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CAUSES AND PREREQUISITES OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE AND GENOCIDAL ACTS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

(comparative analysis)

Abstract

The study of various examples of genocide is impossible without studying their causes and preconditions. Criminal regimes are guided by specific motives and narratives when implementing genocidal policies. The perpetrators of genocide attempt to justify their criminal actions against specific groups with ethnopolitical, religious, socioeconomic and other “justifications”. Modern genocide studies focuses on the comparative analysis of the causes and preconditions of various genocides, seeking to identify both their common features and specific characteristics.

The purpose of this article is to conduct a comparative analysis of the causes and preconditions of the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire and the genocidal acts committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Based on this goal, the objectives are to examine the discriminatory policies against the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire and the Christian population of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to explore the ideological preconditions for the crimes committed and to examine the preparatory processes that preceded them.

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Keywords: *Armenian Genocide, Ottoman Empire, Pan-Turkism, Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, genocidal acts.*

Introduction

Over the course of centuries, a system of government developed in the Ottoman Empire in which the Christian population was deprived of equal rights with Muslims. While the punishment for killing a Muslim by a Muslim was death, killing a non-Muslim by a Muslim was not subject to any punishment. The testimony of non-Muslims in Ottoman courts did not have the same evidentiary value as that of Muslims. Armenians, like other Christians of the empire, did not serve in the Ottoman army and were generally forbidden to have weapons.¹ Thus, in the Ottoman Empire, a disenfranchised status was formed for the Armenian population, which was effectively placed outside the law.²

Before the Ottoman conquest, Bosnia and Herzegovina was inhabited by two main groups: Serbs and Croats (Catholic Serbs), while the Muslim population was small. Although the Croats living in Bosnia were a minority, they nevertheless had their own state entities.³ After the establishment of Ottoman rule, the Christian peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina also began to be subjected to religious discrimination.

1. Discriminatory policies against the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire and the Christian population of Bosnia and Herzegovina

During the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II (1876–1909), along with mass pogroms, a policy of religious persecution and forced Islamization of the Armenian population of Western Armenia was carried out. As a result of this policy, some of the Armenian population was forcibly converted to Islam. In 1895, 40 Armenian villages were destroyed in the Erzurum Valley, their population was exterminated and only the inhabitants of three villages survived, which were forcibly Islamized.⁴ The Armenians who renounced the apostolic faith hoped that at least religious persecution against them would cease and they would receive equal rights with Muslims.⁵ However, the goal of Islamization was

¹ **Gunter** 2011, 2–3.

² **Gunter** 2011, 18.

³ Slavic peoples of South-Eastern Europe and Russia in the 18th century 2003, 62.

⁴ **Nersisyan** 1983, 83–84.

⁵ **Simonyan** 1986, 245.

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not to equalize the rights of former Christians, including Armenians, with Muslims, but to assimilate the latter.

With the establishment of Turkish rule, the demographic picture in Bosnia and Herzegovina began to change significantly, as a policy of Islamization of the Serbian population was pursued. As a result of this policy, some Serbs were also forced to convert to Islam in order to avoid religious persecution, as well as to enjoy the rights, economic and political privileges granted to Muslims.⁶ However, despite the conversion of some Serbs to Islam, Serbs continued to constitute a stable ethnic and religious majority in Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to the 1879 census, 42.87% of the population of Bosnia were Orthodox Serbs, 38.73% were Muslims, and 18.08% were Catholic Croats.⁷ Despite the Turkish authorities' policy of Islamization, Croats expressing separatist sentiments oriented themselves toward Zagreb, seeking to unite the Bosnian territories with the Croatian state, while Muslims were in the process of searching for their own identity. Most Muslims of Slavic descent, after adopting Islam, gradually began to identify themselves with the Turks, creating their own unique way of life and culture. Constantinople became a more familiar center for them than Belgrade or Zagreb.⁸ Thus, the so-called "Bosniaks" or "Bosnian Muslims" were not a separate ethnic group, but descendants of former Serbs and Croats who were Islamized during the Ottoman rule.

Despite their disenfranchised position, Armenians played a significant role in the development of the Ottoman Empire's economy, as they held leading positions in the country's crafts and trade.⁹ The German missionary and public figure J. Lepsius noted regarding the participation of Armenians in the trade of the Ottoman Empire that the bulk of import trade was controlled by the largest Armenian trading companies, which had their branches in the commercial and industrial centers of Europe. The bulk of the Ottoman gold imports through the empire's main ports, amounting to 15 million, was carried out by Armenian traders.¹⁰ Based on the fact that Muslims, and Turks in particular, who lacked certain knowledge and skills, considered crafts and trade to be unworthy

⁶ **Guskova** 2001, 220.

⁷ **Valev** 1996, 9.

⁸ **Ralić** 1992, 5.

⁹ **Sahakyan** 1990, 12.

¹⁰ **Lepsius** 1965, 247–248.

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spheres of activity for themselves and preferred military or government service, until the end of the 19th century, the economy of the Ottoman Empire was predominantly developed by non-Muslim peoples. At the same time, Muslims, primarily Turks, abused their privileged position, used their positions and weapons for the purpose of plundering and appropriating the property of the non-Muslim population.¹¹ However, from the end of the 19th century, the Ottoman authorities began to pursue a policy of ousting non-Turkish enterprises from the country's economy and the formation of a Turkish national bourgeoisie, which was accompanied by anti-Armenian propaganda, the essence of which boiled down to the fact that the Armenians had unjustly enriched themselves at the expense of Muslims, therefore, it was necessary to severely punish and physically destroy them in order to return property from illegal possession to Muslims.¹² It is characteristic that even after the mass pogroms and forced Islamization of the late 19th and early 20th centuries on the eve of the First World War, compared to the Turks, Kurds and Circassians, Armenians in Western Armenia continued to be a relative majority, making up 38.9% of the total population.¹³

It is obvious that, unlike the Armenians, the Christian population of the Balkans did not play such a significant role in the socio-economic life of the Ottoman Empire, however, the uniform discriminatory tax system also extended to the Christian population of the Balkan Peninsula, in particular, the Serbs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which first led to the latter's exorbitant debts, and then to the loss of real estate and property, which passed to local Muslim officials.¹⁴ The empire's judicial system also allowed the local Muslim elite to legalize the seizure of Christian lands through false lawsuits.¹⁵ For Christians, the only way to preserve their ancestral lands and their status as property owners was often to convert to Islam. It's no coincidence that the main cause of the 1875 uprising in Bosnia and Herzegovina was also exorbitant taxes.

Another manifestation of discriminatory policies towards Christian peoples was the process of changes in the administrative-territorial units of Western

¹¹ **Matosyan** 2005, 7.

¹² **Khudaverdyan, Saakyan** 1995, 20.

¹³ **Sahakyan** 1990, 12:

¹⁴ **Ekmečić** 1973, 45–52.

¹⁵ **Ekmečić** 1973, 54–55.

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Armenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the purpose of which was the mixing of ethno-religious groups, some of which found themselves in different administrative units surrounded by another hostile group, which led to clashes between these groups

From the mid-1870s, the Turkish authorities began more radical changes to the administrative borders of Western Armenia, which continued until the early 1890s. The Ottoman Empire sought to create administrative units in which Armenians and Christians in general would not constitute a majority. In 1877, the Van district, separated from the Erzurum province, together with the Hakiari region, became a separate province, which was later joined by the Mush district. The Kharberd district, which separated from the Diyarbakir province, also received the status of an independent unit, to which the Malatya district was also transferred from the Diyarbakir province in 1882–1883. In 1880, the new province of Bitlis was formed from the separated neighboring counties of the Van and Diyarbakir provinces. The Shapin-Karahisar district, which had been part of the Trebizond province, was transferred to the Sebastia province in the early 1880s. Thus, by the end of the 19th century, the administrative system of Western Armenia consisted of the provinces of Van, Bitlis, Erzurum, Diyarbakir, Kharberd and Sebastia, which remained unchanged until the First World War.¹⁶

The territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina within the Ottoman Empire was initially included in the province of Rumelia and divided into the counties of Bosnia, Herzegovina (Hersek) and Zvornik (Izvornik). In 1580, the Ottoman authorities created a separate Bosnian province, which was in turn divided into the districts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Later, as part of subsequent administrative reforms throughout the empire, the region was divided into two provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the district of Novi Pazar.¹⁷ Both when changing the administrative borders of Western Armenia and when dividing the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the imperial authorities sought to achieve a numerical superiority of Muslims in the provinces and districts, as well as to disperse the Serbian population across different administrative units.

With the policy of Islamization of the Serbian population and artificial changes to the administrative borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Ottoman authorities planted deep roots of hatred between Orthodox and Islamized Serbs,

¹⁶ History of Armenia, vol. III, 2010, 448–450.

¹⁷ **Koller, Karpat** 2004.

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between whom, even after liberation from the Ottoman yoke, violent clashes continued based on historical hatred.

After the Balkan Wars (1912–1913), the territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina were liberated from Ottoman rule, but the struggle for leadership in the region intensified between Serbs, Croats and Muslims under the patronage of one or another great power. The Balkan Peninsula became an arena for struggle between the German-Austrian alliance and Russia. The Balkans served as a link to the Asian provinces of the Ottoman Empire, where Germany was expanding, while Russia supported the Serbs, who sought to reunite Bosnia and Herzegovina with Serbia.¹⁸ At the end of the First World War, the Kingdom of Serbs, Slovenes and Croats emerged, which in 1929 became known as Yugoslavia, where during the Second World War a brutal and bloody civil war was waged between the Croats and Muslims on one side and the Serbs on the other. Later, Yugoslavia, following the model of the Soviet Union, transformed into a federal state with a centralized government, which, similar to the Ottoman Empire's policy towards the Armenian population, was guided by the principle that the administrative division of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina should be carried out in such a way that the Serb population should be dispersed among various administrative units, surrounded by Bosnian Muslims and Croats. The policy of discrimination against the Serbian population and artificial administrative divisions of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the central authorities of Yugoslavia led to the fact that the Muslims, who already constituted the majority there, formed a coalition with the Croats against the Serbs.¹⁹ The Croats did not forget that some regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina had once been under the rule of the Croatian state and sought to restore their position in these territories, while the Muslims hoped to create their own state in which there would be no place for the Serbs.²⁰

According to the 1981 census, in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Muslims already constituted a relative majority of the population – 39.5%, and Serbs – 32.2%²¹. It is noteworthy that the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina were also recognized by the Yugoslav authorities as a separate ethnic group of

¹⁸ **Leshchilovskaya** 1994, 52.

¹⁹ **Valev** 1996, 14–15.

²⁰ **Ralić** 1992, 6.

²¹ **Ralić** 1992, 3.

“Bosniaks”. In the context of the anti-Serb discriminatory policy pursued by the central authorities, some of the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina began to identify themselves as Yugoslavs, as a result of which an “ethnic” group of Yugoslavs appeared in the population census, which initially constituted only 1.17% of the population, but then steadily increased in proportion to the decrease in the number of Serbs.²²

2. Ideological preconditions for the genocidal policy towards the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire and the ethno-religious groups of Bosnia and Herzegovina

It is obvious that both during the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire and in the case of the genocidal acts committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, nationalist ideologies were used for the psychological and propaganda preparation of future crimes, with which radical masses were directed against specific ethno-religious groups.

The policy of the Ottoman Empire authorities towards non-Turkish peoples, and primarily Armenians, was carried out on the basis of a racist ideology that went through the stages of transformation “Pan-Islamism” – “Pan-Osmanism” – “Pan-Turkism”.

The implementation of policies based on the ideology of “Pan-Islamism” led to the forced Islamization of some disenfranchised non-Muslim peoples, including the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire, who were thus seeking to avoid brutal oppression and persecution.²³ This ideology, however, did not lead to the expected result, so the Young Turk Party, which came to power in 1908, proposed uniting all the peoples of the Ottoman Empire into a great “Ottoman nation». ²⁴ The new ideology of “Pan-Osmanism” was in fact an attempt to turn the entire population of the empire into so-called Ottomans, based on the language, customs and traditions of the dominant Turks, regardless of religious and ethnic affiliation.²⁵ However, not only non-Muslim peoples, who in addition to their faith had to renounce their identity, did not want to put up with this, but also Muslims, who were against the formerly disenfranchised Christians being

²² **Leshchilovskaya** 2003, 58.

²³ **Gamelen, Bron** 1995, 30.

²⁴ **Zarevand** 1993, 35.

²⁵ **Safrastyan** 2009, 85–90.

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given equal rights with them and thereby depriving them of their superiority over them.²⁶

Taking these sentiments into account, at the 1911 congress of the Central Committee of the Young Turk Party, a decision was made to move to the ideology of “Pan-Turkism”, which, under the slogan “Turkey for the Turks”, implied the Turkification, and if impossible, the physical liquidation of the non-Turkish peoples of the Ottoman Empire.²⁷ Along with the implementation of the ideology of “Pan-Turkism”, another key component of the criminal policy of the Armenian Genocide was the desire of the Turkish authorities to finally appropriate the homeland of the indigenous Armenian people by physically eliminating them in Western Armenia.²⁸

In parallel with the mass extermination of Armenians, the Turkish authorities initiated the process of Turkification of toponyms in Western Armenia. According to the first article of the new government program of January 5, 1916, it was proposed to change all Armenian, Greek and Bulgarian names of provinces, villages, mountains, rivers and other geographical names in the empire to Turkish ones.²⁹ This further confirmed that one of the main motivations of the Turkish authorities for carrying out the Armenian Genocide was the final appropriation of the Armenian homeland – Western Armenia.

Similar ideological transformations are also observed in the policies of various regimes that controlled the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina in certain historical periods. The consequence of the policy of the Ottoman Empire authorities based on the ideology of “Pan-Islamism” was the Islamization of part of the Serbian population of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Already during the Second World War, under the regime of A. Pavelić in the puppet Croatian state created by Germany on the basis of Nazi ideology, the Croatian Ustaše and Bosnian Muslim forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina exterminated hundreds of thousands of not only Serbs, but also Jews and Roma, and about 200,000 indigenous Serbs were forced to leave their homes.³⁰ In the Jasenovac concentration camp alone, more than half a million Serbs were exterminated. In

²⁶ **Marukyan** 2010, 21–22.

²⁷ **Avagyan** 2013, 21.

²⁸ **Marukyan** 2014, 271.

²⁹ **Akcam** 2015, 68.

³⁰ **Valev** 1996, 9.

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addition to mass extermination, the Serb population was also driven into uninhabited areas of eastern Bosnia, Herzegovina and Krajina. As a result of the mass pogroms and ethnic cleansing of Serbs during the Second World War, their population declined significantly, and the balance among the various ethno-religious groups in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina also changed.³¹ In a later period, the communist authorities of Yugoslavia, supposedly guided by internationalism and the equality of all peoples, in fact harshly and irreconcilably fought against Serbian nationalism and encouraged Croats and Muslims.³²

During the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the formation of independent states, pan-Islamic ideas began to spread again among Bosnian Muslims. The newly-appointed leader of the Bosnian Muslims, Alia Izedbegović, presented his political program in the work "Muslim Declaration", which stated that the independence of Bosnia was an intermediate goal, while the main goal was considered to be establishing cooperation with all Muslims of the world to create a common Muslim state in Europe.³³ According to Izedbegovic's program, Bosnia and Herzegovina initially needed to be separated from Yugoslavia, after which, already in an independent state, Muslims would constitute the majority, ensuring a high birth rate and later unite with other Muslim states.³⁴ It is obvious that Izedbegovic's ideas on creating a single Muslim state in Europe were directed against Christian peoples and, first and foremost, the Serbs, who, in his opinion, stood in the way of an independent Bosnia and Herzegovina and therefore were subject to destruction or expulsion from its territory.³⁵

Immediately before the onset of mass crimes both in the Ottoman Empire and during the disintegration of Yugoslavia, a process of "victimization" was observed in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, when an image of an enemy was artificially created in the person of a specific ethno-religious group, which automatically became a victim of future crimes.³⁶ The process of

³¹ **Guskova** 2001, 220.

³² **Simic** 1993, 79.

³³ **Gibbs** 2009, 111.

³⁴ Yugoslavia in Flames: Documents, Facts, Comments (1990–1992). Modern History of Yugoslavia in Documents 1992, 24.

³⁵ **Matveev** 2001, 206–207.

³⁶ **Harf** 1995, 25.

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victimization preceded the policy of extermination of the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire in the preparatory stage of both the pogroms organized by Sultan Abdul Hamid in 1894–1896 and the genocidal policy of the Young Turks, when the Turkish authorities blamed the Armenians for all the troubles of the Ottoman Empire.³⁷ Before the Armenian pogroms of 1894–1896, the “bloody sultan” Abdul Hamid II used Islam as a means of inciting Muslim Turks and Kurds against Christian Armenians. Propaganda against Armenians was conducted through sheikhs and mullahs, who in various settlements across the country incited Turks and Kurds against the infidel Armenians. The Armenians of the empire were portrayed as servants of the Christian world, hostile to the Ottoman Empire, who were to be exterminated.³⁸

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there were also instances of victimization when anti-Serb propaganda began in Muslim media, which resulted in the Serb population becoming a target for Muslims. On September 26, 1991, the Muslim newspaper “Večernji Novosti” stated that Serbs would have to accept the fact that they would live in a Muslim country, deprived of the right to create public organizations and parties, would be able to appear in public places only with special passes and buy food only in places specially designated for them.³⁹

3. The preparatory stage of the Armenian genocide in the Ottoman Empire and genocidal acts in Bosnia and Herzegovina

In parallel with the development of nationalist ideologies, the ruling Young Turk Party created paramilitary structures tasked with coordinating the actions of state bodies and security agencies during the Armenian Genocide. To this end, the Young Turk Party Central Committee established the “Special Organization” (“Teşkilat-i Mahsusa”), funded by the state treasury, quickly increasing its membership to 30,000. In order to increase the number of this structure, the Young Turks even resorted to the help of criminals.⁴⁰ Criminals who had committed the most serious crimes were released from prisons and promised pardon if they rendered a service to the Turkish nation and empire.

³⁷ Marukyan 2010, 43.

³⁸ Safrastyan 2009, 163–165.

³⁹ Guskova 2001, 228.

⁴⁰ Dadrian 1999, 65–80.

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Behaeddin Shakir, a member of the Central Committee of the “Union and Progress” Party and head of the eastern branch of the “Special Organization”, was held responsible for organizing the deportation and extermination of the Armenian population of Western Armenia.⁴¹ Thus, the organizational preparation for the genocidal policy towards the Armenians by the beginning of the First World War was practically complete and only a signal was needed, which was the beginning of the First World War.

The process of the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the declaration of independence of the former Soviet republics was accompanied by military actions between armed units of various ethno-religious groups. The largest and most brutal war was in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992–1995), involving Bosnian Muslims, Serbs and Croats, which followed the independence referendum in that republic. This resulted in a shift in refugee flows and a change in the composition of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. According to the 1991 census, 43.7% of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina were Bosnian Muslims, 31.4% were Orthodox Serbs and 17.3% were Catholic Croats⁴² and of the 36,600 inhabitants of Srebrenica, where the tragic events took place, 75.1% were Muslims and 22.6% were Serbs⁴³. As expected, the Muslim-Croat majority voted for the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, while the Serbs boycotted the referendum because they feared a repeat of the mass pogroms committed against them by Muslims and Croats during World War II in the territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbian Krajina⁴⁴. Insisting on their right to self-determination, the Serb population of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the support of Serbia and Montenegro, proclaimed the Republika Srpska, which was subsequently planned to be united with Serbia, which Muslims and Croats regarded as a violation of the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

To avoid military clashes, the Serbs proposed transforming Bosnia and Herzegovina into a confederation, each of whose constituent entities would include territories populated by Muslims, Croats, and Serbs. Negotiations between representatives of the three groups began in Lisbon to discuss these

⁴¹ **Avakyan** 1999, 76.

⁴² **Annikova, Radusinovich** 2015, 96.

⁴³ **Postnikova** 2020.

⁴⁴ **Guskova** 2001, 287.

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proposals.⁴⁵ However, the unexpected announcement by the EU and the US of recognition of the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina on April 7, 1992, led to the failure of the Lisbon negotiations, and on the same day, A. Izetbegović ordered all Muslim armed units to prepare to defend the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

If the start of the Armenian Genocide was the outbreak of the First World War, then the spark that ignited the civil war was the act of recognition of the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the EU and the US, which led to mutual genocidal acts and ethnic cleansing.

Even before the start of the civil war, armed formations of Croats, Bosnian Muslims and Serbs had already been concentrated in certain areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Most of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina – the eastern and central regions – was controlled by units of the Yugoslav army, consisting of local Serbs, about 30% of the country's territory – mainly the western regions bordering Croatia – was under the control of Croatian forces.⁴⁶ Only 20% of Bosnia and Herzegovina's territory was controlled by Muslim forces numbering about 20,000 people, of whom only 10,000 came as volunteers from Turkey, and more than 2,000 from Malaysia, Pakistan, Algeria, Libya and other Muslim countries.⁴⁷ After the intensification of military action, the Croats and Muslims began to coordinate their forces and then came out against the Serbs as a united front.⁴⁸

Conclusions

Based on a comparative analysis of the causes and preconditions of the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire and the genocidal acts committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it can be concluded that the crimes committed share many similarities. Discriminatory policies of various regimes underpinned both the Armenian Genocide and the crimes committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The manifestation of this policy in the Ottoman Empire was not only the forced Islamization of the Christian population, in this case, Armenians and Serbs, but also the artificial fragmentation of the administrative units of Western Armenia

⁴⁵ **Gibbs** 2009, 111.

⁴⁶ **Ralić** 1992, 5.

⁴⁷ **Guskova** 2001, 279.

⁴⁸ **Sassoli, Bouvier** 2008, 19.

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and the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The administrative division of Bosnia and Herzegovina's territory was reminiscent of the Ottoman Empire's policy of reorganizing the provinces of Western Armenia, when neighboring territories with a Muslim population were artificially annexed to provinces and districts with a predominantly Christian population, or these areas began to be actively settled by Muslims from other regions.

Similarities are also evident from an ideological perspective. While the policy of mass extermination of Armenians was initially based on the ideology of pan-Islamism, and later on pan-Turkism, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the genocidal acts and ethnic cleansing committed by Muslims against Serbs were based on Izedbegović's ideas for the creation of a unified Muslim state in Europe. The Serbs' retaliatory criminal actions against Muslims were also carried out on the basis of nationalist ideas about the creation of a united Serbia, which would include the Republika Srpska of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In both cases, the intervention of external forces served as an additional trigger for genocidal acts and ethnic cleansing. The exploitation of the Armenian Question by the great powers, not so much for the purpose of resolving it but rather to pursue their own interests in the Ottoman Empire, further incited the Ottoman authorities to commit mass extermination of the Armenian population not only in their historical homeland, Western Armenia, but also in other Armenian-populated regions of the empire. The recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina's independence by the EU and the US inspired Muslims led by Izedbeković, as well as Croats, to take radical action against the Serbs, which led to harsh retaliatory actions by the latter, which included genocidal acts and ethnic cleansing.

It is obvious that the ten-year time gap between the Armenian Genocide and the crimes committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the civilizational aspect associated with the peculiarities and specific conditions of the historical development of the indigenous Armenian people in Western Armenia and the peoples of the Balkan Peninsula, undoubtedly left their mark on the causes, preconditions and preparatory stages of these crimes. Based on the above, in the causes, preconditions and preparatory stages of the Armenian Genocide and the crimes committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina can be identified the following main differences:

1. If the Armenian Genocide was planned and carried out by the authorities of the Ottoman Empire, then on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, at

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certain stages of the confrontation between Bosnian Muslims and Croats on one side and Serbs on the other, mutual genocidal acts were carried out. Thus, during the Second World War, under the Nazi regime of A. Pavelić, the Croatian Ustaše and Bosnian Muslim forces exterminated hundreds of thousands of Serbs. Therefore, during the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the declaration of independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Bosnian Serbs feared a possible repetition of these processes, and therefore insisted on their right to self-determination. During the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, these fears were fully confirmed, as both Bosnian Muslims and Croats committed genocidal acts and ethnic cleansing against Serbs, and Serbian units committed against Muslims, which led to significant human losses and refugee flows on both sides. Despite the fact that the International Court of Justice recognized only the mass murder of Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica as genocide among all the crimes committed on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia convicted Bosnian Serb commanders for this crime, the actions of the latter can to some extent be seen as retaliatory measures to previous and/or ongoing crimes committed by Muslims against the Serb population.

2. The Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire was carried out in the context of the First World War, and mutual genocidal acts between Bosnian Muslims and Croats on the one hand and Serbs on the other took place during the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

3. If the start of the First World War was the signal for the Ottoman Empire to commit the Armenian Genocide, then the trigger for the start of the civil war, mutual genocidal acts and ethnic cleansing of both Croats and Muslims against Serbs, and Serbs against the Muslims of Srebrenica was the recognition of the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the EU and the United States.

4. Before the genocidal acts and ethnic cleansing, the Serbs and Bosnian Muslims had statehood, and the armed forces of these opposing sides were approximately equal in size on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which cannot be said about the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire, which became victims of genocide.

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ԱՐՄԵՆ ՄԱՐՈՒՔՅԱՆ

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**ՀԱՅԵՐԻ ՑԵՂԱՍՊԱՆՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԵՎ ԲՈՍՆԻԱ-
ՀԵՐՑԵԳՈՎԻՆԱՅՈՒՄ ՑԵՂԱՍՊԱՆԱԿԱՆ
ԳՈՐԾՈՂՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԻ ՊԱՏՃԱՌՆԵՐԸ ԵՎ
ՆԱԽԱԴԻՅԱԼՆԵՐԸ
(համեմատական վերլուծություն)**

Ամփոփում

Ցեղասպանության տարբեր օրինակների ուսումնասիրությունը առանց դրանց պատճառների և նախապայմանների ուսումնասիրության պարզապես անհնար է: Ցեղասպանական քաղաքականություն իրականացնող հանցավոր վարչակարգերն առաջնորդվում են որոշակի պատճառներով ու շարժառիթներով: Ցեղասպանության կազմակերպիչները որոշակի խմբերի նկատմամբ կայացված իրենց հանցավոր որոշումները փորձում են արդարացնել էթնոքաղաքական, կրոնական, սոցիալ-տնտեսական և այլ «հիմնավորումներով»:

Ժամանակակից ցեղասպանագիտական ուսումնասիրությունները կենտրոնանում են նաև ցեղասպանության տարբեր օրինակների պատճառների և նախապայմանների համեմատական վերլուծության վրա՝ ձգտելով վերհանել ինչպես դրանց ընդհանրությունները, այնպես էլ առանձնահատկությունները:

Տվյալ նպատակից ելնելով անհրաժեշտություն է առաջանում ուսումնասիրել Օսմանյան կայսրությունում հայերի և Բոսնիա-Հերցեգովինայում քրիստոնյա բնակչության նկատմամբ իրականացվող խտրական քաղաքականությունը, հետազոտել կատարված հանցագործությունների գաղափա-

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րական հիմքերը, ինչպես նաև դրանց նախորդած նախապատրաստական գործընթացները:

Բանալի բառեր՝ Հայոց ցեղասպանություն, Օսմանյան կայսրություն, պանթյուրքիզմ, Հարավսլավիա, Բոսնիա և Հերցեգովինա, Սերբիա, ցեղասպանական գործողություններ: