

# 23.5 MEMORY WALKS

Exile of Armenian  
Intellectuals, April 24, 1915

Istanbul Taksim - Feridiye

## Hrant Dink Foundation

Following the assassination of Hrant Dink, the editor-in-chief of Agos newspaper, in front of his office on January 19, 2007, the Hrant Dink Foundation was established to keep his dreams alive. The foundation aims to build a fair and free society that is free from discrimination and respectful of human rights, by fostering a culture of dialogue and peace. Placing coming to terms with the past and reviving memory at the center of its work, the foundation seeks to contribute to the construction of a shared future by making silenced stories visible.

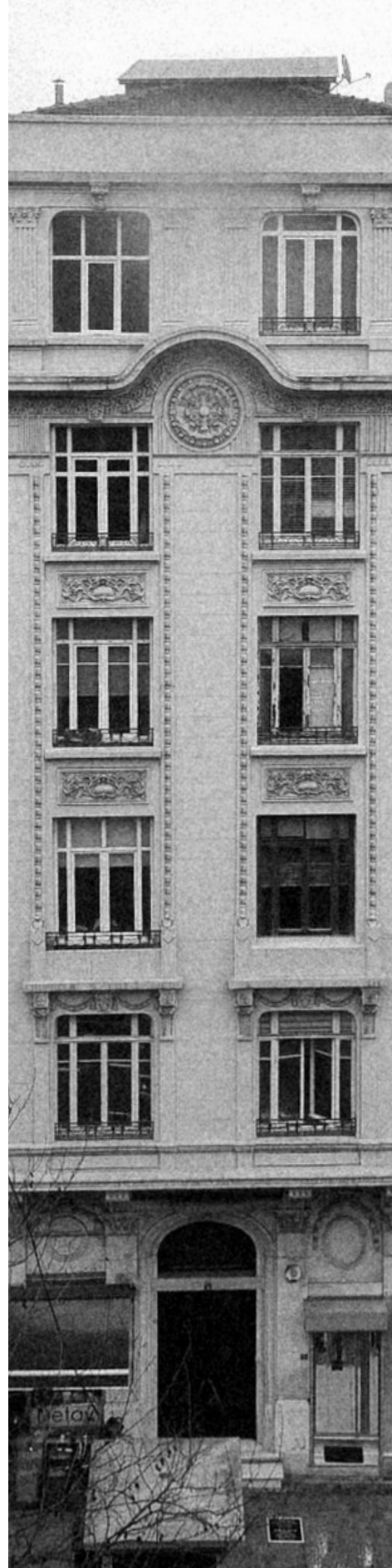
### 23.5 Memory Walks

Located at the very site where Hrant Dink was assassinated, the 23.5 Hrant Dink Site of Memory was founded as a dialogue platform grounded in universal values—one that remembers the past while speaking to the future, and that promotes empathy and mutual understanding. The 23.5 Memory Walks series extends this space and mission, inviting everyone to witness the past and trace the multi-layered memory of the city together.

The 23.5 Site of Memory sheds light on Hrant Dink's life and struggle, the story of Agos newspaper, the process leading to his assassination, and its aftermath. At the same time, it offers a perspective on Turkey's recent history within the context of minority rights, human rights, and democratization. Through exhibitions and various events, 23.5 also provides a space for reflection and dialogue on Turkey's collective memory.

The 23.5 Memory Walks series begins with memory tours focusing on the stories of Armenian intellectuals who were arrested in Istanbul on April 24, 1915 and exiled, and most of whom were killed. First organized in 2024 under the guidance of Nesim Ovadya İzrail, based on his book *April 24, 1915: Istanbul, Çankırı, Ayaş, Ankara* (İletişim, 2013), these tours have inspired the foundation to turn them into a permanent program. While developing the program, the foundation also made use of the Ottoman Archive document prepared by the Directorate of Public Security (BOA, DH. EUM. 2. Şb. 67/31, September 14, 1920), which lists the intellectuals to be arrested in Istanbul, newly re-translated from Ottoman Turkish. These walks aim to pause in front of the homes of the intellectuals, to remember their stories and their place in the city's and society's collective memory, and to build a dialogue with a silenced past.

The Sebat Apartment, which once housed the office of Agos and is today home to the 23.5 Hrant Dink Site of Memory.  
(Photo: Deniz Ezgi Sürek)



# Exile of Armenian Intellectuals **April 24, 1915**

● Police Stations



## **Night of Saturday April 24, 1915**

Between Saturday evening and Sunday morning, 197 Armenian intellectuals were arrested in Istanbul and taken to the Central Prison.

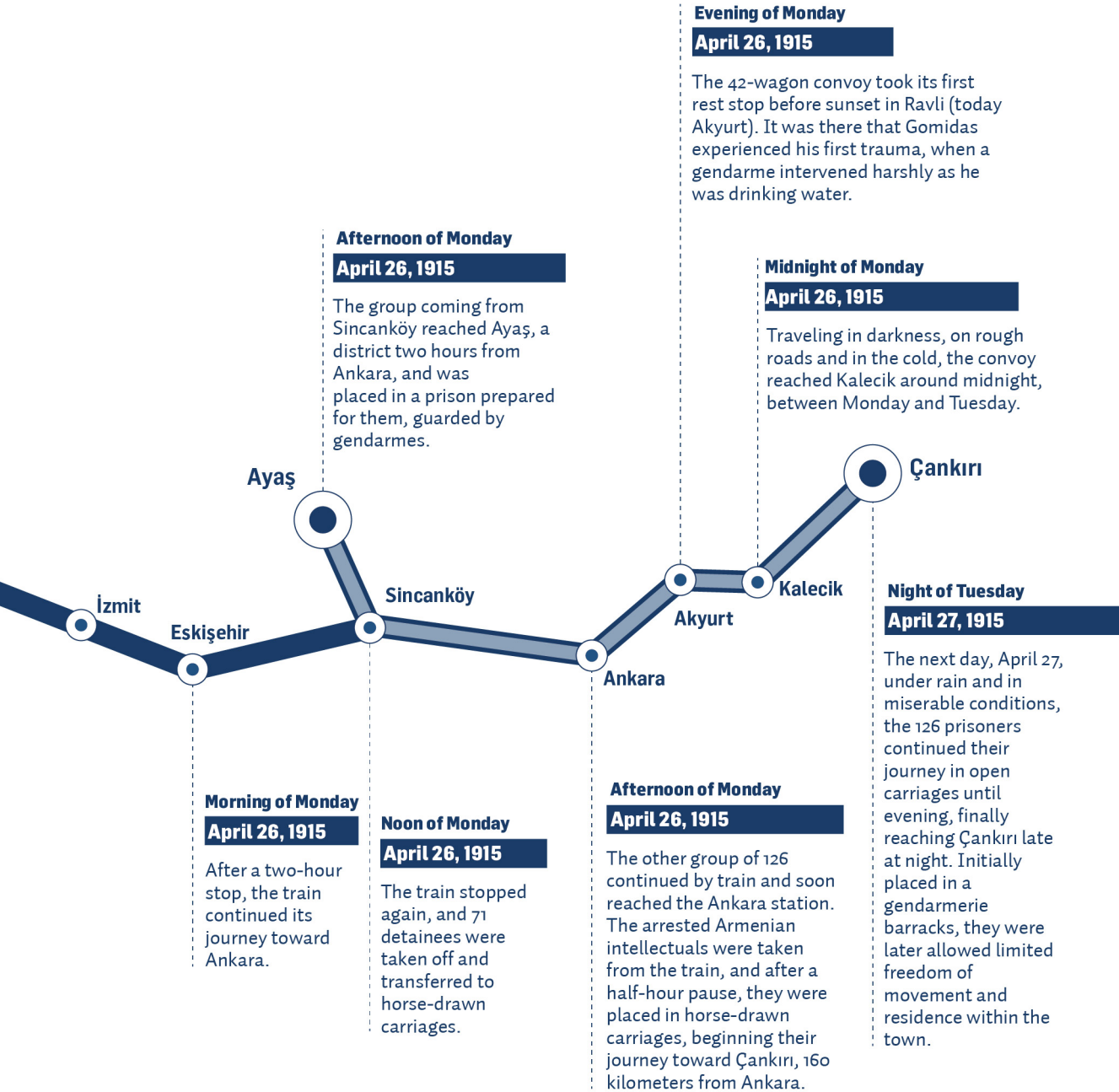
## **Evening of Sunday April 25, 1915**

71 people, considered to be politically active or organized, were transported by bus, while another 126, whose situation was deemed "less serious," were taken on foot, both groups heading toward the Sarayburnu Pier.

## **Night of Sunday April 25, 1915**

The Armenian intellectuals were put on a ferry at Sarayburnu and taken to Haydarpaşa, where an empty train was waiting. After a few hours of delay, the train departed for Anatolia.

# Exile of Armenian Intellectuals **April 24, 1915**



On April 24, 1915, 197 people were arrested, and the number reached 250 with those arrested in the following days. The process of detaining Istanbul's Armenian intellectuals was completed by the end of August. The arrest and deportation of Armenian intellectuals from Istanbul, which began in April 1915, concluded by the end of August. Of the 92 Armenian intellectuals sent to Ayaş, 75 perished. Of the 158 sent to Çankırı, 99 lost their lives. In total, out of 250 Armenian intellectuals, 174 were killed, while 76 survived.

## Taksim - Feridiye

Feridiye Avenue is where the great Pera fire of 1870 began, destroying nearly half of Beyoğlu. Located near Talimhane –the former training grounds of the Topçu Kışlası (Artillery Barracks) in Taksim– this street has since transformed into a hub for tourists from around the world. Today, it is home to a mix of historic and modern hotels of various sizes, serving visitors from all walks of life.

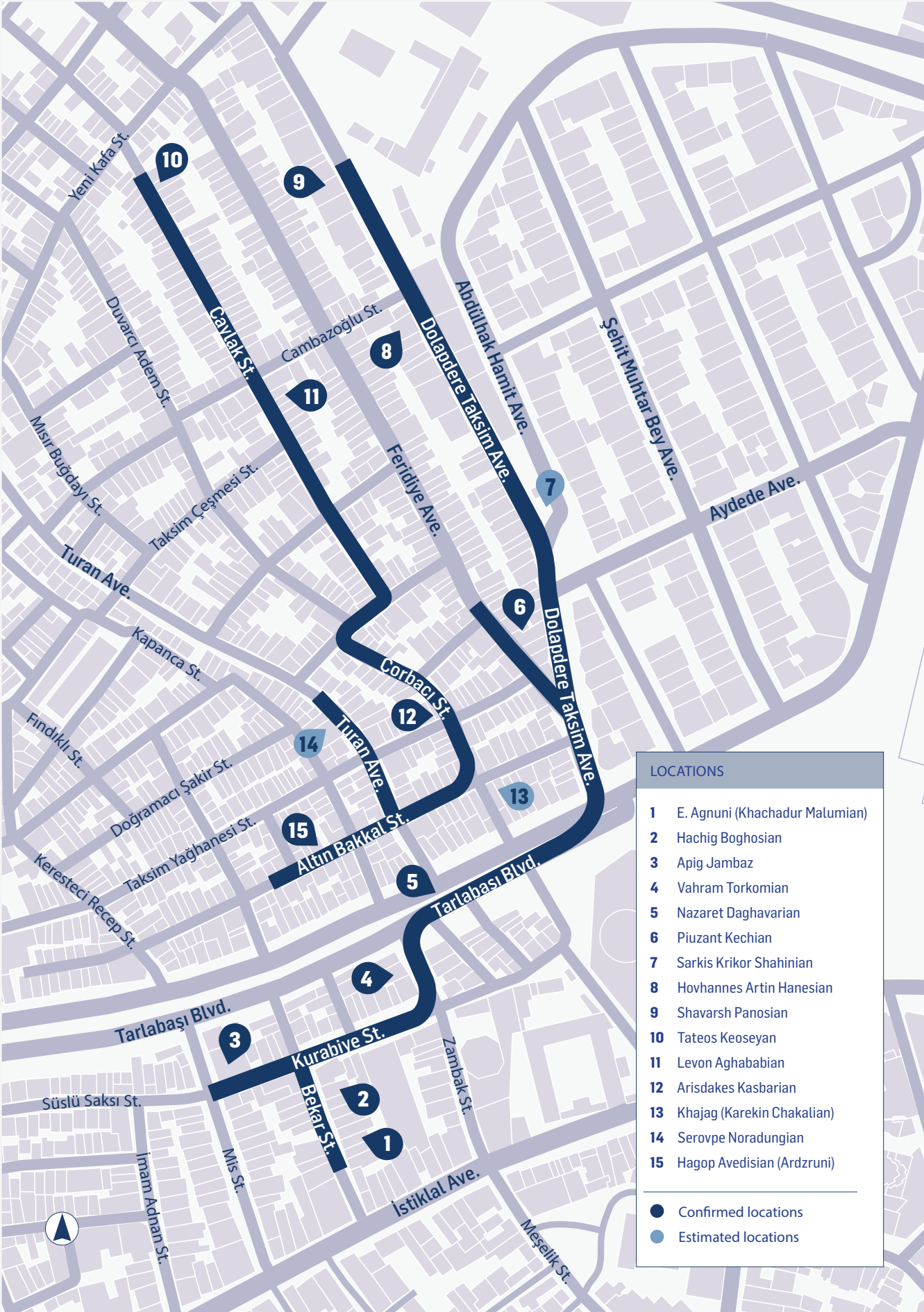
Taksim Square and Feridiye Avenue hold a significant place in the history of the Armenian community. The settlement of Armenians in Taksim dates back to the 16th century. During this period, Europeans established consulates and embassies in Taksim and Pera districts, creating new job opportunities for Armenians who spoke foreign languages and had cultural and commercial connections abroad. While working in the area, many Armenians settled in the neighborhood. Some structures associated with Armenian culture, such as cemeteries, schools, hospitals, and churches, have survived in nearly every corner of the district.

Cinemas, nightclubs, and theaters were primarily located in Pera. The streets surrounding Taksim, densely populated by non-Muslim communities, were among the city's oldest and most important residential areas. In the 20th century, during the modernization period of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic, the city's demographic structure began to change. Armenians from neighborhoods such as Kumkapı and Gedikpaşa, where the Muslim population was relatively small, moved to Taksim and its surrounding areas. Armenian communities in this region concentrated along Turan Avenue (stretching from Tarlabası to Dolapdere), Feridiye Avenue in the opposite direction, and Valide Çeşme Street, bordering Talimhane. The *Annuaire Oriental* (Oriental Directory) of 1914 illustrates this distribution, listing 176 residences and businesses on Feridiye Street: 111 belonging to Armenians, 38 to Greeks, 24 to Levantines, and 3 to unidentified names.

Talimhane takes its name from the open training grounds once used by soldiers at the Artillery Barracks. The non-Muslim population was historically significant in neighborhoods such as Taksim, Pera, Tarlabası, and Dolapdere. However, this population declined sharply following the September 6-7 pogrom of 1955.

Taksim was once a district of cemeteries. The area stretching from the current Hilton and Divan hotels to the Istanbul Radio House and the Harbiye Military Museum was the Surp Hagop Armenian Cemetery. The area immediately adjacent to the Artillery Barracks—later transformed into the Taksim Garden and today occupied by the InterContinental Istanbul Hotel—served as the Catholic and Protestant cemeteries, while the stretch descending from Gümüşsuyu to the Military Hospital was used as the Muslim cemetery. Before the founding of the Republic, the stables of the Artillery Barracks stood where Taksim Square is located today.

Starting in the 1600s, when this area and its surroundings, previously used as a cemetery, were opened for settlement, a maksem (water distribution system) was built to solve the region's water needs, including those of Beyoğlu and Galata neighborhoods. This system distributed water collected from the dams of the Belgrade Forest to the city. Taksim Square takes its name from this maksem, one of the reservoirs where the incoming water was "distributed" (taksim) to the fountains in the area. During the Republican era, Taksim Square has also been the site of numerous political and social events.



LOCATIONS	
1	E. Agnuni (Khachadur Malumian)
2	Hachig Boghosian
3	Apig Jambaz
4	Vahram Torkomian
5	Nazaret Daghavarian
6	Piuzant Kechian
7	Sarkis Krikor Shahinian
8	Hovhannes Artin Hanesian
9	Shavarsh Panosian
10	Tateos Keoseyan
11	Levon Aghababian
12	Arisdakes Kasbarian
13	Khajag (Karekin Chakalian)
14	Serovpe Noradungian
15	Hagop Avedisian (Ardzruni)

● Confirmed locations  
● Estimated locations

## E. Agnuni (Khachadur Malumian)

01

Born in 1872 in Meghri, a city on the Armenian-Iranian border, Khachadur Malumian was taken from his home at number 12 on Bekar Street in Beyoğlu on the night of April 24, 1915. Malumian began his education at the Nersesian School in Tiflis and later completed his higher education at the University of Geneva. During this period, influenced by the revolutionary movements in Europe, he joined the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Tashnaksutiun) and became one of its leading figures. It was during these years that he adopted the nickname "Agnuni."

Agnuni was not only an activist but also the intellectual face of the party. He served on the editorial board of the Troshag (Flag) newspaper and also wrote articles for Govgasi Verker (Wounds of the Caucasus), in which he examined the Armenian-Tatar conflicts in the Caucasus. In the early 20th century, he co-organized the Ottoman Opposition Forces Congresses in Paris, which aimed to bring together those opposed to Sultan Abdülhamid II, including the Young Turks. His political comrade Vahan Papazian describes Agnuni in his memoirs as follows:

The next day, my brother and I went to the Tashnaksutiun headquarters located at number 51 Sakızağacı, one of the side streets of Beyoğlu. Agnuni was there. I had met him six years earlier in Geneva. He hadn't changed at all. Majestic and self-assured, yet intelligent and considerate. When he saw me, his small eyes lit up and we kissed.



Tashnaksutiun leaders gathered in Erzurum for the 8th Congress; Agnuni is seated in the middle row, third from the right, with his arms crossed, 1914. (AGBU Nubar Library)

Agnuni settled in Istanbul following the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. Initially, he advocated cooperation with the Committee of Union and Progress and established close ties with its leaders. Allegedly, during the 31 March Incident (April 13, 1909), he hid Talat Bey, one of the Unionist leaders, in his own home. This incident demonstrated the closeness of the alliance between the two movements at the time. In 1910-1911, he traveled to the United States, where he mobilized the Armenian diaspora and played a leading role in founding the Armenian Relief Society, which remains active to this day.

With the outbreak of the First World War, the changing political environment led to a breakdown in relations between the Tashnaksutiun and the Committee of Union and Progress. On the night of April 24, Agnuni was arrested at his home while hosting fellow party members. He was initially taken to the Central Prison in Istanbul, and later, like hundreds of other Armenian intellectuals, exiled to Ayaş, which was part of the Ankara province. After being held there for several months, he was put on a train to Diyarbakır along with other intellectuals. However, near Siverek, between Urfa and Diyarbakır, Agnuni and five fellow Armenian intellectuals were murdered by a band led by Hacı Tellal Hekimoğlu, nicknamed Hacı Onbaşı, who was affiliated with the Committee of Union and Progress's Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa (Special Organization).

## Khachig Boghosian

02

Born in 1875, doctor and psychiatrist Khachig Boghosian was taken from his home at number 22 on Bekar Street in the Şehit Muhtar neighborhood of Beyoğlu on the night of April 24, 1915. Boghosian began his education at the Getronagan School and later completed his medical training in Germany and Switzerland. In the early 20th century, while working as a respected psychiatrist in Europe, Boghosian decided to return to the Ottoman Empire to be with his family despite the growing political tensions. He settled in Istanbul and became the head of the psychiatry department at Surp Prgich Armenian Hospital. Boghosian, who also held various positions in the Armenian National Assembly, became one of the leading intellectuals of the capital with his scientific knowledge and social status.

Boghosian's life was also completely changed when he was taken from his home on April 24. Brought to the office of the Director of Public Security, İsmail Canbolat, Boghosian reminded him of his identity and profession by saying, "I am an Ottoman doctor." However, his efforts were in vain. Along with other Armenian intellectuals, he was sent first to the Central Prison, and later to Çankırı and Ayaş. Boghosian describes being brought before the court the day after arriving in Ankara, where he had been taken to stand trial, with the following words:

The next morning [June 25], they brought me before a Military Court, and after my identity was verified, they returned me to prison. A few days later, I appeared before the same military court and was interrogated. They asked me to explain a lecture I had given at the Association for Mental Illness in Paris. The (so-called) essence of the lecture was that the Turkish brain was degenerate and that it was impossible to produce a civilized race, etc., from the current generation. Of course, I denied having given such a lecture. They asked me questions about my scientific articles published in Armenian newspapers in Istanbul, in which I had written nothing harmful.

After months of imprisonment, Dr. Khachig Boghosian was released, but his freedom was short-lived. While preparing to return to Istanbul, he was arrested again, this time alongside Catholic Armenians from Ankara. While being transported to his death with a convoy near Ankara, he miraculously survived thanks to an order that arrived from the capital at the last moment. After a dangerous journey that lasted for days, he managed to reach Tarsus. Although a telegram dated October 14 stated that Boghosian was permitted to return to Istanbul, he never returned and decided to rebuild his life in Aleppo.

In Aleppo, he served as a doctor in the Ottoman Army. After the war, he devoted all his resources to reuniting the scattered Armenian community. He was among the founders of the Ramgavar (Armenian Democratic Liberal) Party in Syria and participated in the work of the Yeprad (Euphrates) newspaper. He pioneered the establishment of the Verjin Gulbenkian Maternity Hospital and the Boghos Gulbenkian School, contributing to the re-establishment of the Armenian community in Aleppo. Dr. Khachig Boghosian's life stands as a testament to how, despite being torn from the peak of his intellectual and medical career and dragged toward death, he survived and used his knowledge and experience to help rebuild a community.

## Apig Jambaz

03

Merchant Apig Jambaz was taken from his home at Martin Apartment building, number 24, on Mis Street in Beyoğlu on the night of April 24, 1915. After being held for a while in the same guardhouse where Vahram Torkomian was also detained, he was sent first to the Central Prison, and from there to Çankırı. Jambaz had a distinctive characteristic that, in Andonian's words, distinguished him from other exiles: He was a Turkophone Catholic Armenian. So confident in this identity, during his imprisonment in Çankırı, he repeatedly insisted to other prisoners that he was not "Armenian" but "Catholic" and therefore expected to be released. He objected to being called "Jambazian," insisting that his surname was simply "Jambaz."

His unwavering belief was not entirely unfounded. Indeed, as a result of diplomatic initiatives of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, an ally of the Ottoman Empire, and the Vatican, the Ottoman government had issued a decree exempting Catholic and Protestant Armenians from deportation. When this decree reached Çankırı, Apig Jambaz was officially released on August 10, 1915.

Relying on his Catholic faith and the release document in his possession, Jambaz decided not to wait for the convoy accompanied by security guards. Instead he set out alone from Çankırı to



Martin Apartment, number 24, on Mis Street. (Photo: Can Candan)

Ankara in a rented car. However, this would be his final journey. He was ambushed and killed between Tüney and Kalecik by a band led by the Kurdish Alo, who controlled the region at the time and was known to be used by the state for unofficial operations.

The tragedy in his story did not end with his murder. Weeks later, the Ministry of the Interior, which had authorized his release, sent telegrams to the Ankara Province officially inquiring about the “whereabouts” and “reasons for the disappearance” of this Catholic Armenian merchant whose fate remained unknown. Jambaz, officially a free citizen, had been killed on roads left unchecked by the state, by a band that the state turned a blind eye to.

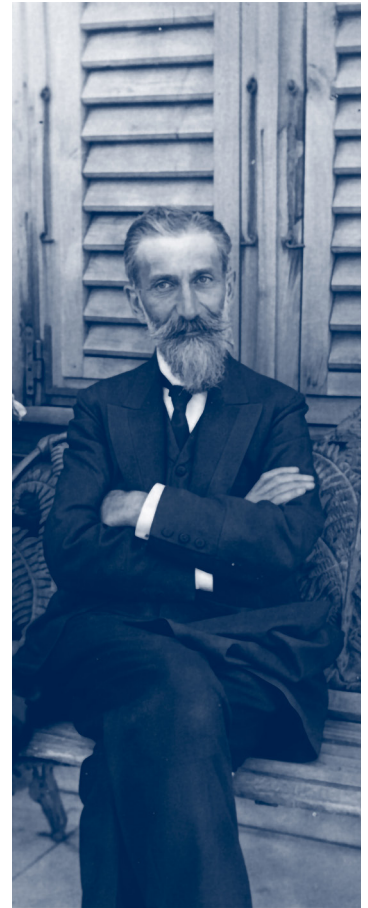
## Vahram Torkomian

04

Vahram Torkomian, a physician, medical historian, and writer born in Üsküdar in 1858, was taken from his home at number 23 on Zambak Street (formerly Taksim Street) in Beyoğlu on April 24, 1915. In 1876, he graduated at the top of his class from the Surp Khach (Holy Cross) School in Üsküdar. At the age of 21, he went to Paris to study medicine with a scholarship he received from the French government. After graduating, he returned to Istanbul and began practicing medicine. He quickly gained recognition for both his professional achievements and his philanthropy. His research that revealed the effect of karabaş flower (French lavender) in the treatment of tuberculosis attracted significant attention. He served as the vice president of the Dersaadet Cemiyet-i Tibbiye-i Şahane (Imperial Medical Society of Istanbul) and left an important legacy for the Armenian medical community by founding the Pzhshgagan Miut'ıwn (Armenian Medical Union). His medical and social services were recognized with awards such as the Orders of the Mecidiye and the French Officier d'Académie.

In addition to his work in the field of medicine, he actively contributed to Armenian cultural life serving as a board member of the Ottoman Armenian Publishing Society and as president of the celebration committee for the 1500th anniversary of the Armenian alphabet and the 400th anniversary of Armenian printing. He also published the first volume of Eremia Chelebi Komurjian's work Sdamboloy Badmutiun (History of Istanbul).

On April 24, 1915, like other intellectuals, he was arrested and exiled to Çankırı. At the Eskişehir Train Station along the exile



Vahram Torkomian. (Vahram Torkomyan, Unutulunan Geçmiş: İstanbullu Bir Doktorun Üsküdar'dan Paris'e Yolculuğu, Aras Yayıncılık, 2024)

route, historian, writer, and military official of the period, Ahmet Refik Altınay, recounts his testimony with the following words:

Things were happening in İstanbul too. Train after train Armenian intellectuals and artists were being sent to remote villages of Anatolia. One evening, a full train arrived, and I watched from the station. They were all familiar faces I knew and recognized: Diran Kelekian, Pozant Kechiyan, Torkumian...

The Ministry of the Interior's telegram dated May 7, 1915 granted permission for the release of eight prisoners, including Vahram Torkomian, and allowed them to return to İstanbul. Thus, he became one of the few individuals, along with Gomidas Vartabed, who were able to return from Çankırı and therefore survive.

After returning from Çankırı, Torkomian resumed his medical practice in İstanbul. He was particularly involved in the treatment of Gomidas Vartabed's mental illness. In November 1918, he founded Hay Garmir Khach (the Armenian Red Cross) with the aim of sheltering Armenian orphans, the sick, and the destitute, providing healthcare services, and training nurses. In 1922, he settled in Paris and spent the rest of his life there. He conducted research on Armenian medical history and authored various publications; he also published the second and third volumes of Komurjian's History of İstanbul. In the final years of his life, he wrote his memoirs under the title Antsugë Mortsug (Forgotten Past). Vahram Torkomian's memoirs were first published in Armenian in İstanbul in 2020, and the Turkish translation was published by Aras Publishing in 2024. Vahram Torkomian passed away in Paris in 1942 at the age of 84.

## Nazaret DagHAVARIAN 05

Nazaret DagHAVARIAN, a doctor and politician born in Sivas in 1862, was taken from his home at number 33 on what was then called Taksim Street (now Zambak Street) in Beyoğlu on the night of April 24, 1915. The house was later demolished during the construction of TarlaBaşı Boulevard. Sent to İstanbul for his education at the age of seven, DagHAVARIAN went to Paris at 16 to study at the Higher School of Agriculture and returned to İstanbul at 21 as an agricultural engineer. For a time, he worked as a teacher and school administrator in Sivas. At 23, he returned to İstanbul and became the principal of the ArAMIAN School in Kadıköy. At 25, he went back to Paris and enrolled in the Faculty of Medicine at the Sorbonne University.

After returning to İstanbul at the age of 37, he became the chief physician at Surp PrGICH Armenian Hospital and introduced modern medical practices there. That same year, he published his book Manreapanutiun (Bacteriology). In addition to his scientific work, he authored books on public health and hygiene. For his



Number 23 Zambak Street.  
(Photo: Can Candan)

contributions, he was awarded the Officier d'Académie medal by the French government.

Daghavarian was not only a scientist but also an influential community leader and politician. As the first secretary-general of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), of which he was a founding member, he played a key role in expanding the organization throughout the empire. He placed great importance on education, serving as an administrator and teacher in Armenian schools. In 1908, following the declaration of the Second Constitutional Era, he entered the Ottoman Parliament as a deputy for Sivas. As a co-founder of the Freedom and Accord Party, he led strong opposition to the policies of the Committee of Union and Progress government. In his parliamentary speeches, he frequently defended economic independence and the rights of all Ottoman communities. He expressed his views on this subject in a speech he delivered in the Ottoman Parliament as follows:

Until now, the people of Turkey had been divided into two groups. One group was the sovereign nation of Turkish Muslims, the other was the subjugated non-Muslims. [...] From now on, this country belongs not only to the Turks and Arabs but to all the people living here, including the non-Muslims.

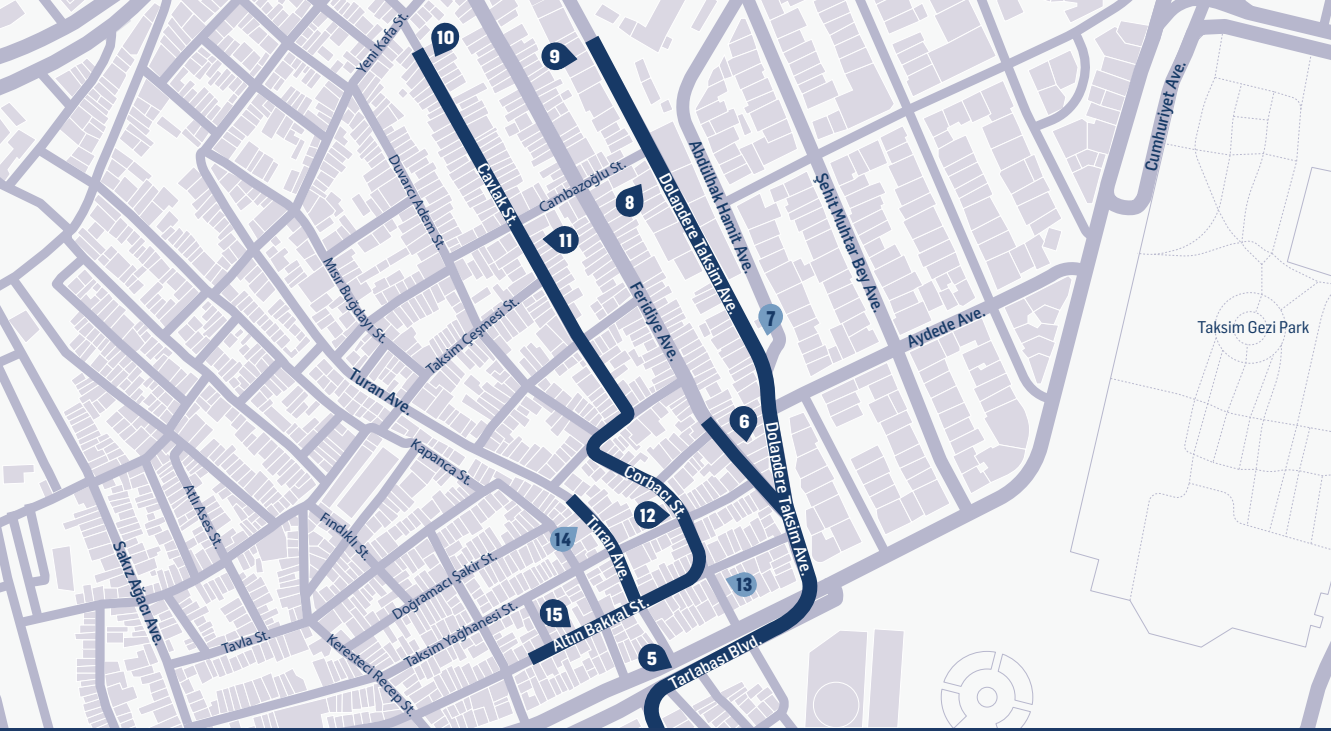
Throughout his life, DagHAVarian advocated for Ottoman citizenship, equal rights, and coexistence. He was arrested on the night of April 24, 1915, after being taken from his home. He was initially sent to Ayaş, then placed on a train to Diyarbakır under the pretext that he would stand trial there. However, near Siverek, in the Karacaören area, he was murdered along with five of his fellow Armenian intellectuals by a band led by Hacı Tellal Hekimoğlu, nicknamed Hacı Onbaşı, which operated under the control of the Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa.



Nazaret DagHAVarian. (Aram Andonian, *Exile, Trauma and Death - On the Road to Chankiri with Komitas Vartabed, Gomidas Institute - Tekeyan Cultural Association*, 2010, p. 20)



Taksim Square and Topçu Kışlası (Artillery Barracks), 1930s. (SALT Research, Salih Alkan Collection)



## Piuzant Kechian

06

Born in 1859 in Kumkapı, Istanbul, journalist Piuzant Kechian was taken from his apartment at number 18 on Feridiye Avenue in Taksim on the night of April 24, 1915. He began his journalism career at a young age at the Masis newspaper, later serving as editor-in-chief at the Arevelk (East) newspaper. He became an important media figure among Ottoman Armenians with the Piuzantion (Byzantium) newspaper he founded in 1896. Published for 22 years, this newspaper became one of the longest-running publications of the Armenian press in Istanbul. Kechian also made his mark in Ottoman press history as one of the 12 founding members of the Matbuat-ı Osmaniye Cemiyeti (Ottoman Press Society), established in 1908.

The most critical turning point in Kechian's life occurred in 1915 when he was arrested and exiled to Çankırı. In the early days of exile, Piuzant Kechian was among a group of eight individuals, including Vahram Torkomian and Gomidas Vartabed, who were released from Çankırı and allowed to return to Istanbul.

After his return, at a time when Armenian intellectuals were being massacred across Anatolia, Kechian drew criticism for sending a congratulatory letter to İsmail Canbolat, who had been appointed under-secretary to the Ministry of the Interior at the time. During the same period, his support for initiatives aimed at severing the ties between Istanbul Armenian Patriarchate and the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin, along with his role in efforts to weaken the institutional structure of the Patriarchate, led to his portrayal within the Armenian community as a "conciliatory" and even a "pro-regime" figure.

Soon after, he moved to Plovdiv in Bulgaria, where he remained until the end of the war. In his memoirs, Armenian Patriarch Zaven Der Yeghiayan claimed to have suspected that Kechian was acting as a government agent, alleging that he sent information from Plovdiv to the Istanbul police under the pseudonym "Kadri." Piuzant Kechian, who published his memoirs of exile in 1922, remained at the center of these controversies throughout his life. He passed away in Istanbul on June 29, 1927, and was buried in the Şişli Armenian Cemetery.

## Sarkis Krikor Shahinian

07

Sarkis Krikor Shahinian, a restaurant owner born in Kiğı, Bingöl, was taken from his home in Taksim Valideçeşme (present-day Dolapdere-Taksim Avenue) on April 24, 1915. Having migrated from his hometown to Istanbul, Shahinian built a new life for himself and became a well-regarded tradesman. Like many of his compatriots from Kiğı, he upheld the town's reputation for culinary expertise and restaurant management. The restaurant he operated was located in the basement of Afrika Han on Büyükdere Street, one of Beyoğlu's busiest thoroughfares.

Shahinian's quiet life came to an abrupt end on April 24, 1915, when he was taken from his home and arrested. Like hundreds of Armenian intellectuals, politicians, and community members rounded up across Istanbul, he was first exiled to Çankırı. After being held there for about two and a half months, he was sent to Ankara, reportedly en route to Deir ez-Zor. However, his journey ended at the Ankara Prison. Following a month of imprisonment, Shahinian was murdered along with other Armenians in the convoy near the village of Beynam, a few hours away from Ankara.

Weeks after Sarkis Shahinian was murdered, on August 25, 1915, a decision was issued stating that he had been pardoned on the condition that he not return to Istanbul. However, this decision never reached him, because he had already been killed.

## Hovhannes Artin Hanesian

08

Hovhannes Artin Hanesian, a watchmaker living in Pera, was taken from his house—then numbered 107 (now 63)—on what was known at the time as Valideçeşme, today called Dolapdere-Taksim Avenue, on the night of April 24, 1915. A skilled artisan, Hanesian contributed to the city's social and commercial life through his craft. He was arrested as part of the Committee of Union and Progress government's operation targeting prominent members of the Armenian community.

After initial interrogation and detention in Istanbul, he was exiled to Çankırı. After a short wait there, convoys began transporting people to their new places of exile. Hovhannes Hanesian was placed in a convoy reportedly headed for Deir ez-Zor via Ankara. Held for about a month in Ankara Prison, the group, including Armenians from Ankara, was taken out in mid-August. They were later massacred in remote valleys by bands organized by the Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa.

Shortly after his murder, on August 25, 1915, the Ministry of the Interior sent a telegram to the Kastamonu Governorate stating that Hanesian's name had been inadvertently omitted from the pardon list issued on August 4. The telegram ordered his release on condition that he not return to Istanbul. However, the response from the Kastamonu authorities rendered this order meaningless: "The aforementioned person was sent to Ankara weeks ago."

## Shavarsh Panosian

09

Shavarsh Panosian was born in Sivas. On April 24, 1915, he was arrested after being taken from his home in the building at number 123 (now 81) in Valideçeşme, across from Taksim Talimhane, and sent to Ayaş. He was released when it became clear that he had been arrested in place of his son and returned to Istanbul.

## Tateos Keoseyan

10

Tateos Keoseyan, a well-known fez merchant in Çemberlitaş, one of Istanbul's bustling commercial centers, was arrested and taken from his home at number 88 on Çaylak Street in Taksim Feridiye on the night of April 24, 1915. He was exiled to Çankırı and released approximately three and a half months later. Four wealthy Armenian detainees—Keoseyan, Hagop Korian, banker Hovhannes Terlemezian, and dentist Vahan Altunian—were reportedly released after large bribes were allegedly paid on their behalf in Istanbul. These individuals were among a small group who benefited from this privilege.

In an official list dated August 4, the Ministry of the Interior approved their release and return to the capital. However, they were held in Çankırı for some time due to claims that the roads were unsafe. On August 19, they departed Çankırı for Ankara as a separate group, following a 24-person convoy accompanied by the gendarmerie. At that time, massacres of Armenians were ongoing in Ankara. Despite having official permits in hand, the group was redirected to Aleppo instead of Istanbul, following the intervention of Ankara's Acting Governor, Atıf Bey. However, the four men managed to notify their contacts in the capital about their situation. In response, the Ministry of the Interior sent a telegram to Kayseri, ordering their return to Istanbul. By the time the order arrived, the group had already resumed their journey. Finally, upon reaching Gülek Station in Tarsus, they made another appeal. A second telegram was sent, and this time, their return to Istanbul was successfully secured.

The group reached Istanbul on October 5, 1915.



Çaylak Street. (Photo: Can Candan)

## Levon Aghababian

11

Levon Aghababian, an educator and writer born in Bitlis in 1887, was taken from his home at number 30 on Çaylak Street in Taksim Feridiye on the night of April 24, 1915. He completed his primary education at the Sanasarian School in Erzurum, one of the most respected Armenian institutions of the time. This school, which aimed to train qualified teachers and community leaders for Armenian schools in Anatolia followed an elite curriculum based on the German education system and played a decisive role in Aghababian's intellectual development. After graduation, he devoted himself to the advancement of communities in Anatolia through education, in line with the ideals of his school.

Between 1908 and 1914, he worked as a mathematics teacher and school principal in Kütahya, home to approximately four thousand Armenians, and in Akşehir, with a population of nearly five thousand Armenians. He not only worked in existing schools but also established his own private school in Kütahya, which he managed for three years.

In addition to his work as an educator, Aghababian was on the writing staff of the Azadamard (Freedom Fight) newspaper, the main publication organ of the Tashnaksutiun in Istanbul. Through his writings, he actively participated as an intellectual in the Ottoman political and social debates of the early 20th century.

This productive life, dedicated to the community, suffered a severe blow when Aghababian was arrested on the night of April 24, 1915, and exiled to Çankırı. After being held here for months, on August 19, 1915, he was sent with a second convoy of 24 intellectuals, to Deir ez-Zor. However, before reaching Ankara, they were ambushed and murdered in the vicinity of Elmadağ.

## Arisdakes Kasbarian

12

Born in Adana in 1861, Arisdakes Kasbarian was a lawyer, writer, and merchant. On April 24, 1915, he was taken from his home at number 15 on Eğri Street (now Çorbacı Street) in Tarlabaşı, Beyoğlu. He was a lawyer known for his mastery of the Ottoman legal system. After settling in Istanbul at the age of 30, he practiced law at his office in Voyvoda Han in Galata, quickly earning respect in the legal circles. He became especially well known for compiling the often complex and ever-changing Ottoman laws and regulations.

Kasbarian authored several important resources for lawyers and merchants in Ottoman Turkish, such as Mecma-i Lahika-i Kavanin (Collection of Legal Supplements), Hukuk Müşaviri (Legal Advisor), and Cüzdan-ı Kavanin-i Osmaniye (Handbook of



Number 15, Çorbacı Street.  
(Photo: Can Candan)

Ottoman Laws). These works reflected his lifelong dedication to the idea of law and order. In addition to his professional activities, he played an active role in the Armenian community and represented his hometown of Adana as a delegate in the Armenian National Assembly. He also wrote articles for newspapers such as *Manzume-i Efkâr* (Course of Ideas), *Mecmua-ı Ahbar* (Collection of News), and *Piuzantion* (Byzantium), and published his own newspaper called *Pasdapan* (Lawyer).

Despite being known for his opposition to the revolutionaries, Kasbarian was arrested by the Committee of Union and Progress government on April 24, 1925, accused of "being a member of Armenian committees and publishing propaganda against Turkey." Although he was sent to Ayaş after his arrest, it was decided some time later that he would be released, thanks to the efforts of his family and friends. However, due to a bureaucratic error, the telegram ordering his release was sent to Çankırı instead of Ayaş. As a result, rather than being released, Kasbarian was transferred to Ankara, where he was murdered. The life of a jurist who had dedicated his life to compiling and interpreting Ottoman laws thus ended in a chain of lawlessness and negligence.

## Khajag (Karekin Chakalian)

13

Born in Gyumri in 1867, Karekin Chakalian, one of the most influential figures in Armenian intellectual and political life, was taken from his home on Yoğurtçu Faik Street in Taksim Feridiye on the night of April 24, 1915. Chakalian, who would later be known as Khajag, began his education in Gyumri and continued it in Etchmiadzin, completing his studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Geneva.

As a member of the Tashnaksutiun, Karekin Chakalian wrote important articles in the party's publications. In his works such as "Taxes in Turkey," "What is Nationalism?," "The Reasons for the Armenian Movement," and "Towards Federation," he discussed in depth the structural problems of the Ottoman Empire, issues of national identity, and ideas about the future of the Armenians.

When he was taken from his home and arrested on the night of April 24, 1915, he left behind his wife, Shushanik, and two children. His place of exile was Ayaş. From Ayaş, he was set out with Agnuni, Rupen Zartarian, Sarkis Minassian, Dr. Nazaret Daghavarian, and Jihangiul (Harutiun Jangiulian) to be sent to Diyarbakır. During their journey, at the Konya Ereğli train station, he sent a short farewell letter to his wife in Istanbul through an Armenian acquaintance:



Khajag (Teotig, Hushartsan: Abril Dasnëmegi, O. Arzuman, 1919, p. 5)

My love, they are taking me far away, far from you, towards Dikranagert [Diyarbakir]. With me are Agnuni, Zartar, Sarkis Minassian, Dr. Daghavarian, and Jihangiul, prisoners from Ayaş.

We met an Armenian at the Ereğli station who promised to bring you this letter. Take good care of yourself and my daughters Nunus and Alos. We don't know why they are taking us. But I am very hopeful that we will see each other again.

Well... See you... I kiss you and my Godanlar [my children].

Yours... K. Khajag

The group never reached Diyarbakir. They were murdered in the vicinity of Karacaören, near Siverek, by a band affiliated with the Special Organization.

## Serovpe Noradungian

14

Serovpe Noradungian, an educator and Ottoman language teacher born in Siirt in 1884, was taken from his home on what was formerly Macar, now Turan Avenue in Bülbül Neighborhood of Beyoğlu on April 24, 1915. After completing his primary education in his hometown, he attended the Sanasarian School in Erzurum, one of the most important Armenian educational institutions of the time. This prestigious institution, which aimed to train teachers and community leaders for Armenian schools throughout the empire using modern methods, played an important role in shaping his intellectual identity. He then went to Istanbul for higher education and studied at the Darülfünun (Ottoman Imperial University).

He began his career at the Sanasarian School, from which he had graduated. From 1903 to 1915, he taught Ottoman Turkish there for 12 years. Noradungian was known for his expertise in Ottoman Turkish grammar and contributed to the education of a new generation of Armenian intellectuals in this field. Noradungian was not only an educator, but also played an active role in the political life of his community. He was a member of the Tashnaksutiun and served as a delegate to the Armenian National Assembly, representing his native region of Siirt.

When he was taken from his home and arrested on April 24, 1915, he was first brought to a guardhouse in Tarlabaşı and held with a group that included well-known intellectuals such as Rupen Zartarian and Piuzant Kechian. After a period of waiting, he was transferred to the Ayaş Prison, which was under the jurisdiction of the Governorate of Ankara.

Following their arrival in Ayaş, the prisoners were denied all communication with the outside world for three weeks. Once the ban was lifted, it was stipulated that all letters and cards to be sent must be written only in Turkish. This was a serious obstacle for prisoners who did not know how to write in Turkish or did not know it well enough. In response, a "writers' group" was formed, consisting of Smpad Piurad, Serovpe Noradungian, Hampartsum Hampartsumian, and Piuzant Bozajian. Letters, usually sent to families, were written on postcards, and great care was taken to ensure they did not contain political content. The cards were first handed over to the Ayaş police, then sent collectively to the Department of Public Security in Istanbul, and only after passing through this final censorship were they delivered to their addresses. After nearly three months in captivity, Noradungian was taken out of the prison in July 1915 with a group of 30 prisoners and was murdered near Ankara.

## Hagop Avedisian (Ardzruni)

15

Hagop Avedisian, a politician and writer born in Van in 1873, was taken from his home at number 16 on Altın Bakkal Street in the Şehit Muhtar neighborhood of Taksim on April 24, 1915. Avedisian, who used the pseudonym “Ardzruni” from one of the historical dynasties of his homeland as part of his political identity, joined the ranks of the Social Democrat Hunchak Party in Istanbul at the age of 17 and quickly became one of the party’s leading figures.

His role in the Bâb-ı Âli (Sublime Porte) demonstration organized by the Hunchaks in 1895 was a turning point in his life. After the demonstration, he was sentenced to “death in absentia,” forcing him to leave Ottoman lands. During his years of exile, which took him to Bulgaria, Athens, Egypt, Iran, and the Caucasus, he never ceased his political activities and intellectual production. During this period, he founded the liberal and nationalist-leaning newspaper Mshag (Cultivator), published in Tiflis, and became its chief editor. However, he was arrested again here and moved to Van after his release.

Hagop Avedisian was not only a member of the Hunchak Party, but also a figure who worked for the common interests of the Armenian revolutionary movement. So much so that when Vartkes Serengiulian, one of the Tashnak leaders, was apprehended wounded in Van in 1903, Avedisian himself was also arrested on the grounds of collaborating with him. After his release, Ardzruni went to Bulgaria and worked as a teacher. He returned to Istanbul with the proclamation of the Constitution in 1908 and began to continue his political struggle on legal grounds. During this period, he was elected to the Armenian National Assembly as the representative for Gedikpaşa.

When he was arrested and taken from his home on April 24, 1915, he was initially in the convoy bound for Çankırı. However, at a checkpoint in Kalecik, it was reportedly discovered that he was on the “wrong list,” and he was instead brought back to Ankara and then sent to Ayaş, a location known for its harsher conditions. After being held there for approximately three months, he was murdered in late July 1915 in Elmadağ, near Ankara, along with other Armenian intellectuals.



Number 16 on Altın Bakkal Street in the Şehit Muhtar neighborhood. (Photo: Can Candan)



Taksim Square, 1909. (Constantinople.cards)



Taksim Square, fire station 1912. (Photo: Albert Harlingue, SALT Research)

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## 23.5 MEMORY WALKS

### Exile of Armenian Intellectuals, April 24, 1915: Istanbul Taksim - Feridiye

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Taksim Square and Topçu Kışlası (Artillery Barracks), 1930s.

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