

## THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE - ARMENOCIDE

**Hovhannisyan N. H.**

*Corresponding Member of NAS RA*

On August 1, 1914, World War I broke out. It lasted for four years. 33 states were involved. The principal role-players, however, were two hostile military-political blocks, formed at the end of the XIX - beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: the Entente, with its core England, France and Russia, and the Central Powers - Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey (October 29). 1.5 billion people, or 75% of the world population was drawn into the war, mobilized were 74 million. The death toll amounted to 10 million, plus 20 million injured in the military operations at various war stages.

World War I was the most tragic event in the history of mankind, which, certainly, did not go past the Armenian people. It was exactly in the years of World War I, when the first genocide of the 19<sup>th</sup> century - Armenocide - was committed. And in our opinion, the Armenian Genocide attaches a unique shade to the slaughter of 1914-1918, stressing even more the global tragedy of the human being.

The Genocide of 1915 derived from the brutal, nationalistic, carnivorous and rapacious policy, pursued by the Turkish sultans and, later, the Young Turks against the non-Turkish nations, particularly, Armenians, during the preceding decades, if not centuries. It was not a policy of individuals, but an official state policy, whose pendulum swung between persecution and carnage<sup>1</sup>.

The Ottoman Empire, as was mentioned, was a horrendous prison, or, rather, a dungeon of nations. In this sense, interesting is the opinion of the modern Egyptian thinker and historian, professor Mohammad Shakik Gharbal. He has studied the history of the Ottoman Empire and the policy of the Turkish government towards the non-Turkish nations, including Egyptians and other Arabic peoples. Gharbal, himself an Arab intellectual, is quite knowledgeable about Islam and the laws of Islam, and among them - Shariah. Based on his own wealth of knowledge and awareness of the Ottoman realities, he specified the anatomy of the Ottoman state and society, which, undoubtedly, can help shed light on the causes of the Armenian Genocide, too. He believes that "the fiasco, stagnation and decay of the Ottoman Empire are reasoned by the fact that it

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<sup>1</sup> Hovhannisyan N., The Armenian Genocide. Armenocide – the Most Genocidal Genocide: in Ten Languages of the World. English, French, Russian, German, Turkish, Japanese, Hungarian, Armenian, Arabic, Persian, Yerevan, 2009. Ջոկալյան Մ. Կ. Nikolay Hovhannisyan. The Armenian Genocide. Armenocide– the Most Genocidal Genocide: in Ten Languages of the World. English, French, Russian, German, Turkish, Japanese, Hungarian, Armenian, Arabic, Persian, Yerevan, "Zangak-97" Publishing House, 2009, 856. Լրաբեր Հասարակական Գիտությունների, № 1-2, 2010, pp. 484-488.

had not anchored on any new religious, or political, or social ideas; instead, it rested upon war and expansion, and did not open its doors for the great number of his rayyas, confessing different religions and belonging to different nations”<sup>2</sup>.

In our opinion, the characterization of the Ottoman Empire, made by the Egyptian author, quite precisely describes the condition of that rotten body. Firstly, Mohammad Shakik Gharbal points out, that Turkey was not anxious to seek and rely on any new ideas, but chose the old and beaten path of wars, subjugations and violence.

Secondly, it had never occurred to the rulers of the Ottoman Empire to change, at least to some extent, the status of its Christian citizens, rayyas, or, as it were, slaves, to open a door for them, to give them a grain of hope. Their firm conviction was that a rayya should remain a rayya. An attitude like this could not but lead to a tragedy for the Christian peoples (persecutions, violence, slaughters, genocide) on the one hand, and decay, and, finally, the collapse of the Empire per se, on the other. For a state with an anatomy like that, genocide was a matter-of-course, and it was perpetrated against Western Armenians.

With time, a dense stratum of Turks, Kurds and Circassians, matured in killings and slaughters, were formed in the Ottoman Empire. It was a kind of specialty for them, a mode of life, a never exhausting illegal way to heap up wealth. At the same time, it was a way for them to secure a certain place and position in the Ottoman state hierarchy. This particular stratum was one of the most interested parties in the Armenian Genocide; they were both the support and perpetrators of the Armenocide.

One thing should be also taken into account: the slaughters of Assyrians, Arabs, Bulgarians, Armenians, Greeks, Serbs and other Slavs, periodically organized in the Ottoman Empire, resulted in the society getting used to the massacres of the non-Turkish peoples. The most violent and bloody individual killings and mass murders would not even serve cause for riots or any opposition among the Turks, because they accepted it as ordinary.

In such a country and under the existing conditions, it was easy to mobilize the numerous dark, retrograde and bloodthirsty forces to plan and perpetrate not only mass murders and national purges, but also genocides. Armenians fell under this flywheel.

The professional investigation of the anatomy of the Ottoman Empire lets us deduce that the latter engendered the crime of genocide, and typologically could be categorized as a “genocidal state”. The Ottoman state system with an inclination to slaughters and genocide had provided itself with an adequate concept, a theoretical foundation for the preparation and perpetration of the Armenian Genocide.

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<sup>2</sup> See Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of the Armenian People from the Beginning up Today's*, p. 180. Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *Tarikh al-Shaabi al-Armani Munzu al-Badayati Hatta al-Yaum - al-Kahira 1986*, p. 180.

At the initial phase, the concept of Ottomanism was put in circulation, according to which, all the nations of the Empire, Moslem or Christian - Turks, Arabs, Kurds, Western Armenians, Greeks, Slavs, Assyrians and others, were announced Ottomanians. By that theory, they constituted a “single”, “united nation” - the Ottoman “nation”. The concept of Ottomanism was, perhaps, the first public manifesto on the assimilation of nations.

The non-Turkish nations were quick to realize what a terrible threat was concealed behind the ideology of Ottomanism, and they unitedly rose up against this extremely dangerous policy of the Ottoman ruling clique. The ideology of Ottomanism failed.

Thereafter, particularly after the Young Turks’ rise to power, the Ottoman ideologists flung out the theory of Turkism-Turanism, which turned out more dangerous than the concept of Ottomanism. Turkism became their official ideology.

Turkism is double-faced. One face is turned inside - towards all the nations in the Ottoman Empire. Its objective is to prepare grounds - political, military and social conditions, a favorable moral and psychological atmosphere - for converting all the Moslems and Christians into Turks. Not merely to be announced Turks but converted forcibly into Turks, i.e. Turkization, - a most important distinctive aspect, since it necessarily implied a resort to violence. This was envisioned to be carried out by three levels: first - forcible Turkization of the Moslem and Christian nations, and forcible conversion of Christians into Moslems; second - ethnic purges, which implied deportation of all the ethnic groups, refusing to be converted; third - extermination of entire ethnic groups and peoples, i.e., genocide. The goal of this policy was to create a “pure” Turkish state, based on the essentially racist attitude, implying the higher rank and superiority of the Turkic ethnos.

The second goal pursued was that of maintaining the integrity of the Ottoman Empire and preventing its further disintegration.

The reverse of the theory of Turkism was turned towards all the peoples beyond the Ottoman Empire - in the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Crimea and Uralic territories in Russia, etc., speaking Turkic languages. The idea was to create a “Great Turanian Empire”, which would embrace an enormously big territory from the eastern coasts of Asia Minor to western Siberia and as far as the Chinese frontier. This program, the stalwarts of which can be found in some political circles of today’s Turkey<sup>3</sup>, presents the core of pan-Turkism. It also accounted for the fact that, in World War I, Turkey participated as a member of the military-political grouping, hostile to Russia.

These expansionistic aspirations of pan-Turkism were a menace for the vital interests of Russia, Iran and other states in the region. It posed a great danger for

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<sup>3</sup> Graham Fuller, Turkey Faces East. New Orientations toward the Middle East and the Old Soviet Union, RAND, Santa Monica, 1992.

Armenia, too. Geographically, Armenia lay on the crossroads of pan-Turkism. In this connection, one of the leaders of the Young Turks, Ali Ihsan, pointed out that, but for Armenia, the Caucasus would have been theirs since long. So the Armenians faced a dilemma: to adopt Turkism, or to get out of the way of pan-Turkism.

Thus, the Armenian Genocide completely fit in the bounds of creation of a 'pure' Turkish state, maintaining the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire, as well as in the bounds of the Young Turks' plans of Turanism, pan-Turkism. So the causes for the Genocide should be sought right there, i.e., in the combined Ottoman and Young Turks concepts, and, consequently, in the anti-Armenian policy, founded on them.

It is worthwhile to address another factor too, by which the Armenian Genocide was largely conditioned. The matter at issue is, paradoxical as it might seem, the liberation from the Ottoman yoke, and declaration of independence by the Balkan peoples.

In the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, and the First Balkan War of 1912-1913, both ended in Turkey's defeat, the latter almost entirely lost its European domains. In Europe, only the capital city of Constantinople with a relatively small adjoining terrain remained theirs. This was a big blow and a big loss for the Ottoman Empire, with a sobering effect on its rulers, too. They became conscious, that a serious menace is impending over the Empire - if not its being, then its integrity is endangered, and that it is important to stifle by all means the aspirations of the nations for independence, which would entail the further splitting of the Empire.

It would be appropriate to mention, though, that the Balkans was but the periphery of the Empire, and the loss of the former did not mean the downfall of the latter. Nor did it directly threaten the core of Turkey, Asia Minor. Western Armenia was different. The leadership of the Young Turks realized that the loss of Western Armenia would not only mean the decline of the Empire, but would question the very existence of the Turkish state per se. At the same time, they knew very well, that they could not rely ad infinitum on the controversies between the European states, in order to hamper the reforms in the Armenian regions.

There was no certainty that, some day, the issue of independence of Western Armenia would not be put on the agenda. All this considered, the Turks, who had been occupants not only in the western Armenian lands, but also in Asia Minor, took the advantage of the occasion, granted by WWI, and once and for all to solve the Armenian Question in the manner, which sultan Abdulhamid II had been employing for 33 long years, i.e. in the manner of eradication of all and every Armenian from the entire territory of the Ottoman Empire and, particularly, Western Armenia, Cilician Armenia, Asia Minor and Armenian Mesopotamia, which meant genocide - Armenocide.

In the time of World War I, Turkey undertook and succeeded in committing that devilish crime. All the prerequisites were there for that: the state system, capable of

repressions, tyranny and mass bloody slaughters and extensively experienced and skilled in perpetrating them; the adequate theory (Ottomanism, Turkism and pan-Turkism); the adequate genocidal mechanism and favorable international chaotic conditions.

Such were, in general outline, the prerequisites and causes of the first genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> century - the Armenocide.

Before that, Turkey dealt with the European Great Powers, also known as "The European Concert", comprising England, Austria-Hungary, Germany, Russia and France. Although serious controversies did happen among these states, and Turkey never missed its chance to derive a benefit from the situation, but, more often, the former stepped in with coordinated demands to the sultan and, sometimes, were persistent enough to make him meet their demands.

The war broke the "European Concert" into two confronting blocks, which fought against each other: England, France and Russia with their allies were on the one side, and Germany, Austria-Hungary and Ottoman Turkey - on the other.

During the war, the Entente countries - England, France and Russia - lost their power to get involved, this way or another, in the domestic affairs of the Ottoman Empire and to come up with demands to its leadership, among others - regarding the Armenian Question.

This gave the Turkish rulers liberty to act. From that time on, they had not any worries whatsoever as to how the Entente countries would react to any of their steps. And the Ottoman leadership, guided by the Young Turk triumvirate, undertook the creation of the "pure Turkish" polity. The "settlement" of the Armenian Question by means of genocide was made an integral part of it.

There was only one force, able to intervene and stop the Ottoman rulers. The force was Turkey's ally Germany. The latter, however, did not even raise a finger to seize the Young Turk murderers by hand. One of the major goals of Germany was to turn Turkey to a base, with its help to drive out its foes - England and France, thereby to reinforce itself in the Near East. Besides, Germany was planning to use Turkey against its other enemy - Russia. Therefore, during the war, it assisted and backed up Turkey in every way, in order to make its primary strategic plan come true. Dominating for Germany were its own far-reaching goals, and not the prevention of the Armenian Genocide.

As was mentioned, nor were there any forces inside Turkey able to hamper the designed crime. Thus, encouraged by the internal and external favorable conditions, the leaders of the Young Turks - Talat, Enver and Cemal, who had already committed one criminal act by drawing Turkey into the war, committed the second criminal act - the murder of the Armenians in their historical Homeland, Western Armenia, Cilician Armenia and other places.

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The resolution of the Young Turks on the solution of the Armenian Question by way of genocide was adopted in the early 1910s, at a number of secret sessions and conferences of the Central Committee of the Union and Progress Party. At the consecutive congress of the Party in 1911 in Saloniki, a quite definitive decision was passed on: Turkization of the non-Turkish nations of the Empire, which evenly applied to the Armenians, living there.

In 1914, with the signature of the minister of interior Talat, secret decrees were dispatched to the local governors regarding the special preparatory measures to be taken for the extermination of the Armenians, all to a man.

One of the leaders of the Young Turks, who was also one of the topmost chiefs of the Armenian Genocide, Dr. Nazim, at the end of 1914, addressing the secret session of the Party, where the ultimate decision about the Armenian Genocide was passed, said, "The Armenian people should be destroyed to the roots, in order not a single Armenian be left in our country, in order that the very name be forgotten. Now the war is under way. There will be no other favorable occasion like this. The interference of the Great Powers and vociferous protests of the world mass media will remain unnoticed, and even if they get to know, they will face an accomplished fact, thereby the problem will be done with. This time our actions must be aimed at the total extermination of the Armenians; it is necessary to destroy all of them, to the last man... I want Turks and only Turks to live on this soil and to be in full possession of it. To hell with all the non-Turkish elements, no matter what their nationality or religion is!"<sup>4</sup>.

In order to organize and mercilessly perpetrate the Armenian Genocide, by the resolution of the Central Committee of the Union and Progress Party, the "Executive Committee of Three" was established in February, 1914, consisting of Dr. Nazim, Shaqir Behaeddin and Midhat Shuqri.

The Young Turk Triumvirate - Talat, Enver and Cemal, functioned through this Committee, which assumed full responsibility for organizing and implementing the deportation and slaughter of all the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire. The Committee, conferred with emergency powers, meticulously developed every technical detail of the deportation and extermination of the Armenians, such as the time frames per region, the routes and destinations of deportation, sites for extermination, etc. The so-called "Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa" - "Special Organization", founded on the initiative and resolution of the Young Turk Party, acted on the discretion of the "Executive Committee of the

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<sup>4</sup> Mevlan Zade Rifat, Türkiye inkılabının iç yüzü, Halep, 1929, s. 89. Dr. Nazim was the lead theorist and ideologist of the Union and Progress Party, and participated actively in the theoretical substantiation and execution of the Armenian Genocide.

Three". Actually, it was a merger of two secret services: one of them pursued military objectives and was subject to the ministry of war. Its primary goal was to instigate the Moslems in the Caucasus against Russia. People, familiar with the terrain and customs of the Caucasus, speaking local languages were enrolled and secretly directed there.

The other organization, functioning under the same title, was incorporated in the system of the ministry of interior, and the responsibility for the actual commission of the genocide was placed on it, under the immediate guidance of Shaqir Behaeddin. "Teshqilat-i-Mahsusa" involved criminals, "çete"-s - gangsters, bandits and other dregs of the society, who were liberated from prisons for that very purpose and were capable of a most violent crime.

Running ahead, we should say that the Special Organization fully justified the hopes pinned on them by the Young Turk leaders.

Thus, everything was ready for giving impetus to the genocide: the appropriate concept, the political will of the leaders, the elaborated plan, the relevant mechanism, and favorable international situation.

When Turkey joined the war and mobilization was announced, Western Armenians, like the other peoples of the Empire, were called to the army. Near 60 thousand Armenian men aged 18-45 were enlisted. They were mostly used in construction work. The Young Turk leadership began the practical phase of the plan of the Armenian Genocide by hitting the first blow at the enlisted Armenian soldiers. And it was not accidental. By doing that, they intended to deprive the Armenians of their potential armed support.

By the decree of Turkey's minister of war Enver, issued in February, 1915, all the Armenian soldiers were disarmed, split into groups of 50-100 and killed. As a matter of fact, Armenians were deprived of any military force, capable to defend their lives, houses, property and settlements. At home only the old and sick, women, children and adolescents were left.

In a diplomatic document, sent on April 10, 1915, from Constantinople to the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Empire, a most faithful description of the situation and atmosphere, prevailing in the country on those days, was given. "The Christian population, particularly the Armenians, is subject to all kinds of persecution, very often - to torture. Under the pretext of calling to army service, people are arrested without age distinction, seized in the streets, churches, shops, trams, etc., neither allowed to finish their activities, nor given a chance to notify their relatives"<sup>5</sup>.

The second heavy blow was struck at Armenians on April 24 (and the following days), 1915. In Constantinople, the selected elite of the Western Armenians, such as members of Mejlis, the Turkish Parliament, the influential Armenian writer, politician,

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<sup>5</sup> Архив внешней политики России, полит архив, D, 3804, L 22.

and lawyer Grigor Zohrap and social-political figure Arshak Vramyan (Derdzakyan Onik), renowned writers Daniel Varuzhan, Siamanto, Ruben Sevak, Ruben Zardaryan and others, lawyers, teachers, journalists, doctors, public figures, clergymen, men of art - almost 800 people, were arrested and evicted with no official charge. They all were killed on the road to exile, or else - on reaching the destination<sup>6</sup>.

Party and political figures were arrested and killed as programmed. That fate was foreordained for Nazareth Chaush, the well-known leader of Zeytun; Ishkhan, the prominent public figure of Van; the entire leadership of Urfa - close on one hundred people.

In June, 1915, on one of the central squares of Constantinople, twenty members of the Henschak Party (led by the prominent party leader Paramaz) were hung,.

The direction, as well as the priority of the blow was strictly chosen by the Ottoman government. **The intention was to behead Western Armenians, to leave them without a military force, political and intellectual leadership, to disorganize and demoralize Armenians and to hamper every possibility on their behalf to prepare or manifest resistance.** This action was qualified in genocidology as *politicide*, as an essential part of genocide.

The destruction of almost 60 thousand Armenian soldiers and beheading of the intelligentsia proved fatal for Western Armenians, who lost their capacity to organize and resist. This accounts for the relative ease and the large scale of the perpetration of the Genocide.

Having done that, the executioners cleared the way for themselves and went ahead arresting, evicting and murdering Armenians in their own home - in Western Armenia, Cilicia, and regions and towns in the west of Asia Minor. The Armenian slaughters and deportations embraced the entire Ottoman Empire from East to West, from North to South.

In May 1915, by the sultan's decree, the law on deportation was endorsed, which implementation was entrusted to the minister of war Enver. The law allowed that the military command forced out and resettled in other places the residents of villages and towns, individually or collectively. In that way, the forcible eviction of the Armenian population from their Homeland and deportation to the Arab deserts was "legalized". Based on the law on resettlement, the command of the Turkish army dispatched orders to the local governors, obliging them to strictly observe the law, warning that, should any Moslem hide an Armenian in his home, "he will be hung in front of his home, and the home will be put to fire"<sup>7</sup>. Turk military and civil officers were warned, too, that they should do their best "not to let any Armenian to escape deportation". For disobedience

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<sup>6</sup> April 24<sup>th</sup> is held by Armenians throughout the world as the Memorial Day of the Armenian Genocide.

<sup>7</sup> Հայկական հարց, Հանրագիտարան, Երևան, 1996, էջ 465:



to the law, they, "if military officers, will be immediately stripped off their military ranks and appear before the tribunal; if civil servants - will be immediately fired and appear before the military tribunal"<sup>8</sup>.

From May, 1915, mass murders and deportation of the Armenians began in the vilayets of Bitlis, Diyarbekir, Erzurum, Kharberd, Sebastea (Svaz) and Van, i.e. in the six Armenian vilayets, and the vilayet of Trabzon.

**Bitlis (Baghesh) vilayet**, where the Armenian population amounted to 210,000, was totally desolated of Armenians in 1915. Tens of thousands of Armenians were murdered right there, in the town of Bitlis, in the provinces of Mush, Sasun and others, the rest were killed on the road to exile<sup>9</sup>.

In June, 1915, the Young Turks began executing the plan of the Genocide in **Diyarbekir vilayet**. First they killed all the renowned townspeople of Diyarbekir - public, national and religious figures, among them - the spiritual leader Mkrtich Chldatyan. Having done that, they carried on with mass murders. The bulk of the population was destroyed on the roads of deportation, namely, in the region of Ras ul-Ayn. Diyarbekir vilayet, like the other Armenian vilayets, was devoid of Armenians.

The slaughters in **Erzurum (Karin-Ezrum) vilayet** started in the beginning of **1915**, when after the defeat at the battle of Sarykamysh, Enver fled to the town of Karin-Erzurum. Right there, by the order of the humiliated and infuriated minister, the Armenian soldiers were disarmed and killed as well as the doctors. This was followed by deportation and beastly destruction of the population of the town and the vilayet. The Turkish troops were besieging the Armenian villages and driving the dwellers out. Those who refused to obey the order and abandon their homes were murdered right at the place.

The population of Erzurum was destroyed on the routes Erzurum - Derjan - Erzinkan, Erzurum -Baberd- Derjan, in the environs of Kharberd and Malatya and in Deyr az-Zor, which turned into a cemetery for all the Armenians, driven here from every corner of the Empire. An Erzerum caravan which included 18,000 Armenians, on reaching Aleppo numbered but 150 women and children. The rest were either killed, or died of hunger and diseases on the road. In August, 1915, in Erzurum, a famous town of Armenians, were 50 Armenian households left - those of exceptionally skilled craftsmen, whose lives were saved for them to meet the needs of the Turkish army<sup>10</sup>.

In **Kharberd vilayet** the plan of Genocide was put in effect from July, 1915. Months before, the Armenian schools had already been closed by the Turkish authorities, the Armenians were robbed of their property, the renowned public figures of

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> According to the Turkish census returns of 1927 only 550 Armenians lived in the entire Province of Bitlis.

<sup>10</sup> The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915-16. Documents Presented to Viscount Grey of Fallodon by Viscount Bryce, London, 1916., 1972, p. 295.

the town and province were arrested and put to prison, then burnt alive. In July, the entire Armenian community of Kharberd was expelled and driven to Deyr az-Zor. Almost none of them survived.

On March 15, 1915, the Turkish governors of Svaz (Sebastea) vilayet arrested and killed 40 Armenian party workers. The arrest of 500 intellectuals followed that. Part of them were killed right at the place, on the bank of the Halys River, while the others were drowned in the Tigris. Thereafter, the forcible deportation of the Sebasteans followed. The entire Armenian population of Sebastea was broken down into three caravans; their deportation was accomplished by July, 1915. The overwhelming majority of them were destroyed on the exile road. Suffice it to mention that only 350 people of the first caravan survived and reached Aleppo.

In contrast to the Turkish plans, it proved unrealizable to commit mass murders in **Van vilayet**. The Armenians in Van had been well prepared, and in the spring of 1915 they heroically resisted the regular Turkish army for about one month. On May 6, 1915, the Russian military units and the Armenian volunteers entered Van, which was a salvation for Armenians. The Van governorship, led by Aram Manukyan, was established. But it did not last long. The Russian troops retreated unexpectedly, and the Armenian population had no choice but to leave their land with them. Sustaining severe torments and at the cost of heavy losses, they reached Eastern Armenia.

The Turkish troops entered Van again, killed all the Armenians, who had not managed to leave with the retreating Russian army, demolished the town, and robbed the Armenian houses of all their possessions<sup>11</sup>.

The mentioned vilayets constituted the areas, where, by the Russo-Turkish Agreement of 1914, two Armenian autonomies were to be founded and governed by European Christian General Viziers. Having cleared these provinces from Armenians, the Young Turks had ruined the very foundation on which that state structure might be erected in the future.

The detachments of the Turkish army, the internal forces, the police, the Teshqilata-i Mahsuse, the chetes, the armed gangs of the Kurd chieftains invaded the settlements, villages and towns, the houses of Armenians, killed the elderly people,

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<sup>11</sup> Геноцид армян в Османской империи: Сб. документов и материалов. Ред. М. Г. Нерсисян. – 2-ое доп. изд. – Ереван, 1982. Անդրանիկ Օզանյան: Փաստաթղթեր և նյութեր, գլխ. խմբ. Գ. Գալոյան, Երևան, 1991: Армянский вопрос и геноцид армян в Турции (1913-1919). Материалы Политического архива министерства иностранных дел Кайзеровской Германии, ред. В. А. Макаелян, Ереван, 1995; A. Andonian, The Memoirs of Naim Bey. Turkish Official Documents Relating to the Deportations and Massacres of Armenians. With an Introduction by Viscount Gladstone, London, 1920 and 1964; A. Toynbee, Armenian Atrocities. The Murder of a Nation, London 1915; J. Lepsius, Deutschland und Armenien 1914-1918, Potsdam, 1919; H. Morgenthau, Ambassador Morgenthau's Story. The copyright of "Ambassador Morgenthau's Story" originally published in 1919, Plandome, New York; R. Hovannisian, The Armenian Holocaust, Second (Revised) Printing, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1980; V. Dadrian, The History of the Armenian Genocide, Providence, Oxford, 1995, etc.

small kids and women, robbed them of their property and possessions, which had been earned by painstaking labor, stole the cattle – everything of any value. The houses of the Armenians, entire neighborhoods and villages were put to fire<sup>12</sup>. In fact, it was a total slaughter - a genocide on the basis of ethnic distinction.

Part of the population, which was not destroyed at the place, in keeping with the Young Turks' plan of the Armenian Genocide, was forcibly deported. The Turkish government dispatched edicts to the local governors, ordering them to be ruthless towards the caravans of the Armenian refugees, emerging in their subject area, prohibiting any manifestation of mercy. The interior minister Talat, based on the relevant resolution of the Young Turk Party, wired to the governor of Aleppo in September, 1915, ordering to exterminate the Armenians - women, the old, and even the newborns -with no mercy for any one<sup>13</sup>.

The expelled Armenians, attended by armed detachments of Turks, were deported to the Arab deserts, Syria and Mesopotamia. The attending detachments - the "warriors" of the Special Organization, the Kurd robbers and other villains - kept killing and persecuting on the exile road. In this respect, all-important is the evidence of the survivors, significant as a first-hand source.

Here is a story told by one of them, Hambartsum Sahakyan (born in 1898 in Sebastea): "We were driven out of our own homes, our gardens. For one hundred and ten days we walked and walked in the wilderness, almost without having a rest. We slept in the open. The old and the sick were not able to walk, they either remained on the road, or the police would shoot and kill them. They made us walk on empty stomach, not even letting us have a sip of water. The Kurds and chetes assaulted and robbed us of our belongings, took away our married and unmarried females. Many a woman and girl threw themselves into the water; the Tigris and Euphrates swarmed with their dead bodies"<sup>14</sup>.

Many died of hunger, or thirst, or emaciation, or illnesses, notwithstanding the violence, the unbearable climate and weather conditions. According to eyewitnesses, the Euphrates was full of killed and drowned Armenians. Therefore, only small fragments of the caravans reached the destination<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> Драгоман российского посольства в Константинополе Министерству иностранных дел, Архив внешней политики России, Полит., D. 3504, L. 19.

<sup>13</sup> Հայ ժողովրդի պատմություն, Երևան, 1980, էջ 265:

<sup>14</sup> Սվազյան Վ., Հայոց Ցեղասպանություն. ականատես-վերապրողների վկայություններ, Երևան, 2000, էջ 162:

<sup>15</sup> The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915-16. Documents Presented to Viscount Grey of Fallodon by Viscount Bryce, London, 1916, 1972, p. 295.

The Arab settlements, such as Deyr az-Zor, Ras ul-Ayn, Aleppo, Mesqene, Raqqa, Baaquba and Nahr al-Umar, past which the caravans of the evicted were driven, became the milestones of the Armenian Calvary.

The Young Turks, while driving the Armenian caravans through the Arab deserts, pursued two goals. First, they were sure that the hungry, sick and exhausted Armenians would not sustain the hellish conditions and will get devoured by the desert. True enough, a great many Armenians passed away in the sands. Second, the Young Turks assumed that the Islamic Arab environment will be hostile towards the caravans of Christian Armenian refugees, and will carry on their own bloody acts.

But they were wrong. The Arabs suffered from the brutal Ottoman yoke themselves. They hated it and were planning to shake it off. Grave discontent had piled up in the Arab countries, which shortly, in June, 1916, grew into an armed uprising against the Turkish rule. It went down in history as "The Great Arabic Uprising". Now it is understandable why the Arab peoples, instead of fulfilling the will of the Young Turks and assisting them in their bloody doings, reached out their hands to help the caravans of Armenian refugees, passing through their towns and villages, no matter how fraught with risks it was. The Young Turks' leadership was well aware of the humane attitude of the Arabs towards the Armenians, and it worried them.

Therefore, as was mentioned, the interior minister and one of the principal organizers of the Armenian Genocide, Talat, in 1915 sent a secret telegram to the governor of Aleppo. All the caravans of Armenian refugees were passing through the province of Aleppo. Talat reminded the governor of the resolution of the Central Committee of the Union and Progress Party on extermination of the Armenians, and demanded that the governor of Aleppo obeyed the resolution and killed all the Armenians, with no sex or age distinction. He required him to be steadfast and to kill the Armenians with a clear conscience. Similar edicts were dispatched from the center to Turk governors of other regions, too, who did carry out these orders energetically and without remorse.

Meanwhile, numerous were cases when Arab officials received the Turkish government's instruction to destroy the Armenian refugees, passing through their terrain or staying there, but refused to obey these inhumane commands.

That was how the Arab governor of Deyr az-Zor Said Haqim behaved, who not only did not kill the Armenians, but built makeshift houses to shelter the Armenian refugees, particularly the orphans, also providing them with food. He was fired right away. The Arab clerical figure Abdallah Musai also built makeshift houses for the Armenian orphans at his own expense in the Syrian town of Hama, where they lived for almost four months, dressed and fed.

The governor of the region of al-Bashir of Diyarbekir vilayet, Abd al-Suweydi, on receiving the order of the Turkish government to kill Armenians, wired to Istanbul, to the

Turkish government, saying “his conscience does not let him do a thing like that”, and sent in his resignation. The government accepted the resignation. By a special order, al-Suwaydi was assassinated - to teach lessons to other noncompliant Arabs. We appreciate the position taken by the Arab elite of Mosul. When the governor of Mosul received the order of the Young Turks to slaughter Armenians, he called upon the local Arab public figures to deliberate and come up with an appropriate decision. They unanimously decided to say no to the demand of the government, and announced that “their conscience does not allow them to wet their hands with the blood of the Armenians”. Words of commendation should be also addressed to the leadership of Egypt, where the Armenian dwellers of Musa Dagħ (Ler/Mt.) found refuge. The latter, after forty days of heroic resistance to the detachments of the Turkish regular army, had to eventually abandon their homes and were taken by the French vessels to Port Said. The Egyptian government put up a tent town especially for them in Port Said, and also took care of their food<sup>16</sup>.

Such examples are plenty. The ones presented, however, are enough for us to positively claim that, but for the philanthropic outreach, extended by the Arab people, national and religious figures and individual officials, the human losses of the Armenians would have been much heavier. Due to the honest and courageous position of the Arabs, hundreds of thousands of Armenians were not only saved from the inevitable destruction, but given refuge, granted the right to settle down, which accounts for the fact that in a number of Arabic countries - Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan and Egypt - Armenian communities were formed. They existed and successfully developed until recent times. At present they are in extremely difficult conditions because of the political turmoil and upheavals in the countries of the Near East.

Despite the military censorship and severe restrictions for dissemination of information during the war time, the world learned about the Genocide of Armenians, committed by the Young Turks. The world community was shocked by the crime, which seemed unbelievable, and which eventually was assessed as a crime against humanity.

Governments of different countries, state, political and public figures, clerics, writers, men of art and others, raised their voices of protest against the criminal actions of the leadership of the Young Turks, and in support of the Armenian people.

On May 24, 1915, in London, Paris and Petrograd, the simultaneous joint official statement of England, France and Russia was issued concerning the personal responsibility of the Turkish government members for the slaughters of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. Taking into account the importance of the document and the issues explicated there, we think it appropriate to present it whole. Here it is: “During

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<sup>16</sup> Հովհաննիսյան Ն., Արաբական աշխարհը և Հայկական հարցը: Հայկական հարցը: Հանրագիտարան, էջ 50:

this whole month massacres of Armenians are implemented in Armenia by Turks and Kurds, with evident permission of the Ottoman authorities, and sometimes with their immediate help. In mid-April massacres of Armenians took place in Erzerum, Derjan, Bitlis, Mush, Sasun, Zeitun and Cilicia. In the environs of Van inhabitants of hundreds of villages were annihilated and Kurds have captured the Armenian district of Van... At the same time the Turkish government of Constantinople imprisoned and unspeakably persecuted the peaceful Armenian inhabitants. In view of those new crimes of Turkey against humanity and civilization, the Allied governments of Russia, France and England announce publicly to the Sublime-Porte, that they will hold personally responsible for all these crimes all members of the Turkish government, as well as those local representatives of it, who are implicated in such massacres”<sup>17</sup>.

The joint Anglo-French-Russian statement was an official document of extreme, one should say unprecedented, importance. Its significance was conditioned by three factors.

First, it was, perhaps, the first document of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which claimed some other government and its members jointly and severally responsible for the offences and crimes they had committed.

Later, particularly after the Nuremberg Trial, which held the headship of Nazi Germany responsible for the committed crimes, including the Jewish Holocaust, and condemned them to death, such condemnation deserved common recognition by international law and the world community. Today it is applied extensively and performs certain restrictive functions.

Unfortunately, the triple statement concerning the personal responsibility of the members of the Turkish government for the Armenian Genocide was not enforced neither in its time, nor later. The Armenian Genocide has not had its Nuremberg.

Nonetheless, the joint statement of the governments of England, France and Russia is a unique historical document and has not lost its topicality.

Second, the content of the document, the logic and evidence cited unequivocally bespeak of the fact that the Armenian slaughters are perceived by Triple Entente as genocide, although the term was missing in the text of the statement. It, certainly could not have been there, because the term *genocide* was presented formally for the first time by Rafael Lemkin in 1944.

Nonetheless, the Armenian slaughters and the crimes of the Young Turks are in full accord with the definition of genocide, documented in the UN Declaration of 1948 on genocide.

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<sup>17</sup> Свет. 13 мая 1915. № 124; see in: Геноцид армян в Османской империи: Сб. документов и материалов под ред. М. Г. Нерсисяна. 2-е изд., доп., Ереван, 1983, с. 602-603. See also: Arthur Beylerian, Les Grandes Puissances, l'Empire ottoman et les Arméniens dans les archives françaises (1914-1918), recueil de documents, Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1983, p. 29.

Third, England, France and Russia in their statement emphasize definitively that the Armenian Genocide is not only a crime against Armenians, but against humanity and civilization. Consequently, Talat, Enver, Cemal, Nazim, Behaeddin and other Young Turk leaders are perpetrators of crimes against humanity and civilization.

This, of course, seriously aggravates the crime committed by them.

The Armenian Genocide became a subject of deep concern for Pope Benedictus XV of Rome. On September 10, 1915, he addressed the Ottomans sultan Mohammad V, who replaced Abdulhamid II in 1909, not to let the massacres of Armenians happen, strictly denouncing the Young Turks' criminals for the slaughters of the "innocent people" - Armenians<sup>18</sup>.

The Armenian Genocide was condemned by public figures in the Moslem world, too. In their opinion, what the Turkish leaders had been doing to Armenians was against the principles of Islam. In this respect, of exceptional significance was the position taken by the indisputable authority of the Moslem world, such as Hussein ibn Ali al-Hashimi, the Sharif of the major religious center of all Moslems of the world, Mecca, and the governor of Hejaz. It is worthwhile mentioning that he was a direct descendant of prophet Mohammad's kin, which circumstance added particular moment to his words.

Hussein ibn Ali addressed the Moslem world in 1916 and 1917. In both addresses he strictly criticized the Young Turk Party of Union and Progress, its leaders Talat, Enver and Djemal, who, in his opinion, through the wrong policy and poor organization lead the Empire to decline. He particularly blamed the policy of the Young Turks towards the non-Turkish peoples of the Empire. To prove his standpoint, he brought three arguments.

First, the attempts of the Young Turks to convert all the peoples of the Empire into Turks.

Second, their hostile attitudes towards Arabs and the Arabic language: the latter had been banned at schools, state offices, the court, etc., despite the fact that Arabic is the language of the sacred book of all Moslems all over the world, the Koran.

Hussein ibn Ali also considered the hanging of 21 prominent Arab national-political figures by the direct order of Cemal pasha as a manifestation of anti-Arab and criminal policy of the Young Turks.

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<sup>18</sup> Roman Pope John Paul II reminded of this on his visit to Yerevan on September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2001, to participate in the celebration of the 1700 Anniversary of the Declaration of Christianity in Armenia as a State Religion. He visited the Monument to Genocide, where he placed the memorial plaque of Benedictus XV on the Wall of Silence. The memorial plaque of Pope John Paul II was placed there, too, with the following inscription, "Remember, oh Lord, the torments of the sons of this nation, and bless Armenia", "Հայաստանի Հանրապետություն", սեպտեմբեր 27, 2001, էջ 1.

Third, mass murders of Armenians all through the territory of the Empire during the war years<sup>19</sup>.

With respect to the slaughters or the Genocide of Armenians, the Sharif of Mecca sent a special address to emirs Faysal, who was his own son, and Abdel Aziz al-Jarbay. Both were at the head of the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Empire at that period of time. Hussein ibn Ali ordered them to extend the broadest assistance to the Armenians, survivors of the slaughters, and to protect them, "as you protect Your own self, Your children and Your property, because they (Armenians - N.H.) are the zimmi of Moslems"<sup>20</sup>.

He set in the pillory the Young Turks and required that they quit relations with the Islamic world, with the sacred Koran and the Sunnah, since their perpetrations have nothing in common with Islam and its virtues.

Turkey's allies Germany and Austria-Hungary were well aware of the Genocide of Armenians. It is evidenced by numerous secret messages, which the diplomats, who worked in Turkey, dutifully sent to their governments. Particularly significant are the messages of the German Consul and Ambassador. We would like to cite some of them.

The Consul of Germany in Turkey, Shoibner, on June 2, 1915 reported to the Turkish Embassy in Constantinople, that "The Armenian population should be evicted from all the plains and, probably, also from Erzurum, towards Deyr az -Zor. This large-scale deportation equals to a mass destruction, since in absence of any kind of transportation half of the exiled will hardly survive and reach the destination alive, and this is likely to destroy not the Armenians only, but the whole country"<sup>21</sup>.

The Consul touched upon a hypothetical rebellion of Armenians, widely employed by the Young Turks to justify themselves for their misdoings against Armenians. He remarked that "these actions could not have been based on speculations of a military nature, because the probability that the local Armenians would rebel should be excluded, since the deported are old people, women and children"<sup>22</sup>. This message also concerns the forcible conversion of Armenians into Moslems. The German Consul informs its Embassy that "those Armenians, who adopt Islam, are not deported"<sup>23</sup>. This

<sup>19</sup> See: The Arabic Sources on the Crime Aimed to Exterminate Armenians, Beirut, 1988 (in Arabic).

<sup>20</sup> Ibid: "Zimmi" literally means "people under wardship", or "wards". According to the medieval Arab-Islamic customary law, they were the peoples inhabiting the borderland, who, although not Moslems, still had their own sacred book. They were Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians and others, who each had their sacred book – the Holy Bible, Torah, Avesta, etc., respectively. They had the right to maintain and confess their own religion; guaranteed were their lives, freedom, inviolability of their property, etc. In other words, the Islamic State and Koran patronized them, and infringement of their rights, the more so – murder of a zimmi, a ward, based on ethnic-religious distinction, was considered impermissible. See: Филимонов Э. Г., Абдусамедов А.И., Ислам в СССР, Москва, 1983, с. 37.

<sup>21</sup> Deutschland und Armenien. 1914-1918. Sammlung Diplomatischer Aktenstücke. Herausgegeben und Eingeleitet von Dr. Johannes Lepsius, Potsdam, 1919, S. 80.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.



is a potent manifestation of the policy of genocide, because in accordance with genocidology and the international instruments on genocide, the forcible conversion of individuals or groups of individuals into another religion, or deliberately inflicting on them such conditions as to induce them to deny their own religion and to adopt another religion, is considered application of the policy of genocide towards them.

Of crucial value are the reports of Vangenheim, the Ambassador of Germany in Turkey, to Bethmann-Hollweg, and the chancellor of Germany.

In his report, dated June 17, 1915, the Ambassador informs the head of his government that 'it is quite obvious that the deportation of the Armenians is not only a result of military measures', and brings the following statement, made by Talat during the conversation with a German diplomat assigned in Turkey, where he said, "The Sublime Porte wants to employ the World War, in order to eventually get even with the interior enemies (local Christians)"<sup>24</sup>.

The content of the report of the German Ambassador to Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg, dated July 7, 1915, is valuable, too. Having informed the Chancellor about the large-scale deportation of the Armenians, the Ambassador concludes that "these actions and the method of implementing the deportation show that the government indeed means to exterminate the Armenian nation within the Turkish state"<sup>25</sup>.

Obviously, the assessment of the events and the policy of the Young Turks towards Armenians, cited in the diplomatic documents of Turkey's ally Germany, fully coincide with that of the Entente countries. This is clear evidence of the fact that the Turkish government was consistently effecting its plan of total extermination of the Armenians.

There was, however, a 'minor' discrepancy there. Unlike the Entente countries, which did not have the opportunity to exert influence on the Turkish government, Germany did have that opportunity. It was the only country at that moment able to avert or stop the Genocide of Armenians. It could, and it did not. The explanation was given above. It reckoned its narrow, selfish, so-called strategic interests higher than saving an entire nation from extermination.

For that very reason, quite substantiated is the viewpoint that, in the Genocide of Armenians, Imperial Germany has its own sizeable portion of guilt.

Public, political and religious figures, writers, scientists, men of art of many countries throughout the world raised their voices of protest and in defense of Armenians. Among them were Lord James Bryce and one of the greatest historians of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Arnold Toynbee of England; Protestant clergyman Johannes Lepsius, Armin Wegner, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg of Germany; Anatole France and Roman Rolland of France; Fridtjof Nansen of Norway; Maxim Gorky, Valery Brusov and

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., S. 83-84.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., S. 94.

Yuri Veselovsky of Russia; the outstanding Arab political and public figure Fayez el-Ghoseyn and many-many others.

To have a more comprehensive picture of the genocidal policy of the Turkish government, it is necessary to dwell on yet another important issue, the more so as this will help us to get a fuller understanding of the causes of the Armenian Genocide.

The matter concerns some non-Turkish nations, such as Assyrians, Greeks and Arabs, who during World War I, together with Armenians, were subject to or faced the risk of genocide.

In 1915 the Turkish government, in implementation of the plan of creating a 'pure' Turkish state, undertook the perpetration of the genocide against Christian Assyrians, too. The policy of their extermination was carried out in the Armenian vilayets of Van, Bitlis and Diyarbekir, where they lived mixed with the Armenians, as well as in the regions of Haqqar and Urmia, when during the war the latter was occupied by the Turkish army for a short while, in Urfa (Urha-Edessa), Adana and others.

The "substantiation" of the slaughters was the same as that of the Armenian slaughters, as if "the community was armed and rebelled against the state."<sup>26</sup>

The genocide of the Assyrians is relatively less studied and very often is cited as "forgotten genocide". It was perpetrated with unspeakable brutality. Let us refer to a document about the slaughters of Assyrians in Tur-Abdin region, committed on June 5, 1915 by the Turkish armed forces and "Hamidie" gangsters. Ten thousand Assyrians were killed. "The most severe methods were employed. The skulls of small kids were smashed with rocks; the bodies of girls and women, who resisted to be raped or converted into Islam, were cut to pieces live; men were mostly beheaded, or else thrown into the nearby river; the clergy, monks and nuns were skinned or burnt live"<sup>27</sup>.

The picture was very much the same in other vilayets and regions, too. Thus, in the vilayet of Diyarbekir most brutal slaughters of many a thousand Assyrians and Chaldean Christians were perpetrated; in Mardin and Urfa - murdered were also Catholic Christians<sup>28</sup>.

500,000 Assyrians, or two thirds of the entire population, fell victim of the genocidal policy of the Young Turks<sup>29</sup>. This ancient civilized nation faced the menace of total physical extermination - in the name of bringing about the insane plans of the Young Turks' to create a "pure" Turkish state and "Great Turan".

In 1914-1918, genocidal policy was likewise pursued against the Greeks, residing in the Ottoman Empire. The Greeks of Constantinople, Smyrna, Trapezunt, the entire

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<sup>26</sup> Documentation on the Genocide against the Assyrian-Suryoye-Chaldean-Arameic People (SEYFO), Frankfurt, 1999, p. 7.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>28</sup> Fuad Hasan Hafiz, History of the Armenian People, p.313.

<sup>29</sup> Documentation on the Genocide against the Assyrian-Suryoye-Chaldean-Arameic People, p. 7, 9.

North Pontus and other regions of the Empire were subject to violence, oppression, deportation and murders. In 1914 alone, the Young Turks deported 90,000 Greeks from Macedonia and Asia Minor, while from 1916 they began exterminating the Greeks of Pontus. The date of this tragedy is observed in Greece as the memorial day of the genocide.

As cited above, the Young Turks' policy of forcible conversion into Turks was not only pursued towards the non-Christians, but also towards the non-Turkish Moslem communities. Otherwise, it would not be feasible to turn the Ottoman Empire into a pure-blooded, unadulterated Turkish state. A glaring example of this is their policy towards Arabs.

Among the Arab national-political figures and historians, dominating is the viewpoint that in the time of World War I, the Young Turks were planning, along with the Armenians, to exterminate also the Arabs. An authoritative and knowledgeable Arab historian as Amin Said is, writes that the success, achieved by the German-Turkish block in the beginning of the war, "turned the heads of the Istanbul headship, who were energetic stalwarts of Pan-Turkism. They decided that the time is ripe for putting an end to the two strong national movements - that of the Arab nationalists in Syria, Iraq and Hejaz, and the Armenian movement"<sup>30</sup> in Western Armenia. He continues, that the campaign, intending to exterminate the Armenians, was led by the Minister of Interior Talat, who in 1917-1918 assumed also the Grand Vezier's office, while in the Arabic countries it was led by another representative of the Young Turk triumvirate, Cemal. "In Syria," Amin Said writes, "the implementation of the plan was taken up by the Minister of Navy and the colleague of Talat-bey, Ahmad Cemal-pasha, labeled in Syria "bloodthirsty". In Beirut, Damascus and Gaza gallows were put up. Ahmad Cemal-pasha hung, deported and put in prison"<sup>31</sup>.

Indeed, by his order the elite of the Arab national movement and political ideology, the brilliant constellation of figures, devoted to their own nation, to the liberation of their homeland, such as Abd al-Hamid az-Zahrawi, Shakik al-Azym, Shuqri al-Asali, Qarim al-Khalil, Salim al-Jazairi and many others from Syria, Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq, etc. were hung. Summing up, the Arab historian maintains that the Young Turks, their entire leadership, while committing these crimes, "attempted to totally exterminate two nationalities - Armenians and Arabs"<sup>32</sup>.

The same opinion is held by the Arab historians Zeine Zeine, Masoud Dahir, Hafiz Fuad Hasan, and many others. Zeine Zeine points out that in 1915 Cemal-pasha

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<sup>30</sup> Амин Сайт, Востание арабов XX века, Москва, 1964, с. 79.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

‘condemned to death many Arab leaders’ as traitors, accusing them of the attempts to decentralize the Ottoman Empire and “to sell their country to aliens”<sup>33</sup>.

Just as in the event of the Genocide of Armenians, in the event of Arabs, too, the broadly practiced murders, detentions and other kinds of violence entailed mass deportations of Arabs. Entire households and tribes were deported, only in the opposite direction: the Armenians were driven to the Arab deserts, while the Arabs were driven to the depths of Anatolia (Asia Minor), where the conditions, created for them, were utterly bad. The deportation was associated with the seizure of the possessions and property of the Arabs<sup>34</sup>. Having this in mind, the Arab historian Masoud Dahir qualifies the policy of the Young Turks towards the Arabs as a “policy of organized murder”<sup>35</sup>.

This is proved by the stated below facts, put down on paper by Naim-bey Abdullahhad, first secretary of Nuri-bey, the Aleppo representative of the Central Committee on Deportation. Later the notes were published as Memoirs. They are the records of conversations between those two - a matter of great interest, helpful in shedding more light on the policy of the Young Turks. “Once”, says Naim-bey, “I said to Abdullahhad Nuri-bey, “Bey-effendi, let’s make the deportation of the Armenians less severe, or else death will threat all of Mesopotamia. In that vast terrain no one will be left, but Satan. The kaymakam of Rasul Ayn sends alarming messages.” Nuri-bey laughed. “My son’, he said, “in that way we will at once get rid of two dangerous elements. Don’t the Arabs die with the Armenians? Is that not good? By that the way for Turkism is cleared”<sup>36</sup>.

The Young Turks did not succeed in accomplishing their genocidal policy against Arabs. In 1916 Arabs rebelled and, with the help of the English, liberated their Homeland, which had been under the Ottoman rule for 400 years. In the ranks of the Arab liberation army the Eastern, or Armenian Legion of three thousand fought.

It is also appropriate to notice that the Young Turks, perpetrating the genocide of the Armenians and Assyrians with the hands of the Kurds, thereafter, when their goal had been achieved, later began slaughters of the Kurds. Such was the “logic” of the genocide and the creation of a “pure” Turkish state.

Thus, the criminal policy of sultan Abdulhamid II and the Young Turks, of their leaders Talat, Enver, Cemal, Nazim, Shaqir Behaeddin and others against the Armenians, Assyrians, Greeks, Arabs and other nations permits us to conclude that in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century the Ottoman state developed into a genocidal state.

The Armenian Genocide was an all-national tragedy with fatal consequences for all Armenians. In Western Armenia, Cilicia and all over the Ottoman Empire, 1,5 million

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<sup>33</sup> Zeine N. Zeine, *The Emergence of Arab Nationalism*, New York, 1973, p. 110.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Masoud Dahir, *The Social History of Lebanon*, Beirut, 1974, pp. 25-26 (in Arabic).

<sup>36</sup> *The Memoirs of Naim Bey*, London, 1920.

Armenians were killed and hundreds of thousands deported. The largest part of the native land of the Armenians was desolated of its native inhabitants - Armenians. Instead, the intrusion of Turks and Kurds into the Armenian lands, which had started in the previous centuries, became even more active.

Armenians have been dispossessed of the largest part of their Homeland - Western Armenia, making up nine-tenths of the Armenian Highland<sup>37</sup>. At present the Republic of Armenia (RA) and the Artsakh Republic (NKR) constitute one-tenth of the territory of the Armenian Homeland.

The Genocide of Armenians and of other nations of the Ottoman Empire left its imprint on the Empire per se, as it has gone down in history as the first genocidal state.

It also left its negative imprint on the international rating and prestige of modern Turkey, as the successor of the Ottoman Empire. Meanwhile, contrary to undeniable facts, the leadership of present-day Turkey is stubbornly denying the fact of the Genocide.

Now about the origin of the term "Armenocide", its connection with the term "genocide", about its author and its characteristic features.

The term "Armenocide" is directly connected with the term "genocide", invented by Raphael Lemkin in 1944 and approved by the United Nations Organization on 9 December, 1948 by adopting "The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of the Genocide". The term "Armenocide" was invented by analogy with the term "genocide" and put in circulation by Moussa Prince in the mid-1960s. Moussa Prince is a brilliant Lebanese scholar and historian, author of several monographic studies on the Armenian Genocide - Armenocide in different languages, sometimes with the help of his wife Marie-Ange Prince<sup>38</sup>. He gave also its scientific definition, qualifying it as the biggest, gravest and wickedest crime against mankind. According to him "The Armenian Genocide is the most genocidal genocide"<sup>39</sup>.

The Genocide of Armenians, or Armenocide is the black page in the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>37</sup> The deportation resulted in Armenians being scattered over various continents - Asia, Europe, America and Africa, and various countries, where they formed Armenian communities with their national, educational, cultural and clerical structures. The Armenian Diaspora emerged.

<sup>38</sup> Moussa Prince. Avec la collaboration de Marie Ange M.Prince, L'Armenocide. Introduction, Heidelberg Press, Lebanon, 1967' Moussa Prince, Un genocide impuni: L'Armenocide, 1975; , Musa Prins. Majazar al Arman. Jaraim Did al Insaniya ( Genocide of Armenians. Threat to Mankind), Haleb, 1996 (in Arabic).

<sup>39</sup> Nikolay Hovhannisyan, Arab Historiography on the Armenian Genocide, Yerevan, 2005