



THE UK ARMENIAN DIASPORA 1913-1919

Vahe Boghosian - UCL - BA History


*Why UK-Armenian Diaspora? Why
during World War 1?*



Academia and the Genocide




What is Diaspora?

- Armstrong – Archetypal and situational
 - Panossian's Ethnie – 'The Armenians'
 - Modern Diaspora and migrant communities
 - Diaspora formation
 - Smith – Classical diaspora
- 

Ethno-cultural communities whose members are presently located in more than one state” - Smith




What is a trade diaspora?

- Aslanian – From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean
 - Apolitical networks vs political hierarchy
 - Cross-cultural brokers
- 

*“Communities of merchants living
among aliens in associated networks” -
Curtin*



What is Diaspora nationalism ?

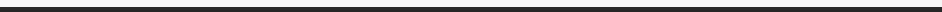
- Anderson – Long-distance nationalism
 - Smith's diaspora nationalism process
 - Establish unity of the community
 - Reuniting the community to the homeland
 - Inspiring the community via ethno history
 - Creation of a national destiny to chart the way forward
- 

Homeland

- Bank of symbolism
- *Hairenik*



Historical Context




Historiography & Sources



*UK-
Armenians
on the eve of
World War
1*

- Armenian United Association of London (AUAL)
- Manchester Young Men's' Club (MYMC)
- 'Evening News' article on foreign clubs - summary

“The engrossing calls of business are apt to create an aloofness from national affairs” – Lt. Col. Gregory Markar




“This Association of ours is not a mutual admiration society. If its members are not to be at liberty to point out the weak spots in our armour, it is manifestly obvious we shall never successfully meet our opponents” - Balian


*UK-
Armenians
on the eve of
World War
1*

- Inspiring community via ethno-history → Elite activity
- Trade diaspora elite politics → Individual links
- Feeling in the community → pro reform


“Our best and ultimate interest lies in our continuing to be subjects of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan”- Balian



*“It is only through the means of such an association that units of our nationality can get to know each other and combine for national purposes” –
Lt. Col Gregory Markar*



Outbreak of World War 1

- 1914 Alien Restriction Act and the AUAL
- 

‘And when we view the aspect of the commercial position of Armenians in the thriving colony of Manchester, we are filled with dismay as to the financial outcome affecting a body who have carried on for the good of those country ... The transactions of this colony reach the colossal figure of about four millions sterling annually, and how do we find so useful, industrious and peaceful body treated?’

Registration of Armenians




‘When the party so applying is not personally known to the Secretary, or to any member of the Committee, he or she should produce either a personal reference from a responsible member of the Armenian Community who is known to the Committee.’

*The UK-
Armenian
response to
the
initiation of
Genocidal
policies*

- Revelation of the hierarchy that unknowingly diffused downwards
- Boghos Nubar's "supervision"

“It seems to me that not all Armenians have confidence in Boghos Nubar Pasha. Even here, in London, a group of influential Armenians (these are not insignificant people; some of them are millionaires) told me they do not trust Boghos Nubar... They all say that Nubar cannot be considered as the representative of all Armenians” – Dr Zavriev to Nubar Pasha

“Before taking leave, I [Boghos Nubar] insisted that it was necessary to engage in active propaganda, presently only through the press and speeches in support of our cause”



‘The recent output of literature dealing with Armenia is, doubtless, largely due to the publication, some three years ago, of Ararat, which circulating as it does among the more educated and responsible sections of the public, has enabled them to inform themselves for the benefit of those with less leisure and fewer opportunities’

Representative Armenian Committee of Manchester.

HON. SEC.
KAMBERIAN,
40, COOPER STREET,
Communications should be addressed

40, Cooper Street,
Manchester.

142749

JUL 22 916

July 20th. 1916.

TO His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

WE the undersigned members of the representative Armenian Committee of Manchester beg to submit the following statement in relation to Rassim Husni formerly Turkish Consul in Manchester:-

Rassim Husni and his son Houri Husni (the latter acting as mouth-piece for his father whose knowledge of English is limited) have since the outbreak of war from time to time given strong expression to their anti-Armenian feelings in various places speaking of the Armenians as a race in terms of the greatest contempt and justifying the well known Turkish policy of massacre and assassination.

THE Armenians in England have since the outbreak of war seriously compromised themselves from the point of view of the Turkish authorities by expressing their sympathies with the Allies not only by communications to the press but also by public addresses on the atrocities and in some cases by volunteering for the British Army.

MOST of all they have compromised themselves by making when applying for exemption from the disabilities imposed on

Representative Armenian Committee of Manchester.

HON. SEC.
KAMBERIAN,
40, COOPER STREET,
Communications should be addressed

40, Cooper Street,
Manchester.

19

B.

alien enemies by the Aliens Restriction Order declarations that they were opposed to the Turkish regime. About the time when these declarations were being generally signed by Armenians --- Rassim Husni met a number of representative Armenians and strongly deprecated and discouraged the signing of the declarations --- stating that the signatories were by signing exposing themselves to serious danger and that their relatives and friends in Turkey would suffer in consequence.

THE Armenians in England are mostly engaged in commerce and have in their hands an important proportion of the British trade with Turkey. The majority of them have relatives in Turkey and many of them have assets and property there of considerable value and have also large sums of money owing to them by customers in Turkey many of whom are also Armenians. Rassim Husni is himself a shipping merchant engaged in the shipping trade with Turkey and must be possessed of considerable information likely to be of value to the Turkish Government in any campaign against Armenians and in particular in the persecution of the relatives of pro Ally Armenians in England and the confiscation of their property.

SINCE the outbreak of the war and more particularly during the

The Representative Armenian Committee of Manchester.

Hon Sec.
H. KAMBERIAN.
40, COOPER STREET.

To whom all Communications should be addressed.

40, Cooper Street,
Manchester.

19

4.

(c) the stoppage of remittances from Turkey to Armenians in England in the manner described above

7. THE attitude of Rassin Husni in relation to Armenians has been a subject of consideration by the Armenian Committee for many months but hitherto they have not considered it necessary to take any active steps because they were persuaded that so long as he remained within British territory he would not be permitted to communicate with his Government or anyone else in Turkish territory in any manner likely to prejudice the Armenian community either in the United Kingdom or in Turkey.

8. THE statements which are made above are necessarily statements in general terms but if detailed evidence on specific points is required the undersigned will be ready to procure it.

Kevork Utichian

Archbishop of Armenians in Europe,

President,

Members.

Benvelian
Stephan Filipian

irkhis yaldesjian
Stephan Filipian
Stephan Filipian
Stephan Filipian

M. Manoukian
Chairman,

H. Kamberian
Hon. Secretary.

8. THE statements which are made above are necessarily statements in general terms but if detailed evidence on specific points is required the undersigned will be ready to procure it.

Kevork Utichian

Archbishop of Armenians in Europe,

President,

Members.

Benvelian
Stephan Filipian

irkhis yaldesjian
Stephan Filipian
Stephan Filipian
Stephan Filipian

M. Manoukian
Chairman,

H. Kamberian
Hon. Secretary.

“The Cessation of its social functions has given place to a far greater vitalising power which is being utilised towards the nation and the individual, and such activity was bound to spring to the surface in so colossal a struggle on the outcome of which hangs the destiny of Armenia and Armenians, nay their very existence”

“Miss Gulbenkian sweet and sympathetic voice ... was particularly brought out in the old Armenian song, Mer Hairenik, which touched the hearts of all Armenians present and culminated in a roar of applause when she unfurled the Red, Green and Blue, the Armenian flag”

ARMENIA'S DAY

Wednesday, JUNE 13TH, 1917.

IN AID OF THE

ARMENIAN REFUGEES (LORD MAYOR'S) FUND.

600,000
MEN.
WOMEN
AND
CHILDREN
MASSACRED.

*Government
Blue Book,
Decr 1916.*



ARMENIA

1,200,000
DEPORTED
AND
THEIR HOMES
DESTROYED
BY THE
TURKS AND
KURDS

HELP US TO SAVE THE REMNANT OF THIS BRAVE AND PERSECUTED PEOPLE

For further information about Flag Day apply to

THE HON. ORGANIZER, I. MADDOX STREET, REGENT STREET, W. 1.

Donations to

Armenian Refugees (Lord Mayor's) Fund, 96, Victoria Street, S.W.

ARMENIAN REFUGEES (LORD MAYOR'S) FUND, 96, VICTORIA ST., S.W.1.

APPEAL FOR ARMENIA


The success of Armenia's Flag-Day in London on June 13th was greatly diminished by the German Air-Raid upon the City of London. The amount obtained was thus less than had been anticipated, and quite insufficient to meet the many fresh calls upon the Armenian Refugees (Lord Mayor's) Fund. The Committee, therefore, urgently appeals for generous contributions to supplement the London Flag-Day Collections.

* * *

The need of further help for the stricken Armenian Refugees in the Caucasus, Syria, and Mesopotamia is great and urgent.

*“The giving out of a few
“fivers” or a few
hundred pounds is a
mere apology for
patriotism” – Invalid
officer*

*“Finance has played, is playing and will play a most importance part in... the resuscitation of Armenia” –
A.B.C*




*UK-
Armenians
in the
aftermath of
World War
1*

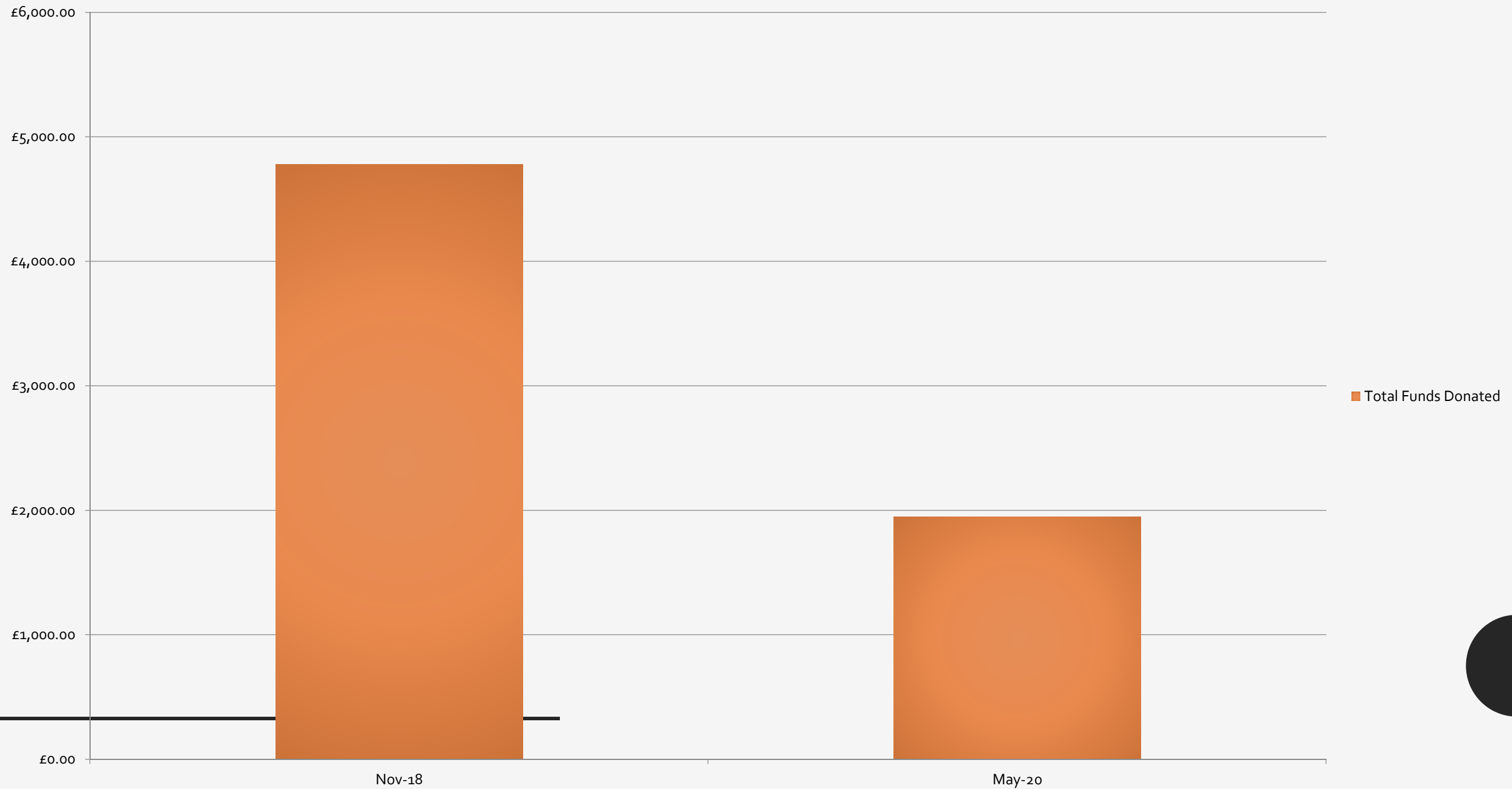
- January 1919 AUAL AGM report
- Highest number of meetings
- Anglo-Armenian Economic Association
- AUAL Branches in Hong Kong and Straights Settlements

“Our own general conviction that we Armenians cannot unite and act in harmony in our own national affairs has once more been disproved by the fact that we London Armenians meeting here today have unanimously endorsed the choice of our compatriots at Manchester” - Yeretzian

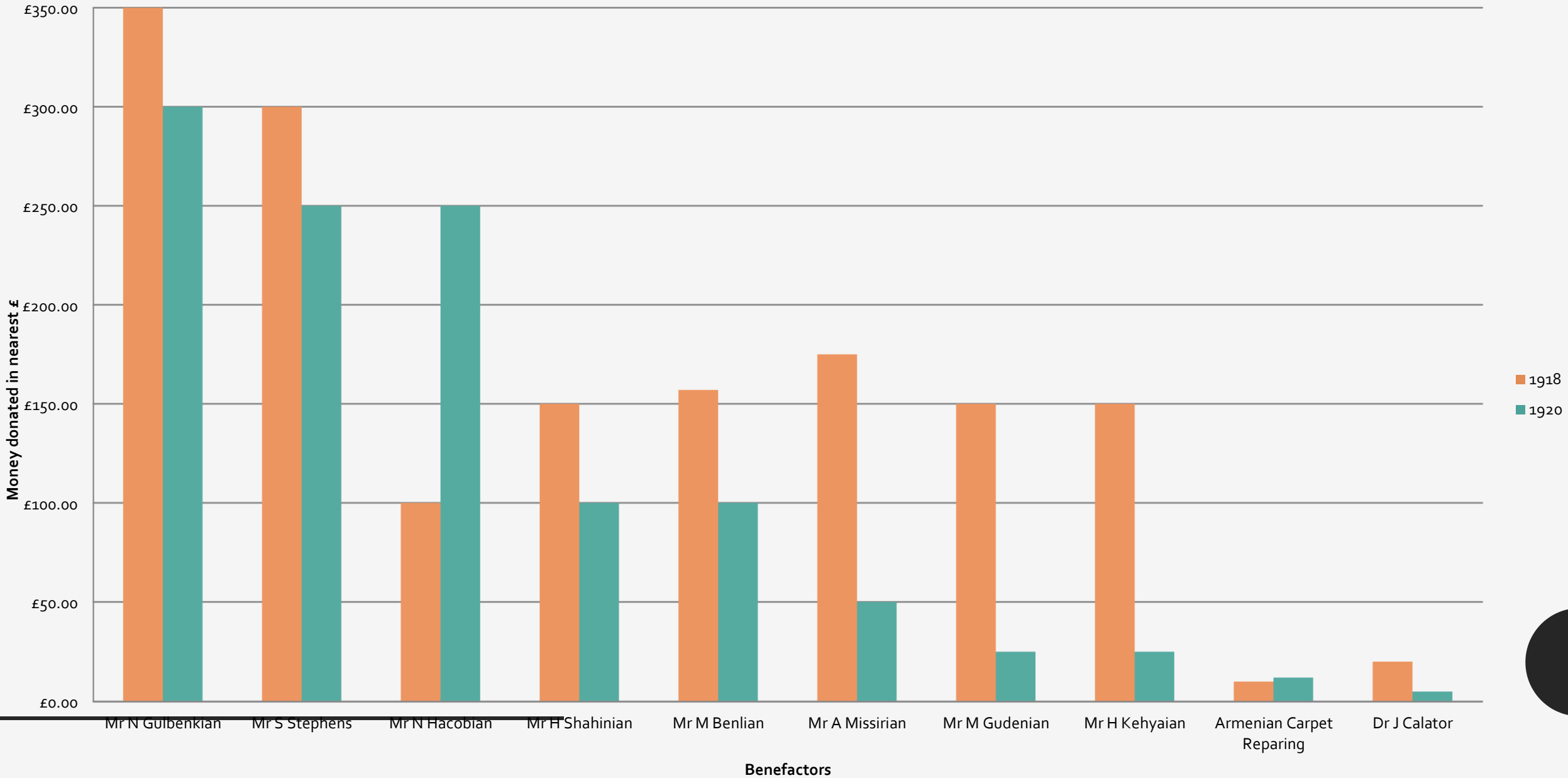
Armenian Information Bureau

- Aram Raffi
 - Varandian's address to the Labour Party Conference
 - On the Cross of Imperialism – Diana Abcar
 - The Armenian Church – Noel Buxton
- 

Total Funds Donated to the Armenian General Fund



Donations to General Armenian Fund November 1918 and May 1920 by the same benefactors



Conclusions

- Other factors of politicisation: Global trends, refugees
 - How did war affect the UK-Armenian community: established a patriotic bond and a sympathy to the homeland, a heightened desire for independence, and a fear for relatives and financial property
 - What does this case study emphasise? Political entrepreneurs
 - Strong linkage of financial states to political status as an element of trade diaspora politicisation
-
- 

The network is a free flowing structure and suited the Armenian businessmen; the hierarchy on the other hand suited Armenian patriots in attempts to assist the national destiny. The events of the war steadily compelled centralisation around community organisations and necessitated organised action in order for the community to assist with the national cause. The conversion also explains the specific political structure emerging from the politicisation which still emphasised individual over collective action and respected the positions of financially strong community members.

*“When a people begin to produce
and recognise leaders for
themselves they become a nation”
– Mr Malcolm*

