Victimization, religiosity and patriotism

Rustamdjan Hakimov (University of Lausanne& WZB), Seyhun Orcan Sakalli (University of Lausanne), and Max Schaub (WZB)

Introduction

Religious identity demarcated the boundaries between different groups living in the Ottoman Empire. Ethnic identity was a construct that was becoming more and more salient among both the Armenian and Muslim/Turkish intelligentsia in the late 19th century and early 20th century but for common people religion was the dimension on which intragroup relations and comparisons were based. Moreover, religious propaganda was used by the Ottoman officials during the genocide to reduce the resistance of local Muslims to deportation and increase their participation in massacres where they took place. One hypothesis to test is whether Armenians whose family members were subject to persecution during the genocide are more religious today, and how religious identity relates to patriotism measures in Armenia today. Another hypothesis to test, if there is enough variation in the data, is whether persecution had a differential effect on religiosity depending on whether one's ancestors were active in the Ottoman politics, i.e., members of ARF (Armenian Revolutionary Federation) or SDHP (Social Democrat Hunchakian Party) given the fact that ethnic identity was already more salient for political elites.

Population and sample

We aim to recruit a representative sample of the Armenian working-age population. The interviews are conducted by a reputable research institute. Sampling follows a stratified multi-level clustered random sampling design.

Our starting population is the voting-age population according to the voter register, which has about 2.5 million entries. Our primary sampling unit/clusters is the election precinct (there

are a total of 1,959 election precincts in Armenia). To ensure a good geographic spread, we formed nine strata: one for the capital, and one each for rural/urban zones in four geographical areas (NE, NW, SE, SW) of the country. Within each stratum, we determined the number of PSUs to be sampled in accordance with the relative number of voters in this stratum relative to the total. We then randomly selected a number of PSUs. The probability for a PSU of being selected was set to the relative number of voters relative to their total number in a stratum. Within each selected PSU/cluster, 12 individuals are recruited, aiming for a total sample of about 2,600 observations.

The recruitment at the PSU-level follows a random-walk protocol. Starting with a randomly chosen number of steps and direction, enumerators recruit respondents in every 4th dwelling. Within-household selection is conducted by entering the identifying information of all household members aged 18 and above into the CAPI device, and have the device randomly pick one household member. In case the household or selected household member is absent, three contact attempts are made to conduct the interview. After a failed third attempt, the house to the left of the selected household is chosen.

Measurements

Victimization

We measure victimization with questions on victimization during the war over Karabach and during the genocide.

Regarding the war over Nagorno Karabakh, we ask:

1. Were any of your close family members (parents, siblings, uncle/aunts and their children) severely injured or killed during the conflict [over Nagorno Karabakh]? [1992killed, scored as '1' if a, '0' if b or c, missing if d]
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Don't know

d. Refuse to say

We may worry, however, that such recent victimization is not randomly distributed. Individuals whose family members we count as victims are likely to have self-selected into the conflict in non-random ways. In order to assess the severeness of such selection into treatment, we will produce balance statistics comparing non-victimized with victimized victims.

While these statistics may alleviate some of the concerns with selection, we argue that a better---because plausibly exogenous---measure of victimization is affectedness by the genocide. We argue that this measure is as-if-randomly distributed in the present-day population of Armenia. We do so following the following logic. On the one hand, we may assume that those victimized during the genocide were systematically different--- a concern that we address with inclusion of historical control variables discussed below. However, even if the initial distribution of historically victimized and non-victimized was different, it is highly likely that the passing of time will have led to a stark reduction of this association. The reason is that the genocide led to the shuffling of Armenian populations from various backgrounds, who had to re-establish a livelihood on the territories of present-day Armenia (Aghanian 2007).

Furthermore, during the 70 years of Soviet rule of Armenia that ensued, maintaining links to the West was seen as deviant and strongly discouraged. Combined, this means that the mixing of the populations in marriage of individuals with and without relatives who suffered during the genocide plausibly occurred largely at random over several generations. Conceptually speaking, we are now at the third or fourth stage of a Markov-chain process, were we may assume that convergence to the steady state will have already substantially proceeded (Levin, Peres, and Wilmer 2009). Concretely, what we claim is that Armenians in present-day Armenia mixed during the Soviet period independently of whether they their families were victimized or not.

We measure affectedness by the genocide with the following questions:

2. Were any of these family members [who were alive before the genocide] killed during the genocide? [genocide_killed, scored as '1' if a, '0' if b or c, missing if d]
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Don't know
    d. Refuse to say

3. If yes, how many were killed?
    a. [number] [genocide_killed_number]

4. How many survived?
    a. [number] [genocide_survived_number]

We will use the binary indicator whether a relative was killed during the as our main measure of historical victimization. As alternative measures, we will use a categorical variable of the numbers or relatives killed that takes four values: 1, 2-5, 5-10, 11 or more. As a third indicator, we will use the ratio of the family members killed and those who survived.

Religiosity

We measure religiosity by the following questions:
1. Do you belong to a religion or religious denomination? If yes, which one? [religious_denomionation]
    a. No: do not belong to a denomination
    b. Armenian Apostolic Church
    c. Other Christian
    d. Jew
    e. Muslim
    f. Yazidism
    g. Other

2. Apart from weddings and funerals, about how often do you attend religious services days? [religious_frequency1]

    a. More than once a week

    b. Once a week

    c. Once a month

    d. Only on special holy days

    e. Once a year

    f. Less often

    g. Never, practically never

3. "During a normal week, about how many times do you pray? [religious_frequency2]

    a. More than once a week

    b. Once a week

    c. Once a month

    d. Only on special holy days

    e. Once a year

    f. Less often

    g. Never, practically never

We aggregate the answers to form variabl "religious".

Patriotism

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Time in school should be used to teach pupils patriotism, even if this means that less time is available for teaching other subjects (like math)." [patriotism_school]

    a. Strongly agree

    b. Agree

    c. Disagree

    d. Strongly disagree

2. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Time in school should be used to teach pupils patriotism, even if this means that less time is available for teaching other subjects (like math)." [Patriotism_school]

    a. Strongly agree

    b. Agree

        c. Disagree

        d. Strongly disagree

We aggregate the answers to form variable "Patriotism".

Political membership

4. Was any of them member of the Dashnaktsutyun/ARF or the Hnchak Social-Democratic Party (SDHP)? [1910arf_sdhp]
    a. Yes
    a. No

The variable political_membership1910 is equal 1 if the answer is yes, and 0 otherwise

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Armenians whose family members were subject to persecution during the genocide are more religious today
We test effect of victimization measure on religiosity variable.

Hypothesis 2: More religious Armenians are more patriotic

We test effect of religiosity variable on the patriotism variable.

Hypothesys 3: Persecution had a differential effect on religiosity depending on whether one's ancestors were active in the Ottoman politics, i.e., members of ARF (Armenian Revolutionary Federation) or SDHP (Social Democrat Hunchakian Party) given the fact that ethnic identity was already more salient for political elites

We test the heterogeneous treatment effect of victimization on religiosity depending on the variable political_membership1910.

References

Aghanian, Denise. 2007. *The Armenian Diaspora: Cohesion and Fracture*. Lanham [Md.];
Toronto: University Press of America.

Levin, David Asher, Yuval Peres, and Elizabeth Lee Wilmer. 2009. *Markov Chains and
Mixing Times*. Providence, R.I.: American Mathematical Society.