

materials ensued, crude and unprofessional in the beginning, followed by well-written and professionally presented books and articles, mostly by non-Turkish hired historians. During the 1980s, while the information gap about the Armenian Genocide was narrowing, between Turkish society on the one side and on the other the Diasporan Armenians along with the rest of the world, that dichotomy was being transferred onto a more dangerous plain.

James Wertsch discusses a similar process in the history of the Soviet Union, the selective approach that emphasized some events and left out others, and the channeling of that history into education in order to inculcate a uniform collective memory and thus a uniform Soviet identity. Wertsch follows that process up to the collapse of the Soviet Union: "[T]he transformation involved was particularly wrenching because it began with a context of tight state control over collective remembering and moved to one that sometimes seems to be characterized primarily by chaos."⁶ By introducing a new variation into its historical narrative, Turkey was negotiating memory. But what would happen if the government were to completely lose its legitimacy? It is not unlikely that the libertarian Turkish intellectuals who are currently challenging the official line in Turkish history and demanding reconciliation with the past, would save Turkish society from experiencing such chaos. The transition to a democratic society and government would be bumpy but not chaotic.

⁶ Wertsch, *Voices of Collective Remembering* (2002), p. 173.