care of twelve orphans. Maybe even the guardian saints of the monastery are unaware that this number will eventually reach thousands.

Much excited, Tsolag starts to accompany his master with the 5x7 inch camera that his father has bought him. However, Djerahirjian is not much interested in teaching the subtleties of the art of photography to Tsolag. Just three months later, he slips a diploma to Tsolag and goes on his way. Tsolag is much disappointed. So he decides to go at it alone. His brother Aram becomes his first model. During an entire year, he takes pictures of his brother, sisters, nephew,

uncle and his father. Gradually, his photographs become better and better, and he starts to gain confidence.

Back then, there are almost no established photo studios in Anatolian cities. Most photographers are ambulant. They come to town, set up a makeshift shop for a couple of days, take pictures, then develop these --usually with the help of a local Armenian pharmacist--, print them on paper and go on their way...

Tsolag is burning with desire to open up a studio; however, he is so young and inexperienced that his father withholds his approval to set up his shop without enough knowledge of the matter. So they invite to Sivas the young but well-experienced Istanbulite photographer Mikael Natourian, who does not have his own studio. Krikor the elder places the family home under mortgage, borrows one thousand dollars and purchases everything that is necessary: 10 x12 inch cameras, swift rectangular lenses, voigtlander lenses, backdrops, trays and many more... A shop in the bazaar is rented for the two young partners.

Tsolag and Mikael not only work at the studio, but also take turns visiting villages and neighbouring towns to take photographs.

1890

Two young photographers, one studio

The task at hand is not a piece of cake. Anatolian men are very jealous about their families. They deem it inappropriate for their wives to pose for a photographer. Furthermore, many men consider it humiliating to stand alongside women before the camera. Nevertheless, it is impossible not to be enchanted by this most innovative, surprising and exciting invention of the age. Gradually, the business grows and grows.

Tsolag and his partner gain many important customers thanks to his father's vast social circle. The fame of Natourian & Dildilian Photographers soon reaches as far as Merzifon [Marsovan]. The town's Anatolia College, established by Americans a few years earlier, has started to train intellectual urbanites with much interest in photography.

Tsolag and his partner are invited each year by the college administration to photograph the campus, graduation ceremonies, as well as well-off boarding students who like sending their photographs to their parents. Soon they decide to open up another studio in Merzifon. This new studio is initially managed by Natourian; however, he passes away soon afterwards, succumbing to a heart attack. Tsolag is deeply shocked by this loss; however, he pulls himself together and starts managing both studios.

1894

From Sivas to Marsovan

Nothing: neither infrastructure, nor basic hygiene, nor sufficient health services... The Anatolian people frequently suffer from outbreaks of cholera, plague or typhus. Death visits Tsolag's family home twice in five months. Tsolag loses

first his mother and then his father. The 22-year-old young man is now responsible for his six brothers and sisters, including his ten-month-old sibling.

However, life is never short of surprises... A few days after the death of his father, the college's president Rev. Tracy sends Tsolag a wire inviting him to Merzifon to take office as the official photographer of the school.

Tsolag does not hesitate a second and moves to Merzifon, to be followed in the years ahead by his brother Aram, and sisters Haiganouch, Markarid, Nevart and Parantsem. His uncle and aunt remain in Sivas and assume the responsibility of bringing up baby Shumavon.

Tsolag also takes Sumpad, the 16-year-old son of his uncle, to Merzifon to become his assistant. His cousin Sumpad has a great talent for painting. While serving as Tsolag's assistant, he also takes classes at the college. A few of years later, Sumpad will become an arts teacher at the college.

Soon after Tsolag and Sumpad's relocation to Merzifon, the Armenian communities in Anatolia suffer consecutive massacres. One such massacre hits Merzifon; however, they are safe behind the secure walls of the college. His brother and sisters continue their education at the schools associated with the college.

1895

College and studio grow in tandem

These massacres not only spell death for hundreds of thousands of Armenians, but also upend daily life in countless villages and towns, spreading poverty.

Finally the massacre troops are brought under control and once again Anatolia is visited by spring - albeit an illusory, deceptive, temporary one... Cities and towns start to recover. In this period, Anatolia College grows remarkably. The campus is extended considerably with the addition of new buildings. More students are enrolled, the faculty expands. The student body and faculty are mostly made up of local Greeks and Armenians. There are also a handful of Russians and Turks.

At the turn of the century, Merzifon establishes itself as the education hub of Anatolia. The college museum managed by Prof. Manissadjian counts more than 7,000 examples of plant and animal species. Arshak Daghlilian's Anatolia Music Club and Orchestra performs in concert all over Merzifon. The college library, open to the entire population, has 4,500 books in 1902 and over 10,000 in 1915.

Aside from the Anatolia College, Merzifon plays host to three more Armenian schools... Surp Sahagian for boys, Surp Hripsimé for girls and a French Jesuit Catholic school. Subsequently, the college inaugurates King School, a special experimental school for the hearing impaired.

Tsolag takes graduation photographs and portraits at the Anatolia College, and also documents the construction activities on the campus. He does not refrain from going beyond the campus premises, and takes photographs of the people, places, events and rural landscape. Many of these images are eventually produced as postcards.

1897

Life and death come from the same place

The Anatolia College in Merzifon also includes a medical clinic. In no time, this institution turns into a large scale hospital and starts offering top-notch medical education.

This hospital is set to play an important role in the story of the family, as it will give life to the younger brother, but speed up the death of the elder one.

When he was 9 years old, Aram was attacked by a mullah on the street and critically wounded in his right leg. The wounded leg does not fully recover for many long years. After establishing himself as the official photographer of the college, Tsolag takes his brother to the hospital; however, doctors fail to bring the infection under control. Finally, Aram's right leg is amputated in order to save his life.

The hospital is transformed into the most competent health institution of the time under Dr. Marden, considered to be one of the founding fathers of modern medicine in Turkey. The first X-ray machine is installed at the hospital at the turn of the century. Back then, radiography is viewed as a branch of photography; as such, the college's official photographer Tsolag is assigned the duty of operating the X-ray machine. Thus as a secondary line of work, Tsolag starts to photograph the human body - this time from the interior! At the time, no one is aware of the hazardous effects of X-rays. After operating the device without any facial protection for years, Tsolag will get jaw cancer and eventually pass away for this reason.

1899

A large household with five children

Tsolag is now 27 years old. He marries Mariam Nakkashian, a graduate of Euphrates College's girls school in Harpoot. In the following ten years, they have six children, five of whom survive. All except the youngest of Tsolag's children attend the primary school of the college. Little Alice is unfortunate, as the college is closed after the expulsion of Armenians from Anatolia.

Even as Tsolag strives to have a family and make his business grow, the Ottoman Empire is in a deep crisis and the First World War is around the corner. However, Tsolag is in pursuit of scenes from daily life behind his camera lens and behaves as a good and loyal citizen, hoping to keep the family safe from danger. Indeed, no one is ready for the approaching catastrophe.

The photography business grows very rapidly. The cousin Sumpad moves to Samsun to establish a new studio. Sumpad is like a brother to Tsolag so the studio now is named the Dildilian Brothers Studio. Tsolag frequently travels all across Anatolia. He takes portraits in ceremonies and inside homes; he photographs buildings and urban landscapes. Dildilians' photographs document life in every province from East to West, from Trabzon to Konya.

Meanwhile, Tsolag also visits Istanbul. The Armenian photography master Boğos Tarkulyan, also known as

Phébus, takes a picture of Tsołag. At that point, Dildilian is considered to be among the very best names in photography.

Tsołag has a large mansion built on the College Street for his rapidly growing family. This beautiful mansion is also home to a studio that can accommodate up to 100 people. All his neighbours are members of the college faculty: the house of the music professor Dahglıan to the left, the house of the natural sciences professor Manissadjian to his right, and the house of the Turkish language professor Hagopian to his rear...

Life is peaceful, sweet and prosperous in Merzifon.

1900

The New World, a new world

Tsołag's younger brother Aram is now an adult and his chief assistant. Aram cannot participate in the college's sports activities since his leg is amputated, nevertheless, he is very much interested in science and technology. At the school, he is the most active participant in student experiments such as setting up a radio network between the two towers of the main building.

Aram adds to the fame of the Dildilian family, by assisting his brother in producing panoramic urban landscapes and postcards. In fact, he makes enough money to afford a prosthetic leg. Brought by Professor Manissadjian from Germany, the prosthesis is attached to his leg in a successful operation. Thus, Aram gains back his leg through diligent work...

Aram is truly in love with the art of photography, into which he was born. Anatolia College, on the other hand, has helped him master a few foreign languages and acquire a broad vision. In 1904, he feels ready to embrace the 'New World'. He tackles countless challenges, and manages to get enrolled at the Illinois College of Photography, one of the world's first schools of photography and the alma mater of many prominent photographers. He packs up and leaves Merzifon for a long and difficult journey to Effingham.

One year later, Aram graduates from the college, and spends two years trying to establish himself in the USA. However, he grows increasingly homesick and misses life in Merzifon. He decides to abandon this new world and goes back home blissfully...

1908

A fleeting dream.

Aram finds plenty and happiness in Merzifon... He returns from the USA with new inventions and skills... From this point onwards, the Dildilian Brothers Studio will now have an actual brother to help the business grow and diversify. . .

It is a period of hope for Ottoman Armenians...A new constitution and a new parliament with 12 Armenian MPs... With the belief that these freedoms will continue to expand, they organize festivals and stage rallies on the College Street.

However, this dream is destined to be very short. In only a few years, violence against Armenians is once again rampant. The massacre in the province of Adana results in a blood bath.

In spite of everything, life continues and hopes are not abandoned. The family members do what they do best: work, pray, and hold on to life with all their might.

In these years, Aram inaugurates a photography studio in Konya, inside the campus of the Jenanian Apostolic Institute.... The headmaster of the institute is a bright academic educated at the universities of Yale and Columbia: Dr. Armenak Haygazyan. He personally sends an invitation to Aram; however, the studio is destined to be short-lived. The tough winter of 1910 inflicts severe damage on the studio in Konya and Aram falls ill.

He decides to move to a warmer province in the south. He settles in Adana and establishes yet another studio of the Dildilian Brothers. Among his clients is the manager of the Royal Stables in Anavarza founded by Sultan Abdülhamid to raise horses. Aram takes pictures of the Sultan's horses but is never paid for his work.

1914

Teachers get drafted, soldiers invade the campus

The academic year 1913-14 symbolizes the zenith of the Anatolia College. The number of students reaches 420 and that of the faculty to 32. The institution counts 10 American, 11 Armenian, 9 Greek, 1 Swiss and 1 Russian professors. In addition, the hospital graduates numerous young nurses, most of them Armenians.

In spring 1914, the 50th anniversary of the Merzifon American Girls' School is celebrated at the campus. However, the celebration program cannot be completed and the yearbook is not published. The 600-year old empire in disintegration is under the threat of the First World War.

That year, the campus witnesses not the diploma ceremony of new graduates but rather the military march of Turkish soldiers. After the war breaks out, 8 Armenian and Greek faculty members get drafted. A photograph showing the remaining 22 professors is to be the last group picture of the faculty.

The student body is halved in number due to the war. The skies are more and more overcast.

1915

Death march on naked feet

The spring of 1915 spells disaster for Anatolian Armenians. With the onset of the war, Armenians are killed, and their villages are plundered and raided under the pretext of collecting taxes or apprehending deserters.

Pursuant to an order issued in February 1915, all Armenian soldiers serving in the army are disarmed and they are organized into troops of workers. These troops who work in road construction and the transportation of materials are eventually massacred or left to starve and freeze to death. However, the biggest wave of massacre comes after

the incidents in Van. On April 24th and 25th, the so-called Armenian uprising is used as a pretext to arrest many of the Armenian intellectual and political elite in Istanbul. April 24th is indelibly marked in the memory of Armenians, becoming the date on which they will commemorate the Armenian Genocide for generations to come.

Then the deportation begins and the death marches start. Armenians all across Anatolia are driven out of the lands where their ancestors have lived for millennia. They are forced to march in fear and resignation, often not given the chance to take any of their belongings with them.

The men are usually separated from the convoy in the first or second day, and are executed. The women, children, elders and orphans remain defenceless... They are driven deep into Anatolia, and towards Syrian deserts around Deir ez-Zor. Most of them are raped, or abducted to become maids; plundered and robbed by gangs; killed during the march by starvation or thirst, cholera or typhus; thrown into roadside ditches and rivers. The survivors are taken to concentration camps... The rest is history... Syria, Lebanon, Iran, Armenia, France or USA... Driven from their homeland, they scatter across foreign lands. They try to rebuild their lives from scratch in refugee camps in countries whose language and culture is alien to them.

The most dramatic massacres take place in the Eastern provinces, which are at risk of being annexed by Armenia in case of an Ottoman defeat. The troops of Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa ["Special Forces"] and some Kurdish tribes were recruited to play a key role in the massacres. In certain regions, they are joined by military troops, gendarmerie and civilians.

For the Armenians, Anatolia is now but a vast killing field.

In this period, the Dildilian Brothers' cameras focus on different subjects than before. College graduates and school activities are no more. Promenades and family picnics, celebrations and weddings are gone... The wagons that used to carry picnickers and the oxcarts which were filled with the abundant harvest of the Merzifon plain now transport Armenian women, children and elders towards an unknown future with only a few belongings...

An entire nation marches towards death on naked feet.

The Dildilian Brothers survive mainly because of the art of photography. State officials who want to document important public figures and events in Sivas and Merzifon in early 20th century cannot turn to anyone but the Dildilians... They start to work for the government.

In his memoirs, Aram recounts how he and his brother were invited to the municipality one day. They are asked to photograph hand grenades, rifles and knives supposedly dug out of a grave in the Armenian Cemetery. These are critical details meant to legitimize the deportation of the men of Marsovan... Years later, Aram writes the following in his journal: *"They themselves must have buried the coffin there, because there wasn't the slightest dust, rust or stain to be found on the coffin, guns or swords. They were in mint condition."*

Converting to Islam for survival

In 1915, Tsoilag [43 years old] and his brother Aram are still young enough to get drafted. Most of the men in this age group are already sent to the war. Undoubtedly, the

two brothers must have received conscription letters... Tsoilag's youngest child Alice tells in her memoirs that she remembers seeing her father at home in uniform.

Nevertheless the Dildilian brothers are neither sent to the front nor deported... They are spared because of their services to the state. And also because they have converted to Islam!

In that period countless people across Anatolia have to opt for religious conversion, that is, become a Muslim to avoid certain death. However, conversion is subject to the approval of local officials. Not everyone who wants to convert is given this chance, whereas many who are given the chance refuse to convert.

The town is hit by waves of deportation, and many of those forced to march out are fully aware that they will never come back. On August 6th, a high-ranking military officer, who's a friend of the family, comes to the Dildilian mansion to warn Tsoilag: *"Your large family is under great danger. Tomorrow you must immediately convert to Islam. That's your only chance for survival."*

On August 10th, soldiers enter the campus and start to deport the Armenians living there. All the family members gather, and decide that they have no other choice but to convert. In the evening they go to the Municipal Office and visit the mufti in his office. They start repeating the Islamic shahada after the mufti: *"I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is his servant and prophet."*

That is it! They are saved! However, there is one more detail to be sorted out. All of them have to take Turkish names. Their names are chosen by Krikor Gulian, a professor in Armenian language at the college, who tries to remain loyal to the meaning of their original names... And Tsoilag becomes Pertev, Aram becomes Zeki and Haiganouch becomes Nadire!

Victims and survivors

Tsoilag manages to save his household, but not his relatives outside Merzifon. Due to wartime bans on transportation and communication, he loses contact with them. He does not hear anymore from his aunts, uncles, scores of cousins and nephews living in Samsun, Vezirköprü, Trabzon and Sivas. All of them are killed during deportation, including his youngest brother Shumavon, who had deserted from the army and his sister Parantsem along with her husband and three young children. There are many Dildilians among the hundreds of thousands of dead without a grave.

Despite everything, life turns out to be stronger than death. The survivors hold on to each other to go on living; but they are shocked, helpless, agonized and speechless amid the immense loss and ruin...

After a while ghosts appear at the family homes as well as in some of the houses of the deported... Aram and his sister Haiganouch have saved from certain death and hid in their home a group of young men and women. 18 youths... Tsoilag has done the same in his home. They hide in the house cellar, in secret sections. Most of them are Aram's friends from the college. They hide for two years rarely seeing the daylight, until the turmoil is over.

The Family celebrates Christmas and Easter at home together with their permanent and desperate guests, behind firmly drawn curtains. Festive celebrations are now only distant memories of a bygone era.

1915 - 1919

The dark years

Gloomy days continue until the armistice... In this period, Tsolag continues to work for the government. The photographs taken during this period are used by Turkish public agencies and are not included in the family collection.

After the deportation of Armenians, the student body at the College is only half of what it used to be. American and Greek teachers continue to give classes for the next academic year. However, the next year, government closes the school down. The military seizes a large part of the campus and the entire hospital.

Meanwhile, many German soldiers who stop over in Merzifon visit the studio to have their picture taken or to develop various negatives. Tsolag keeps those negatives showing German soldiers posing alongside skulls of massacred Armenians. Aram eventually delivers these pictures to Dr. Chase from the American Navy, who comes to Samsun after the armistice, and asks him to show them to everyone and explain what has happened.

One rare blissful event for the family during this period is Tsolag's saving of two young sisters who are his relatives, after a long search: After painstaking efforts, Tsolag gets news about Adrine, his niece in Trabzon; however, learns that the Turkish family who have kidnapped her have relocated to Istanbul. He asks a friend of the family for help. British security forces save the young woman from the family, and she is brought to Samsun and then to Merzifon with the help of an Armenian merchant.

Adrine's only surviving sister is little Meline, who was abducted by another officer's family. Meline is saved just like her elder sister, because the officer in question stops at Merzifon on the road to Istanbul. Tsolag makes a meticulous plan and invites the officer to a lavish feast in his house. The man is offered plenty of wine and of course some money to 'change his mind'. Meline is infested with lice. She takes a hot bath, is given fresh clothes and put to bed. The little girl yells with astonishment: "Is this really my bed now?"

Hope rising from the ashes

After devastating the world, the First World War finally comes to an end. Germans withdraw their forces, and Anatolia is now trampled under Allied boots. Five months after the armistice, a British platoon reaches Merzifon in early spring. The power balance in the city shifts, and the Americans regain control of the Anatolia College.

The survivors of the massacre raise their heads from among the ruins. They behold a horrible panorama.

Families shattered, corpses without graves, little girls and women abducted, starving orphans living in the street...

There is no time to weep and moan, or mourn the dead. Every able-bodied person starts to work to help the survivors - once again, to rebuild their lives with hope, and to endeavour to live...

The Dildilian Family do their utmost. Tsolag assumes the responsibility of issuing from scratch identity papers for Armenians like himself, who had to convert to Islam in 1915. His bureau is located in the very same Municipal Office.

After traveling to Samsun, Aram is horrified by the sight of homeless orphans roaming the city streets. He writes letters to his contacts and asks for help in order to set up an orphanage for Armenians. He receives positive responses from more than twenty people and immediately starts to work. The pictures he takes of the orphans become crucial in this respect. He presents these pictures to his friends at a meeting, and says "I am sure you have seen these kids in rags; here are some of the pictures I have taken."

A Joyous Wedding in May

Amid all the pain and adversity, it is the perfect time for a joyous wedding ceremony... So as to love and to hope, to resist death and to hold on to life...

Aram is intent on marrying his fiancée Christine. The Dildilian Family is ecstatic with the news... The Protestant church has yet to be returned to the congregation; however, the family mansion has a vast studio and garden on the first floor.

The family embarks upon wedding preparations with excitement. Aram's cousins write all the invitations by hand. Over 200 people come to the ceremony. Aside from Greek and Turkish friends, they include American, British, French and Russian guests. The meticulously prepared tables are filled with pies, baklava, ice cream, and baskets full of candy.

Cousin Hratchia enchants the guests with violin solos. A small chorus sings songs and psalms. Greek neighbours play their drums, adding joy and excitement with their energetic folk dances.

Everyone enjoys a beautiful May wedding in the large family home in Merzifon. They all yearn to laugh, have fun and forget. Rays of sunshine start to appear through the dark clouds.

Crossing paths with Mustafa Kemal

Mustafa Kemal Pasha arrives in Samsun on May 19th, and travels to Havza on May 25th. Aram and Christine's wedding ceremony in Merzifon takes place on the 23rd of May. A couple of days later, the newlyweds set out for Samsun. Aram's sister-in-law, Tsolag's wife Mariam goes along to help them settle down in their Samsun home.

In his memoirs, Aram writes that he almost crossed paths with Mustafa Kemal during this trip: "We embarked upon our journey and spent the first night at an inn in Havza. We were told that Mustafa Kemal Pasha was also staying in that very inn. First we did not care very much, but then my sister-in-law said 'We shall not stay here'. She went out and returned 15 minutes later: 'Pack up, we have a relative who lives nearby; we are going there'." Later on, Aram will feel very sorry for missing the opportunity to take a great photograph, just because Mariam refused to pass the night in the same establishment with Mustafa Kemal... Aram is a photographer after all!

Rebirth... Is it possible?

Aram thus returns to Samsun, and continues to run his photography business and organizes aid campaigns. Upon the reopening of the Anatolia College, Tzolag, too, recommences his commercial activities in Merzifon.

Placing their trust in the forces of occupation, some Armenian survivors return to their home towns and cities. No reliable statistics are available then; however, the casualties are much higher than estimated. Merzifon, which was home to 12,000 Armenians before deportation, counts no more than 3,000 Armenians in 1920, including those who have returned.

Meanwhile, in other regions of the country, special military courts are set up to prosecute the perpetrators of the massacres and executions take place.

Some Armenian intellectuals start to describe the immediate post-war period as the age of "Rebirth and Development", and many Armenians come to embrace this sanguine outlook.

In May 1918, the Armenian republic is established on Russian territory. It is strongly believed that the victorious Allied powers will unite the historical Armenian provinces in eastern Anatolia with the nascent republic. Many Armenians have already started making their plans for the future accordingly... Aram, too, writes that he had believed in these dreams. He starts making plans about which province he will live in...

1920

Promises made and broken

These hopes and expectations disappear very soon.

The ship of US High Commissioner Admiral Bristol calls at the port of Samsun, accompanied with two American cruisers carrying the employees of Near East Relief and various materials. Members of the Armenian National Committee including Aram go and meet him immediately. Admiral Bristol states that he would indeed be very glad to see the Armenian neighbourhood. Together they visit the neighbourhood in ruins. There isn't a single house that can be inhabited. They welcome the Admiral in their makeshift club, decorated in haste with borrowed carpets and chairs.

Admiral Bristol goes on the balcony to salute the people waiting in the courtyard outside: *"We are here to wipe off the tears in your eyes and the fear in your heart... You will never again experience the destruction you have suffered. We are here to help your people and will remain here for your safety."*

However, the admiral changes course in no time. Aram witnesses this shift while he is photographing a horse race at the Samsun Hippodrome. Admiral Bristol, who had gone to visit Mr. King, the president of American Tobacco Company, as soon as his ship was moored, arrives at the hippodrome in the flashy red convertible car of the Namlizade Family, one of the richest in Samsun, and takes the seat right next to the governor's. Aram thinks of the ruins and the agonized people in rags that they showed to him a couple of weeks ago; and compares that with the joyous young men wearing elaborate fez and white pants, and sporting delicate canes, huddled around the admiral. He smiles with agony.

Farewell to Marsovan

When spring arrives, the situation changes radically and tension escalates.

Events take a turn for the worse for all Armenians in Merzifon, including the Dildilian Family. As the handful of British troops abandon the city, Armenians once again come under threat.

Those who have occupied the homes and offices of deported Armenians are still afraid that they might have to surrender their new properties if the Armenians return. The post-war years fuel this fear and animosity. Tzolag becomes a target due to his dialogue and cooperation with the forces of occupation.

He decides to stay at his brother Aram's house in Samsun for a while. He takes along with him his wife, oldest son, young daughter and two nieces. He leaves behind his three other sons who are boarding students at the reopened Anatolia College.

He hopes to go back to Merzifon as soon as possible with his family, when the conditions ameliorate. However, this hope never materializes. Tzolag will never see his beloved Merzifon and his house ever again.

The last Christmas

Samsun is relatively more secure for Tzolag and his family... Once again, he and his brother Aram start working together. Business is good at the studio. The Dildilian Brothers Studio takes numerous photographs which will be used in Samsun postcards for many years to come.

Tzolag and Aram become the visual historians of the civilian life in the city. Meanwhile, they take photographs of prominent figures who follow Mustafa Kemal deep into Anatolia and thus document a crucial period of the Turkish War of Independence.

Soon afterwards, their sister Haiganouch arrives in Samsun with her family. Mariam's family, the Nakkashian nieces are already in town.

Aram's first child Markarid brings joy to the family. It is the first birth ever since the losses suffered from 1914 onwards... This tiny "drop of pearl" inspires hopes for the family's future.

They remain optimistic, thinking that they will be safe in Samsun. The large family is once again united and everyone is busy at work. It is a great pleasure to celebrate Christmas without secrecy. They hope to go back to their beloved Merzifon very soon.

1921

The final blow

Nevertheless, conditions get even worse in Merzifon during the next winter. The college is closed down once again, this time for good. Tzolag's son Humayag is jailed in a prison in Amasya, accused of plotting a conspiracy with

Greek nationalists. The war between Greeks and Turks triggers massacres against the Greek population, and the Armenians are targeted once again.

Between July 23rd and 31st, 1921, thousands of Greeks and Armenians are massacred in Merzifon. Everyone is killed, with the exception of a few hundred people who take refuge at the Anatolia College campus. They include Tsolag's sister Haiganouch who had relocated back to Merzifon at the time, her four children and Tsolag's two sons who were staying with her after the college had closed.

As soon as the tension somewhat deescalates, Haiganouch travels to Samsun with all the children.

The memoirs of the family members about this period tell of the horrible massacres committed by the irregular forces of Topal Osman in Merzifon and the Samsun countryside. Samsun is spared the violence due to its vast foreign population and the efforts of prominent local figures. However, Topal Osman's deeds spell the end of an era.

All hopes of returning to Merzifon are lost forever.

1922

And the ship sets sail

The violent clashes between Turks and Greeks shape the political atmosphere, and the inevitable end comes closer and closer. Tsolag and Aram, as well as their wives and sister consensate most of their time to orphans. Together with the Americans of Near East Relief, they take care of 1,200 orphans.

In September, the Greeks are defeated and the city of Izmir is burnt down. The Greeks and Armenians in Samsun find themselves in an increasingly precarious position. In November, all Armenian and Greek Christians are obliged to either abandon Samsun, or once again become assimilated by force.

Near East Relief officials give assurance to Aram that all Armenian orphans will be transported to Greece by ship. Meanwhile the ship Belgravia from Glasgow is already in the port of Samsun to take Greek orphans to Athens... Just one hour before the ship is to set sail, an official from Near East Relief informs them that there will not be another ship, and that Armenian orphans will have to take the same ship with the Greeks. They have only 24 hours to pack up. However, it does not take very long to prepare these kids for voyage since they do not have any relatives or any belongings left. Meanwhile, the Dildilian Family gathers and decides to leave their homeland in the same ship.

In the same days, the Armenian Patriarch Zaven leaves Istanbul.

Journey to the future

In the next 24 hours, the family is busy packing up their belongings. Although under dire conditions, they do not hesitate to take along many of their photographs and glass negatives. Clearly, they feel comfort in bringing along all their past, memories, and experiences with them while travelling towards an uncertain future.

Tsolag always has his camera at hand, continuing to take photographs on the ship. Life aboard the Belgravia is very difficult. Greek orphans and their caretakers have the chance to stay in the ships cabins; however, the latecomer Armenian orphans and families have to live huddled in stuffy, overcrowded lower decks or on the exposed top deck. Most important of all, food and water is very scarce.

A storm breaks out, and the ship takes refuge in Odessa. Five days later, it reaches Istanbul with a broken mast and starved orphans in tears. However, they are not given the permission to come on land. A ship full of starving infants is thus forced to wait at the port for days. Meanwhile, the Belgravia is damaged and water starts to leak in; however, they are told to set sail for Piraeus. They do not have any other choice. During the journey, the slightly elder boys work hard to pump out water from the ship.

1923

A new home, a fresh start

The conditions in Greece are no better for the Dildilian Family... With its limited resources, post-war Greece is not ready to absorb the huge wave of migrants. In addition to the large Greek population expelled from Pontus, Anatolia and the coasts, numerous Armenian families are also obliged to take refuge in this neighbouring country. The adversity in refugee camps is unbearable; however, they manage to hold on.

Only a year later, they build with their own hands their new home near Athens. The same year, the Anatolia College is reborn in Thessaloniki.

Tsolag opens a new photography studio in the Kokina district of Athens. His son and daughter take up the family tradition of photography. His younger son graduates from Anatolia College and many years later joins the school's board of trustees.

Aram migrates to California with his family, and continues his career in photography. Haiganouch and her children go to live in France...

They carry the weight of a nation's fate on their shoulders... They scatter around like the beads of a rosary...

No other land so dear

The families create new homes, turn over a new leaf. However the exiles cannot forget their homeland. For many years, they hold on to the photographs and postcards of their lost country... They write down their memoirs to save them from oblivion. They draw the plans of their former houses, and fill these up with sounds, smells and images of the past.

They yearn for the butterflies on the shoe soles made by their grandfather, a children's song telling the story of the two bear cubs raised in the college campus, the donkeys which were used for carrying snow from the mountains to Aram's wedding and which continued to hee-haw throughout the ceremony, the blissful Christmas dinners enjoyed in freedom, harvest time in the rich Merzifon plain, and the sweet and green waters of the river Iris...

No other land is ever so dear to them.

Dildilian Family



The nuclear family.
Tsolag and Mariam in the middle, surrounded with their children, one
orphaned cousin who joined the family and an orphaned neighbor girl.
Merzifon, 1919



Three sisters: Nevart, Haiganouch, Parantsem. Circa 1912.



The older sister Haiganouch Medaksian with her children. Circa 1910.



The baby Alice on her aunt Nevart's lap. 1912



Elbiz and Louisa Dildilian, the wives of Krikor and his brother Haroutioun, and their kids. Sivas, circa 1894.



The Dildilian Family after Tsolag's parents passed away. Tsolag, seated on the far left; next to him, Aram. Their uncle Haroutioun and his wife Elbiz in the middle. Their only child Sumpat, on the right. Tsolag's three sisters, Markarid, Parantsem, Nevart, standing to the rear. Young Shumavon in front. Sivas, 1895



Mariam Nakkashian, just before her marriage, 1899.



Alice Dildilian (later Marsoobian) with her baby doll. Circa 1920.

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No photos were left of the Dildilian family home in Sivas. No problem! Aram Dildilian had preserved every corner of the house inscribed in his memory. Aram made these drawings, decades later, in the 1940s, from memory. He had guarded the memory of the house's façade, overall plan, living room, rear courtyard and fountain, summer kitchen, and kitchen utensils.



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Portrait Works from the Studio





Panoramic view of Merzifon. Circa 1914.

Cities, Streets



Panoramic view of Sivas. Circa 1900.



Panoramic view of Merzifon. Circa 1913.

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Surp Azvadzadzin Cathedral in Sivas, completely destroyed in 1950. Circa 1900.



Armenian all-male wedding party in Merzifon. Altar boys in front and groom with boutonniere in the rear. 1890-1900.



Gök Medrese, Sivas. Circa 1900



The Small Minaret, Sivas. Circa 1900

Anatolian College



Anatolia College, with Main Building on the left and playing fields in front. Circa 1903.



Sewing class, 1914



Students making furniture at the Anatolia College workshop. They could thus pay for their tuition and learn a craft. Circa 1905.



Arshelous Der Kaloustian teaching at the King School for the hearing impaired. Circa 1900.

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Physical education class, 1914



Cooking class, 1914



Music Club Orchestra. 1914

American Hospital



The new building of the American Hospital, completed in 1914.



Dr. Marden during a surgical operation. Circa 1906.

Orphans, orphanages



Three orphan boys placed under the protection of the Anatolia College in Merzifon, wearing woolen clothes provided by Near East Relief. Circa 1919.



Orphan girls peeling potatoes. 1921



Ms Phelps with Fatima that she brought from the Turkish barracks. She carries the badge of Near East Relief on her hat. 1919



Orphan boys being cared for in the Anatolia College. There were 2500 orphans gathered up in Merzifon at the end of the war. Dildilians helped organize the school for orphans. 1919.

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Some of the 42 Greek children accepted to the orphanage in Merzifon, under treatment for lice. 1919



Orphan girls in Merzifon. Number 7 is Greek and 8 is Turkish. The rest are Armenian girls saved from Turkish families. 1919



Orphans with their teachers. Aram, in the second row, fourth from the left. Circa 1921



Orphans of Merzifon being treated for favus with tarcaps. Circa 1919.

Date of Death: 1915



7 Armenian and 2 Greek professors of Anatolia College's 1914 - 1915 academic faculty were killed between 1915 and 1921. Those murdered are marked with "X".

The names of only some of those killed are featured in the Dildilian archive:

1. Hovhannes Hagopian. [Linguist teaching on Turkish, Arabic and Persian; writer of a book on Ottoman Turkish grammar and an Armenian - English dictionary]
2. A. G. Sivaslian [Professor of mathematics and astronomy]
3. D. Theocharides [Professor of Greek]





From a glass negative in the family collection. Dated 1914-18.

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Remnants of Armenians massacred in Hekimhan.
This picture was taken by German soldiers on November 18th, 1918 and given to Tsoilag Dildilian to be developed.



From left to right: Dildilians' sister Parantsem, her husband and their family.
In 1915, their children Hrant was 3 and Hratchia 5 years old.
The Chirinians were deported in 1915 from Vezirköprü. They were never seen again.



From left to right: Dildilian brothers' cousin Sumpad, who was working as an engineer in the Samsun - Sivas railway project. He was killed during the deportation along with his wife Prapion and children. When murdered, Tsoyig was 4, Chahine was 2 and Vahan was 1 year old.

A Modern School In A Small Town: Anatolia College

Missionary activities for spreading the Protestant belief in Merzifon start in the 1850s. The Theological Seminary built for this purpose transforms first into a high school and then the Anatolia College.

Established in 1886, Anatolia College offers six years of education, including two years of preparatory school. In 1908, the duration of the preparatory school extends to 4 years, and thus the total duration of education reaches 8 years. Education is in English, but students also study French, Turkish, Armenian and Greek. The College curriculum includes courses in natural sciences, as well as Armenian and Greek mythology, astronomy, philosophy, psychology, international political economy, Christian history and philosophy, and Turkish law.

During the 35 years of college history, Armenian and Greek students make up the majority of the student body. Out of a total of 250 students in 1901, 175 are Armenian and 75 are Greek; whereas, in 1914, out of a total of 425 students, 160 are Armenian, 205 are Greek, 35 are Russian and 25 are Turkish.

GOING OVERSEAS FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

The College hires its brightest graduates at the Theological Seminary or other departments. Many students receive scholarships for masters or PhD programs in Europe or USA. Ottoman officials recognize the school not as a university ["ali"] but rather as a high school ["rüşdiye"]; however overseas educational institutions accept them as holders of bachelor's degrees and invite them for postgraduate studies.

Towards the late 1890s, the school's Armenian and Greek graduates already account for more than half of the full-time faculty. Another important characteristic of the college is providing students not scholarships and grants, but rather self-assistance opportunities. Accordingly, students can attend the school without paying tuition, by working as ironsmith, carpenter, bookbinder, fez maker and tailor in its workshops, as labourer in the vineyards, or as lecturer. The Anatolia College has a very vibrant cultural life. It has a choir, an orchestra, various magazines, a literature club, an archaeology club as well as a rich Natural History Museum. Many sports clubs are active in the campus, which also boasts a swimming pool.

FROM COLLEGE TO EXILE

When this liberal atmosphere in the school is coupled with freedoms of expression and press during the Second Constitutional Era, many students become more and more politically active, seeking social justice and equality. The government, which was already suspicious of the college's activities, soon becomes convinced that the institution serves the cause of Greeks and Armenians. Education is disrupted during World War I, and Armenians in the campus suffer from the deportation of 1915.

American administrators who want to rescue Armenian students, professors and employees offer a bribe to the district governor; however, the 275 liras given to the commander of gendarmerie fails to yield results. A

government decree orders that no one else but Americans shall remain in the campus premises. The 15 Armenian professors of the faculty, and 20 out of the 30 janitors are deported with their families. All the deported faculty and staff perished.

The college president George E. White describes that horrible day as follows in his memoirs:

"In the morning of August 10th, just as we were saying the morning prayer with students who were enrolled at the summer school since they could not go back home, Dr. Marden appeared in the door with a white face and whispered: 'They are here.' (...) The officials forced opened the doors and (...) ordered all Armenians to surrender. We discussed with them for two hours, but the number of armed men had risen to almost thirty, and they were searching the premises by breaking down the doors and forcing every single entrance. Finally, our Armenian friends felt that resistance would bring more damage than benefit, and surrendered of their own accord. Each family was given an oxcart.

These were loaded with very little food, beds and a few personal belongings. Mothers and children sat on the carts, whereas the men walked alongside. Just before the convoy set out for the road, a group gathered around me and I prayed together with them. (...) None of the 72 individuals taken by force and deported from our beautiful campus ever came back." The college, which was temporarily closed during the war, is shut down permanently by the new nationalist government created in 1921. The students are dispersed, the college property is confiscated and all Americans are told to leave the country in 48 hours.

The 35-year-long history of the Anatolia College in Merzifon ends thus, and the school relocates to Thessaloniki.

I was crying over my lost people and lost glories...

Aram describes his mixed feelings on the day of armistice as follows:

One fatal day in (November 11) 1918, I was visiting one of those German-Armenian friends' garden. We were cooking jam out of grape juice. Their son came from downtown and gave the good news that there is word of Armistice. Our joy was great. Soon I started preparations to leave for Samson as soon as possible.

Last three and four years, we were deprived of any kind of religious gathering or church services of any kind. We were confined in our family circles.

The following Sunday for the first time, a group of mixed Protestants, Armenians, Germans, and Greeks decided to take our lunches and climb up the Amasia's famed ancient forts. Before that day, often we wished to climb up to those caves but we did not dare to make this attempt as we had to pass through the Turkish quarter. It was a long and hard hike for all of us but finally we make it. When we arrived at the right spot, we took a deep breath. The scene was profound and breathtaking.

The whole Amasia with its grandeur was spread in front of us. On my right, way out in green vineyards and gardens, the Iris river makes a graceful turn towards the city. Way up on the hillside I could see half-ruined Sourp Garabed...

Right in front of us we could see the Armenian quarter burned to the ground (Turks burned the Armenian houses as vengeance...) Farther up on the rocky slopes, the poorest Armenian houses cling to the rock in the deep valley. We could see those small houses still waiting as orphans for their owners to come back, with their individual small rickety bridges ... a heart-breaking scene. On the left we could see the government houses, the bridges, the marketplace and shops, and the Souk Punar valley with resort houses and vineyards up to the peaks. And down on the foothills,

the Protestant quarter, which was left intact as most of the houses being nice homes, was occupied by German and Turkish officials.

Farther out, many vineyards and vineyard houses and flour mills on both sides of the river, and the ancient Roman bridge with three big arches over which all our loved ones and beloved nation passed to their death... Way up on high, on the rock, we felt wonderful, joyful, and victorious, and unconsciously started singing songs of victory and praise... Just about then, the Greek church bells started ringing for the first time [by law church bells could not be rung in Ottoman Turkey], which brought tears out of our eyes, yes, tears of joy. Each one of us was in tears for different reasons... I was crying for the first time over my lost dear ones who passed over that river bridge and walked through the same highway which winds away into the green vineyards.

I was crying over my lost people and lost glories that have gone, to come back no more...

Welcome party for bears at the college

Aram Dildilian describes what life was like on the Anatolia College campus during his years in the preparatory school in the early 1900s:

On summer nights once in a while, in secret, with a few boys, we did dare to jump into the college pool for a few minutes. We did not dare to stay much longer as the night watchman, Mugurdich Emmy would come around. Oh, yes, I had another amusement which was to watch the bear cubs brought from the Sivas mountains. Soon they grew to be unruly and dangerous so Chester Tracy, with the help of the big boys, dug the ground for a new and bigger house with a climbing pole and water pool and a nice cave for them to sleep. When moving day came, we had a house warming ceremony. All the college, girls' school, and orphanages were off. Professor Manissadjian officially named them Oursoos and Oursoola.

Then we all sang the Manu of the bears:

Mer archere inch gooden den den den
Yergou shap tee Mar gi meg meg meg
Yerek shap tee Purasa sa sa sa
Chorek shap tee Loupia ya ya ya
Hink shap tee orher Havla la la la
Ourpat orher Mazoon zoon zoon zoon
Shapat orher Pi laf laf laf laf
Giragi orher Kash geg geg geg geg

In the winter months, every Friday night we used to have special lectures by our professors. We used to have a full house, thousands would attend, city folks as well as college people. Other than those, I did not enjoy other activities.

We used to have all sorts of games, football, baseball, soccer ball, Olympic games. I never had any chance to go swimming, fishing, hiking, or picnicking with the college boys.

Sivas: The Cradle Of The Ardzruni Kingdom

Today's Sivas province overlaps with a large section of the region called Armenia Minor by Ptolemy in ancient times. Throughout history it was invaded numerous times and frequently changed hands; however, the most catastrophic invasions were those by Mongolians and Tamerlane. Ottomans, for their part, encouraged nomadic tribes to

settle down in these regions and managed to shatter its homogenous structure completely.

Prior to the World War I, 204,472 Armenians lived in Sivas, making up over 25% of the total population. Armenians lived in 241 settlements across the province, and had 198 churches, 21 monasteries, as well as 204 schools with a total of 20,599 students. Traditionally, Armenians were the leading artisans of the city, whose cutlers, jewelers, whitesmiths and gun makers were famous across the empire.

The Surp Nişan monastery, 2 km to the north, was built by the Armenian king Senekerim in 1025 and served as the archbishop's residence for 900 years. One of the foremost pilgrimage centers of the region, the monastery used to house more than 300 medieval Armenian manuscripts. The Surp Nişan Monastery and its environs are used today as a military base. Nothing much remains from the old churches, monasteries and schools of Sivas.

A LUSH GREEN SANJAK: AMASYA

Prior to 1915 in Amasya, then one of the four sanjaks [districts] of the Sivas province, lived around 200 thousand people; 31,717 were Armenians and 39,676 Greeks. Back then, local peoples like the Abdal, Laz and Georgians still preserved their languages and traditions in Amasya. Various monuments from ancient times, caves, and rock-cut tombs of Pontus kings remained intact until the early 20th century. Amasya was well-renowned for its vineyards and orchards. Weaving was the dominant branch of manufacturing; leading the way in this business, Armenians had built machines to weave raw silk into yarn.

MARZVAN: THE KAZA WITH A COLLEGE

In today's Merzifon, then known as the Marzvan kaza [borough] of the Amasya Sanjak, there lived 10,381 Armenians in 2,278 households in 1914. Situated next to a vast plain, the town was home to the Anatolia College, which graduated a large majority of the Armenian elite until 1915. There were numerous flour factories in Marzvan.

SAMSUN (CANİK): A PORT FOR EXPORTS

According to the Ottoman census of 1914 and the statistics of the Armenian Patriarchate, 35,907 Armenians lived in the Canik Sanjak prior to the 1915 genocide. There were 49 Armenian churches and 74 Armenian schools with 3,254 students in this port city. There was also a large theater in the seaside neighborhood where Armenians lived. The city exported tobacco, cotton, pearls and wood.

Armenians, pioneers of the art of photography

Immediately after the invention of photography and its spread across Europe, the first photography studios were inaugurated one after the other in mid-19th century Istanbul. Greeks as well as Ottoman Armenians played a leading role in this process.

Armenian merchants had centuries-old connections with Europe, numerous young Armenians travelled to Europe for education and came back with innovative ideas, and Armenians shared the same religion with Europeans and mastered their languages: As a result, Armenians quickly embraced photography, much like many other innovations, and started to practice this art with mastery. Another factor underlying their leadership in this area was

the fact that early photographers had to carry out many side processes such as development and printing, which required a certain knowledge of chemistry. Back then, pharmacy and chemistry were areas in which Armenians excelled in the Ottoman Empire.

Armenians not only established the most renowned photography studios in the empire's capital, but also extended this art across the Anatolian provinces where they lived.

Born to an Armenian mother and an Assyrian Catholic father, Pascal Sebah established the largest studio in Pera, Istanbul's main hub of photography, and was deemed worthy of medals in overseas exhibitions.

Sarraf Mikayel Abdullahunyan's sons Viçen, Kevork and Hovsep became famous as the Abdullah Brothers [Abdullah Frères] and were named "palace photographers" by the sultan. Pushing the technical and esthetic limits of photography, Abdullah Brothers enchanted audiences with their use of light. Sultan Abdülhamid II attached great importance to the art of photography and had pictures taken of buildings, institutions and people from across the empire, thus accelerating the development of this art. Many photographers were trained in the studio of the Abdullah Brothers.

Another master holding the title of "palace photographer" was Boğos Tarkulyan, who made a groundbreaking achievement by coloring his photographs with paint. One other famous studio in Pera was that of the Gülmez Brothers. The brothers Kirkor, Yervant and Artin showcased an indisputable technical and esthetic quality in their panoramas of the Bosphorus and Istanbul.

Aşil Samancı may be considered the first photojournalist of the country, considering the pictures he took for magazines and newspapers. From Papazyan Brothers to Mihran İranyan, numerous photographers documented 19th century Ottoman Empire with their images.

On the other hand, the largest firms which supplied these photographers with imported materials and hardware were Onnik Diraduryan, Karakaş Brothers and Pabuçyan.

Armenian photographers carried their art beyond the Istanbul and Anatolia, into the Eastern lands of the empire. These who emigrated to these regions to escape the massacres in Anatolia, established studios in cities such as Jerusalem, Beirut, Baghdad, Amman and Aleppo, and continued to practice their art with finesse. continued to practice their art with finesse.

Merzifon American Hospital: Nurses were the last to leave

The modest clinic situated next to the Anatolia College in the campus expanded gradually to become a modern hospital in 1914: Merzifon American Hospital.

First established under the leadership of Dr. T. S. Carrington, the hospital reached new heights under the leadership of Dr. Jesse Marden. Housed in a magnificent four-story building, it boasted all the necessary infrastructure such as an operating room, laboratory, the latest radiology

equipment and counted 4 doctors, 1 dispensary official, 4 nurses, 10 intern nurses, and close to 20 assistants and other employees in 1914.

The same year, 921 inpatients and 3,186 outpatients were treated at the facility. The inpatients included 340 Armenians, 296 Turks, 241 Greeks and 44 other patients from 13 ethnic backgrounds.

According to hospital records, 671 surgical operations and 226 childbirths took place in the hospital in 1914.

The hospital also trained nurses, and graduated every year numerous nurses, most of whom were young Armenian girls.

The last graduates of the School of Nursing at the hospital were the class of 1915. Armenian nurses were the last people to suffer deportation from Merzifon. After they left, the quality of the treatment offered to patients and the wounded dropped sharply.

Merzifon American Hospital's magnificent stone building is still intact today; however, it now houses a high school administered by the Ministry of National Education.

Collecting wine, playing backgammon

Aram's memoirs reveal that his father Krikor was a veritable epicure:

"My father was not a drunkard but he used drinks extensively. He used to make his own wine expertly and had bottled, labeled, and sealed samples of wine of 14 years dated 1880 up to his death. I do not know what became of that collection but I remember well that often I would take a stick and like a harp string, I used to go up and down the bottles having fun and making music. Good thing I did not break any of them..."

Our parlor, rather father's room, was a pleasant place to be in. It was well lighted, well furnished and had an excellent view and scenery. Father was a man of pleasure (half-retired). He used to come home early in the afternoon. His refreshment or snack table would be set...it was some lovely sight. On it there were three beautiful cut glass vials, the big one for water and the smaller ones for drinks, and several cut glass dishes full of salads, cheese, abought, sujak and salted leblabu.

He would have someone as companion to play tavloo game. Poor uncle used to come home all tired and hungry but had to wait till their game was over to sit at the dinner table...My little heart was in revolt even then..."

Family home in Sivas

There are no photographs left showing the family home in Sivas... However, we know every furniture, every corner of this house in full detail. Aram's memories of his childhood home were so fresh that he managed to reconstruct it years later with words and pencil drawings:

"At the time of my birth, my father was in his glory. He was successful both financially and socially. As I said before, he was progressive, modern for his time, and had good taste. He repaired and modernized our ancestral home. We had five big rooms, the front room, or parlor, where father used to stay, had an extended front with four big windows, two in front and two on each corner on the north and south, with double window sashes for the winter. The walls were painted with oil paint

and there were soft cushioned sofas, upholstered chairs and ornamental wooden ceiling. The inner two rooms had open fireplaces with fancy front mantelpieces. The middle big room had a skylight in the center of heavy clear timbered ceiling, and the walls were fancy wooden panel.

We had a sunken fireplace, “tonir” where the food was cooked in wintertime. After the cooking was over, the opening was covered with a round and smooth stone slab, covered with pillows and carpets and used as sitting room to play games or tell stories on long winter nights. We had a basement with enough room for provisions, a bread baking oven, a stable for cows and other animals that had two doors, one in the back street and the other on the main street. We had two running water fountains, one for drinking spring water and the other for general use.

I remember well my father was one of the first ones to buy the kerosene lamps for the “burrow” dresser and chandelier lamp from the ceiling.”

Orphans: Just kids, not enemies

The exact number of Armenian orphans who survived the massacres of the years 1915-1918 is unknown. The black book of Talat Pasha gives this figure as 10,269, adding that 6,768 of them were entrusted to orphanages and 3,501 to Muslim families. Near East Relief alone took care of 30 thousand orphans in Alexandropol’s famous “Orphan City.” This figure corresponds only to a small portion of all the orphans found and registered by state officials. It is impossible to calculate the exact number of those adopted by their relatives or taken out of the country in ships by foreign aid agencies. No one knows how many children were entrusted to neighbours by families forced to leave their homes. Also unknown is the number of children abandoned next to a field, a wall or a tree by mothers who understood that the long march led nowhere and wanted to spare their kids from certain death.

Undoubtedly, some of those children were adopted by their new families as their offspring. However, it is not difficult to imagine that a considerable number were taken under care only to be forced to work as labourer in the field, servant in the house, or slave in bed. These children were brought up as Muslims; they either never knew their true language, name and identity, or simply forgot these in time.

The Committee of Union and Progress reinforced its policy of Turkification on the orphans abandoned in the streets.

In 1916, an aid agency established by the Minister of War Enver Pasha realized that it would soon become unable to feed the orphans it had taken under protection. It was decided that the orphans would be distributed to companies, farms and homes across the country as labourers, servants or maids, and the decision was immediately put into practice. A few years later, the Allied Powers which took over Istanbul after the Armistice of Mudros passed into immediate action to collect these orphans and take them under care along with other abandoned children. However, an incredible chaos and dramatic events ensued... It was impossible to match the groups of orphans brought to Istanbul from across the empire with existing records. No reliable data was available, the names of the children had been changed, and most important of all, many refused to speak out of fear. Some had gotten used to their adopted families and refused to leave. Other families claimed that their biological children were being taken away from them. Even before they could overcome the first trauma, children underwent more suffering and were displaced once again.

The existing Armenian orphanages of Istanbul were jam-packed. New charities were established amid war, famine, poverty and epidemic; however, even these were not enough. Some orphans were taken to Cyprus by the British and French, and some to orphanages in Syria by American aid agencies. Near East Relief transported 22 thousand orphans from Anatolia to Greece and Syria between 1922 and 1923.

From 1914 until 1918, around 25 thousand children died of neglect in Istanbul alone. Many of them were the children of Armenians killed during the genocide. According to a report issued by the Armenian Patriarchate in 1921, there were 63 thousand Armenian orphans waiting to be saved in Muslim households.

Years later, these children would become quiescent, downcast grandmothers...

Date of Death: 1915

A large number of Armenian intellectuals are buried in the Armenian Cemetery located in the Şişli district of Istanbul. Most of their tombstones have the same date of death: 1915!

In 1915, in the night of April 24th, prominent Armenian intellectuals living in Istanbul, especially journalists and writers were arrested. A first convoy of 180 people set out on a forced journey for Çankırı and Ayaş. Almost all those headed for Ayaş were massacred on the road, whereas only 30 of those sent to Çankırı could return.

SERVING THE NATION

Five weeks later, Krikor Zohrab, a Member of Parliament representing İstanbul, was arrested on the way home, after a dinner and card game with the Minister of Interior Talat Pasha and Halil Bey at the club Cercle d’Orient. Along with the Erzurum MP Vartkes Serengülyan, he was put on a train bound for Diyarbakır to stand trial at the Military Court. In mid-July, near the city of Urfa, they were massacred by Major Ahmed, also known as “the Circassian”, a member of Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa [Special Forces]. While explaining with pride how he committed these crimes to the writer Ahmed Refik [Altınay], Major Ahmed indicated that he blew Serengülyan’s off with a Mauser bullet, and crushed Zohrab’s skull with a stone “... Go and have a look: I transformed the city of Van and its environs into the land of Kaaba. You cannot come across a single Armenian over there. Although I have served the nation with such devotion, it is rascals like Talat who sit in Istanbul, sipping ice-cold beer...”

April 24th is a symbolic date. The massacre lasted from March 1915 until November 1917. According to official historiography, the order of “deportation” was issued in late May, only after the news of the April 1915 “Armenian revolt” in Van reached Istanbul. The pretext was “legitimate defense during war time.” However, the massacre had actually begun in March. Preliminary plans were put into practice much earlier, even before the onset of World War I. In the first stage of the plan, “top secret” messages were wired to various regional administrations, ordering them to report to Istanbul the names of the Christians in the region, complete with data about their wealth, education level and social status, as well as a list of influential Christian figures.

Detailed lists and tables showing their properties, lands and other real estate were produced in separate ledgers. Next came the disarmament of the Armenian population. In various provinces, men with leadership qualities were either arrested and killed, or recruited to workers’ battalions to be put to work like beasts of labor.

With the onset of the deportation, prisoners freed from jailhouses, Kurdish gangs historically used by the Ottoman state for suppressing Armenians and organizing bloodbaths in Eastern Anatolia, Muslim survivors of massacres in the Balkans and Caucasus burning with desire to take revenge on Christians, and troops of Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa, all joined forces across the country! In many regions, the locals joined their ranks: Some of them were intent on getting hold of a few gold coins, others on confiscating houses and lands left behind, and still others on “killing an infidel to get one step closer to heaven.”

Those put on oxcarts or trains, or forced to walk were in fact not meant to reach their ultimate destination. Because this deportation was not actually designed to relocate people. No proper preparatory measures were taken on the paths of migration, or at train stations.

In an official communiqué sent by the Ministry of Interior to the office of Sadrazam [Grand Vizier] in 1915, it was written overtly that the deportation was organized to “provide a wholesale and radical solution” to the Armenian question. In August 1915, Talat Pasha pronounced that well-known phrase: “Armenian problem has been solved.”

NEGOTIATING THE STATISTICS !

The exact number of people killed during the deportation has been a controversial issue for many years. Armenian sources suggest that more than 1.5 million Armenians were killed; whereas the commission set up by the Ottoman Ministry of Interior in 1918 to investigate war crimes indicates that 800,000 Armenians were killed during World War I. This latter figure is also found in another document issued in 1928 by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which states that “500,000 Muslims, 800,000 Armenians, 200,000 Greeks” were massacred, killed during deportation or in workers’ battalions”.

According to a document found in Talat Pasha’s personal archive, statistical tables for the year 1914 indicate the presence of 1.5 million Armenians living across Ottoman lands. Tables for the years 1915-16, however, show that only 370,000 Armenians remain in the same provinces and districts. The fates of the remaining 1.1 million people are unknown!

After the armistice, only a very limited number of survivors could go back to the villages where they grew up in. Most of those who returned were soon forced to leave Anatolia for Istanbul, and then for foreign lands. Almost none of those who had to convert to Islam to survive and to save their families could reclaim their true identity, out of fear.

They had to hide or forget in order not to perish. The houses, lands, schools, churches and monasteries that they left behind were pillaged and distributed by the state itself.

Blacksmiths, carpenters, producers of pastirma, laborers of cotton mills, doctors and photographers were claimed to be very dangerous, because armed and ready to revolt at any time... Hundreds of thousands of people – women, men, children, elderly – were forced to accept their horrible fate and march. They set out from Sivas, Maraş, Erzurum İzmit, Bolu and Edirne. They never came back.

No place for non-Muslims

All solution proposed to save the Ottoman state only served to further accelerate its collapse. The reforms of the Tanzimat and Islahat eras, undertaken under the influence of the emancipatory ideals spreading across Europe, failed to satisfy any nation living in the empire. It was in 1876 that, for the first time, a constitution was created and nationwide elections were held. The resulting General Assembly had 115 members, and 46 out of these were non-Muslims including Armenians. However, the assembly and constitution survived for only a year.

Seizing upon the Ottoman defeat before the Russian army as a pretext, Sultan Abdülhamid II disbanded the assembly for an indefinite period and suspended the constitution. The subsequent 30-year period of “despotism” would see Abdülhamid gain the nickname “The Red Sultan”. The Armenian nation took the heaviest toll during the Hamidian massacres. The Eastern Anatolian region was devastated with violence and corruption. The Armenian community was not only obliged to give to the state a large portion of its produce, but also to pay hefty extortions to Kurdish tribes simply to survive. The Hamidian troops, supposedly set up to bring peace to the Eastern provinces, organized the “Armenian Massacres”, which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of ordinary Armenian civilians.

The chaos engulfed not only the Armenians of the East, but all the nations. The entire country resembled a powder keg ready to explode. Small-scale resistance soon gave way to all-out revolt. In 1908, the Young Turks staged a revolution and the constitution came back into effect. Winds of freedom were blowing across the country. Political, social and public life evolved at an incredible speed. Meanwhile, ethnic and religious questions, hitherto suppressed by the empire, were put back on the agenda. Magic words started to reverberate everywhere: Liberty, Equality, Fraternity and Justice... However, the land had a well-established tradition of its own: It was out of question to grant ‘Liberty, Equality, Fraternity and Justice’ freely to everyone!

ENEMY BROTHERS

The Muslim and Turkish intellectuals thought of the non-Muslims as parasites feeding on the economic riches of the empire, and overtly declared that they themselves were the dominant nation. The non-Muslims, on the other hand, were suffering from state-sanctioned inequality and assimilation policies in almost every field. They were fed up with losing the fruits of their labor to the state or to unruly tribes, and did not want to pay any more bribes or extortion to survive.

The Adana Massacre of 1909 was the clearest indication that the revolution would not change anything for the non-Muslims. Encouraged by state officials, mobs attacked the Armenians of Adana and their cultural monuments, staging a veritable dress rehearsal for the genocide of 1915. Between 15,000 and 30,000 Armenians were reported to be killed in the Adana Massacre. Thousands of houses, shops, churches, monasteries and schools were razed to the ground; fields, orchards and factories were put on fire. The pretext for the massacre was as horrible as the damage inflicted: The reason behind this immense hatred was the richness of Armenians and their pretension to equality with Muslims!

The arguments to justify the events of Adana were the same with those of the future genocide of 1915: “Rebellious Armenian gangs”, “the armed resistance movement”,

"outrage against the religious beliefs of the population" ... In fact, however, the Armenians had not staged any collective resistance, let alone a revolt, against the massacres. Otherwise, it would not have been possible to kill tens of thousands of Armenians and pillage their property in just a couple of days. No one found credible the argument that a few thousand Armenian rebels had fiercely fought against the Ottoman army with just hunting rifles and revolvers, and had thus posed a "serious threat".

In the same period, the March 31st rebellion broke out in Istanbul to topple the ruling İttihat ve Terakki - Committee of Union and Progress. An Ottoman battalion from Thessaloniki managed to suppress this rebellion. Afterwards, the government replaced Sultan Abdülhamid with Sultan Reshad, whose powers were immediately decreased to a symbolic level.

THE PLANS WERE READY

Now it was the turn of the Committee of Union and Progress to act like despots. Unlike the sultan, the party opted for passing legislation in the parliament to limit freedoms! The opposition was brought under increasing pressure, traditions such as press censorship and the ban on rallies and strikes were reinforced even further.

Turkish and Armenian revolutionary groups had joined forces prior to 1908 to establish the constitutional order; however, they were now increasingly pitted against each other. The idea of a "national economy" completely destroyed all the ideals of the revolution and any hopes of peaceful coexistence. The Committee of Union and Progress now saw the homogenization of the economy as the key to an eventual nation-state. The riches of the Greeks and Armenians were simply up for grabs! The CUP was ready to do whatever it takes to this end: Pillage, plunder, massacre, and even genocide!

The main official document of this new period was the doctrine of Turkish nationalism adopted at the CUP congress which convened in 1911. The Balkan Wars which broke out immediately afterwards proved to be a veritable tipping point. The Balkans were hit by an incredible tragedy. Turkish immigrants who were driven out of their lands and whose relatives were massacred during the wars had to be given new homes in Anatolia.

The CUP had already made plans about where to settle them!

Ships full of immigrants

In Fall 1922, over one million Greeks migrated from Anatolia and Thrace to Greece, bringing the overall immigrant population up to 1.5 million, in a country with a total population of 5 million. In this period, an estimated 90 to 200 thousand Armenians had to migrate to Greece. Most Armenian immigrants settled in the cities of Athens, Kokina, Alexandroupoli and Thessaloniki.

In his memoirs, Henry Morgenthau, the US Ambassador to Istanbul during World War I, emphasized that the Greeks driven out of Turkey were "living happily in their homes, just a few days ago, totally unaware of the things to come."

"750 thousand people poured into the ports of Thessaloniki and Athens, as well as the Aegean islands of Crete, Lesbos, Kos and Euboea, like a huge animal herd. The plight of these people upon their arrival in Greece was incredibly dramatic..."

The voyage continued under the scorching sun and freezing autumn rains, which came one after the other. I witnessed with my own eyes a ship filled with 7,000 people, although it had a capacity of just 2,000.

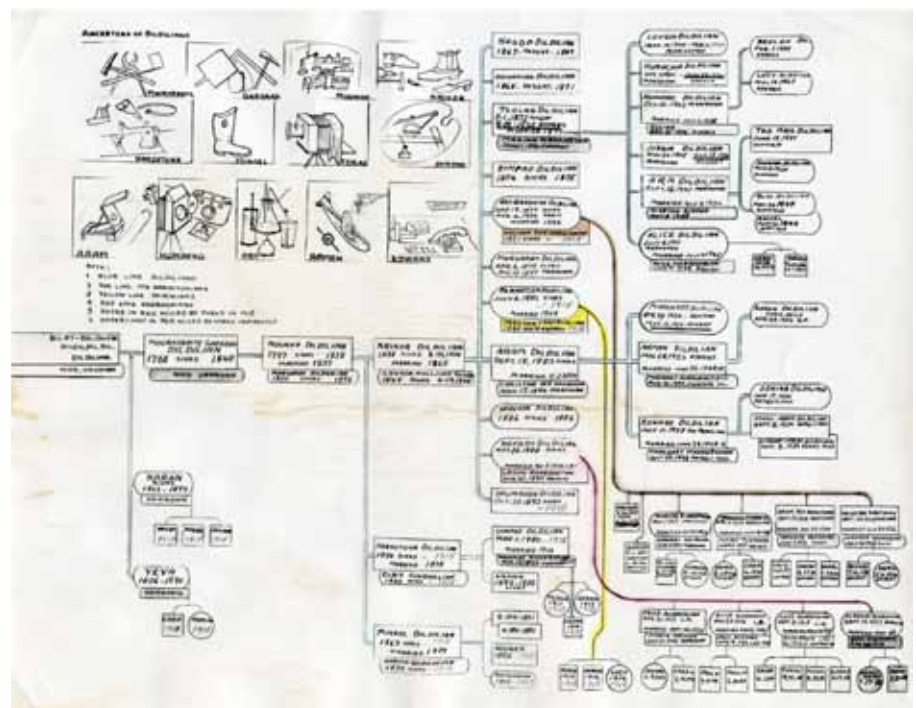
As in other cases, the voyagers were deprived of water and food... Typhus and smallpox spread rapidly, and every corner was infested with lice. Children were born on the deck. Many people threw themselves overboard to put an end to their suffering. The survivors reached the land, in filth and fever, without a home, quilt or winter clothes, deprived of food and income..."

Tsolag's son Ara Dildilian describes those days as follows in his memoirs:

"They took us to a museum. Almost every building in Athens or across Greece, schools, houses, museums and metro stations were full of people. People were hanging curtains at train stations, and living all together. For about a week, I slept in a museum, between the legs of some prehistorical animal..."



The surviving members of the Dildilian, Der Haroutiounian and Nakkashian families after the deportation. Early April 1923.



The family tree drawn by Aram years later.

**The exhibition is realised in cooperation
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grandson of Tsolag Dildilian.**

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ANADOLU KÜLTÜR

**BEARING WITNESS TO THE LOST HISTORY
OF AN ARMENIAN FAMILY
THROUGH THE LENS OF THE DILDILIAN BROTHERS**

1872-1923

