

## THE TURKISH UNPUNISHED CRIME OF GENOCIDE AGAINST THE ARMENIANS - THE SUICIDE ROAD OF MANKIND

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On April 24, 2015, all Armenians throughout the world are going to commemorate one-and-a-half million innocent victims of the Armenian Genocide<sup>1</sup>. On this day the progressive people of the world will be standing next to us - Armenians, for whom the year of 1915 and April 24 have turned into the symbol of condemnation and prevention of the greatest crime against humanity and civilization<sup>2</sup> - the genocide. The Genocide against the Armenians<sup>3</sup> started by the Ottoman Empire long before World War I and vigorously culminated during the Young Turks' regime and was continued by the Republican Turkey.

The Armenian Genocide remains a bleeding wound for Armenians. It will remain fresh as long as the perpetrators go unpunished, as long as the criminal does not face universal condemnation, does not repent and return to Armenians what they took from them by committing genocide.

On the eve of the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide we draw attention to some facts which make more holistic the scale of the territorial and human losses of the genocidal crime. The principal conclusion of this analysis stems from the concept according to which the widely held and publicized formula "The Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire in 1915-1923" does not fully reflect the factual and political content of this crime.

The formulation under discussion connects the crime only with the Ottoman Empire, despite the well-known and irrefutable fact that Turkish regimes (of the sultan, after his removal from power, the Young Turks and the Kemalists) pursued the policy of extermination of Armenians in Western Armenia and other parts of the Empire, as well as outside the latter's bounds, namely in some regions and towns of Eastern Armenia

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<sup>1</sup> Pan-Armenian Declaration on the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide – <http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/29.01.2015-hrchakagir.php>

<sup>2</sup> The Governments of France, Great Britain and Russia made a declaration, on 28 May 1915, denouncing the massacres of the Armenian population in the Ottoman Empire as "crimes against humanity and civilization" for which all the members of the Turkish Government would be held responsible, together with its agents implicated in the massacres. <http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/1948.php>; <http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/1948.php#sthash.jnzYZ6hW.dpuf>

<sup>3</sup> In Armenian: Հայոց Մեծ Եղեռն (Hayots Meds Yeghern) Armenian Great Yeghern.

(Nakhijevan, Shushi, Shirak, etc.) and Eastern Transcaucasia (to the east of the Kura River up to the Caspian western coastal zone, including the Apsheron peninsula) and north-western parts of Iran.

For decades the West has been seeking to free its military ally - Turkey, from the burden of the crime committed at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century leaving it only to the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, the fact was also overlooked by the Bolshevik leaders who, hoping to export the “Red Revolution” to the Muslim East, saw Turkey and Soviet Azerbaijan as the pioneers of this revolution.

In the 60s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the taboo on the issue of the Armenian Genocide was removed, Moscow allowed the circulation of the mentioned formula, watching carefully that the Armenian massacres in Nakhijevan and Eastern Transcaucasia are not referred to, since it would undermine the realization of the political myth of “Lenin friendship” between Armenians and “Caucasian Tatars” (from the mid-1930s they have been renamed “Azerbaijanis”). This is how the massacres of the Armenians in Transcaucasia committed by the Ottomans and Kemalists (that invaded the region in 1918 and 1920) escaped the *corpus delicti* of the crime of the genocide and only the above-mentioned formulation (“the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire”) was put into circulation in media and literature.

It is high time to speak out and tell the world that the Armenian Genocide in Western Armenia, Nakhijevan and Eastern Transcaucasia includes different stages of the same genocide. The same is the criminal and the same is the victim. This obvious fact is left unnoticed when it can serve as the key evidence of the real scale of the Armenian Genocide. So far the key argument of the Turkish denial of the Armenian Genocide with which Ankara reverses the charge is that the Turks did not have a pre-planned program of genocide. Rather, they displaced Armenians because of their being unreliable for the Ottoman empire which was at war at that time. The “accidents” that happened to the caravans as a result of the attacks by “mobs” on the way, as claimed by official Ankara, cannot be labeled as genocide. Contrary to this fraud, along with the undeniable facts of the realization of the genocidal program against Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and Western Armenia<sup>4</sup>, massacres in Nakhijevan and Eastern Transcaucasia reveal the Turkish falsehood once and for all<sup>5</sup>.

In 1918 it was not the Turkish and Kurdish mob but the Turkish army and the squads of Tatar-Musavatists that burnt down Armenian settlements and killed the innocent inhabitants along the way to Baku and then in Baku, as well. This fact, well-grounded and confirmed by numerous testimonies and documents does not leave room for the false claims of “the unreliability of Armenians” in the Turkish file on the

<sup>4</sup> Safrasyan R.A., Ottoman Empire: the genesis of the program of genocide (1876-1920), Yerevan, 2011.

<sup>5</sup> Danielyan E.L., Armenian Civilizational heritage versus Turkish-Azerbaijani falsification of history and historical geography, Լրաբեր հասարակական գիտությունների, 2014, 1, p. 49.

“justification” of the displacements. A part of the documents was presented in a collection of documents: “The Massacres of Armenians in the provinces of Baku and Elizavetpol in 1918-1920”<sup>6</sup>. The Armenians living in their historical lands in Nakhijevan and Eastern Transcaucasia for centuries were not Ottoman citizens and thus could not be labeled as unreliable. They did not expose any threat to the empire or Turkey, either. They were not displaced, but were slaughtered on the spot for only one reason - they were Armenians.

It is necessary to note that the policy of genocide was not stopped in Turkey in 1923 as is presented in the above mentioned formulation. The century-long attempts to push the crime out of the pages of world history and to deny it, the defalcation of the territory and properties of the victims, the tactics of stifling the Republic of Armenia and the Artsakh Republic in a circle of blockade, the defalcation and destruction of the millennia-old Armenian cultural heritage, the forceful conversion and Islamization of the survivors of the Armenian Genocide, all these are the continuation of the policy of the Ottoman empire that has been adopted and consistently pursued by the Republican Turkey since the very first day of its foundation, a state that was established by the political forces directly involved in the Genocide.

The people that had adopted the culture of “massacre” and “theft” and established the state<sup>7</sup> based on the conquered peoples’ plunder and enslaving, could not have a historical prospect. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century it became evident that the Ottoman Empire owing to its economic backwardness<sup>8</sup> had not only fallen behind of the general flow of civilization but hindered it, too.

<sup>6</sup> Հայերի կոտորածները Բաքվի և Ելիզավետպոլի նահանգներում 1918-1920 թթ. (փաստաթղթերի և նյութերի ժողովածու), կազմողներ՝ Ս. Միրզոյան, Ա. Ղազիյան, Երևան, 2003:

<sup>7</sup> Along with their authorities the Turks have equally been responsible for the massacres since they equally participated in the crime. They inherited their behavior in international issues from their ancestors - the nomadic Seljuk and Oghuz Turks who invaded some lands of Western Asia and, particularly, Asia Minor since the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. They savagely seized the fertile fields and lands displacing the native population by killing them, destroying their settlements and robbing them. This was the sole method applied by them which was practiced by the whole Turkish tribe - male and female, old and young. This bloody genocidal lifestyle was still in use after they established medieval state formations and later after capturing and destroying Constantinople (1453), an empire, based on the blood of subjugated peoples. The Turkish authorities and the Turkish mob, in the manner inherited from the times of raids, remained consistent in robbing native nations (with different religions and high culture) oppressed by the empire, in exploiting and killing them and settling in their lands. The mob remained a key phenomenon characterizing the Turkish tribal behavior which reflects the unity of the Turkish authorities and the Turkish mass in their policy against the “others”.

<sup>8</sup> The Economic Decline of Empires, edited by Carlo M. Cipolla, New York, 2010, p. 227.

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, during the state crisis, the lifestyle, formed on the basis of the merciless exploitation and plunder of the peoples and the rules empowered by the authorities, resulted in a genocidal behavior the bearers of which were not a small group of state officials or a thin layer of the society. The true criminals acting against Armenians, Greeks and Assyrians comprised a huge social layer holding the spheres of state authority both in the Ottoman Empire and in Republican Turkey. It keeps on reproducing itself in all layers of Turkish society starting from the state elite, lower administrative circles to the “ordinary Turk”. Today it is this mass and not the sparse opposing layer that dictates the state policy of Turkey’s denial of the Armenian Genocide. Such a situation sums up the responsibility of the Turkish people as it was during the Ottoman Empire, as well as republican Turkey in committing the crime against humanity. It is this very consequence that brings together the notions of “genocidal Turkey” and “genocidal Turk”<sup>9</sup> which the peoples living in the region and beyond its borders perceived as synonyms and endorsed it in the widely used expressions “Turks went through there”<sup>10</sup>, “The Turk never changes”<sup>11</sup>.

As far as the Turkish case is concerned, the formulation stating that genocide is a state policy is evidently incomplete because of the mass involvement of Turks in it. This truth is rarely voiced because of the unnecessary expression of hypocrisy and tact whereas the mere acknowledgement of it would help the Turks to get to know themselves better and shrug off the burden of the sin. Genocide will remain a characteristic feature of the Turkish identity and statehood as long as the deniers of the crime form a majority in the society and dictate the state policy of the country. That is why the claims to recognize the Armenian Genocide that are addressed to Turkey, are in fact addressed to all Turks.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Turkish genocidal nature manifested itself not only in the Ottoman empire but also later, beyond its borders, trying to continue annihilation of Armenians, Greeks and Assyrians and to establish “states” as a continuation of the same genocidal crime. The first Turkish-plan-based state was the so-called “Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan” which was established in Baku by the Turkish forces who brutally massacred Armenians in September 1918. Decades later took place the Turkish invasion and occupation of Northern Cyprus, and establishment of the unrecognized “Turkish Republic” of Northern Cyprus through the genocide of Greeks and their

<sup>9</sup> Ղազարեան Հ.Գ., Ցեղասպան թուրք, Բեյրութ, 1968, էջ 13-14: Payaslian S., United States Policy toward the Armenian Question and the Armenian Genocide, New York, 2005, p. 195.

<sup>10</sup> Recalling the massacres and destruction during the 1820’s Greek war of independence from the Ottoman Empire, later Victor Hugo wrote, “the Turks have passed by here All is in ruins and mourning”. (Eric Margoli, “America’s Bulldozer Ready to Roll”) <http://www.lewrockwell.com/2013/09/eric-margolis/ruins-and-mourning/>

<sup>11</sup> Romesburg Ch., How about It, Writer? Morrisville, 2005, p. 40.

culture<sup>12</sup>. Moreover, the impact of the Turkish political line of genocide is more than evident in the current situation in the Middle East.

From the end of the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the metamorphosis of the artificially formed state bearing the plundered (from Iranian Atropatene-Adarbaygan, Adarbayjan or Azarbaijan) name “Azerbaijan” have not brought any change in the historically inherited genocidal behavior of the part of the ethnic group of Turks who held power in the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan, then Soviet Azerbaijan and present-day Azerbaijan. The Bolshevik center that was a hostage to Stalin’s plan of forming a new “Azerbaijani nation” in the Soviet times turned a blind eye upon the Baku policy of annihilation of the Armenians who lived in the republic. This had already caused the violent mass deportation of Armenians from Nakhijevan in the 70s and in 1988, starting from Sumgait, turned into genocidal actions against Armenians in the Azerbaijan Republic. Not only Armenians were the target of genocidal policy in the Ottoman Empire, Republican Turkey, as well as in the Republic and Soviet Azerbaijan. The authorities pursued the policy of forced assimilation also of native Islamic nations. The only way to resist was to shut oneself in a unique national shell as most of the Lezgi, Talish, Tat and other native peoples have done. During the last years of the Soviet Union, all the Islamic nations that had been converted into “Azerbaijanis” by force vanished from the ethnic map of the once multi-ethnic Soviet Azerbaijan. All these happenings in the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan that was established by the Turkish army, continued in Soviet Azerbaijan founded by the XI Red Army, and all that has happened presently. The Republic of Azerbaijan is not at all different from the previous and current regimes in Turkey.

The notorious formula of Heidar Aliev - the President of the Post-Soviet Azerbaijan “One nation, two countries”<sup>13</sup> came to prove that the assassinator is the same Turk both in Ankara and in Baku. It comes to endorse the common characteristics that unites the Turks<sup>14</sup> in Turkey and Eastern Transcaucasia, where disguising themselves as Muslims, Caucasian Tatars or Azerbaijanis they persistently pursue the policy of annihilation of other nations living in the captured territories.

It is not a mere chance that the blockade of the Republic of Armenia and NKR is imposed by Turkey and the Republic of Azerbaijan together. It is no less accident that during the war unleashed against Mountainous Arstakh, Turkey and Azerbaijan

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<sup>12</sup> Cyprus Genocide,

[http://www.greece.org/main/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=449&Itemid=404](http://www.greece.org/main/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=449&Itemid=404)

<sup>13</sup> The Messenger online [http://www.messenger.com.ge/issues/2161\\_august\\_2\\_2010/2161\\_econ\\_two.html](http://www.messenger.com.ge/issues/2161_august_2_2010/2161_econ_two.html)

<sup>14</sup> Turks, but not Tyurks. This making more exact is very important, because the Ankara and Baku theorists often try to make accomplices of the genocidal crime committed by them also other Tyurkic peoples, falsely affirming that charges presented to Turks, in the question of the genocide, are insulting for “Tyurkic ethnos”.

bombarded Armenian settlements as the main targets. It is no accident, either, that the criminals of the Sumgait pogrom in the Republic of Azerbaijan and savage Ramil Safarov, who had axed in sleep Armenian officer Gurgen Margaryan in Budapest, are idolized in the same way as the principal perpetrators of the Armenian Genocide - Talaat and Enver Pasha are in Turkey.

The Genocide of the Armenians in Nakhijevan and Eastern Transcaucasia is the manifestation of the same Turkish policy of the Armenian Genocide that was carried out by the states bearing the label "Azerbaijan", the last of which is the current Republic of Azerbaijan.

In May, 1915 Russia, France and Great Britain came up with a joint statement qualifying the atrocities against the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire as "new crimes against humanity and civilization" and agreed that the Turkish government must be punished for those crimes<sup>15</sup>. It seemed that the great powers were to administer the punishment to prevent a possible recurrence of the crime. It seemed that the international community realized the hazard that this crime contained against humanity and civilization. It turned out to be a misbelief. The threat of the Turkish germ of genocide, practically lethal for civilization, was literally ignored. The West preferred to use the dubious plan of using Turkey against the Soviet Russia and in 1923 it threw away the Treaty of Sèvres that it itself had adopted. The Treaty (it was signed also by the representatives of the First Republic of Armenia) envisaged the restoration of the Armenian statehood in certain regions of Western Armenia<sup>16</sup>, thus it stated that the international community defended the legal right of Armenians to restore statehood in their own historical Homeland. However, the great powers failed to make the smallest move in Lausanne in 1923.

The Bolshevik leadership was no less different from the West. In 1921 in an attempt to entice "the anti-imperialist Turkey", Moscow presented Turkey with Kars, Ardahan, Surmalu, Mount Ararat-Masis, that had never belonged to the Ottoman empire before. This was followed by still new donations. On demands from Turkey, the Soviet Bolsheviks forcibly broke away from the Armenian Motherland Nakhijevan and Mountainous Artsakh and placed it within the borders of Soviet Azerbaijan. In 1921 some more Armenian lands were left to Turkey - the perpetrator of the Armenian Genocide.

The crime was not only left unpunished, but was encouraged, instead. What is more, while "forgiving" (actually encouraging) Turks for some political considerations for decades, the superpowers became participants of the Turkish plan to keep the fact of the Armenian Genocide under lock and key and to erase the tragic events from the pages of the history. It was Adolf Hitler who broke the silence in 1939 asking "and who remembers

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<sup>15</sup> Shabas W.A., *Genocide in International Law*, Cambridge, 2000, p. 16.

<sup>16</sup> British and Foreign State Papers, 1920, vol. CXIII, London, 1923, pp. 652-776.

it” not for condemning the Turks, but for copying them. It seemed that Turkey, the ally of the Nazi Germany would face a severe punishment after World War II. However, universal human interests and values were sacrificed once again - this time in the political games between the Soviet Union and the West. Turkey, a Nazi ally, left the war with no losses. The Armenian lands were left occupied by it this time, as well.

The collapse of the Soviet Union provided the West with yet another chance to adopt a clear-cut position over the prevention and rejection of genocides from the practice of national relations, the condemnation of genocidal acts and the punishment of genocidal governments and states. It seemed that the genocidal actions against Armenians in Nakhijevan, Sumgait and several other places committed one after another by Azerbaijanis<sup>17</sup> would leave no doubts for the West to qualify the tragic events as the criminal acts of genocide. However, the leading western capitals avoided principle qualifications and ended up with standard statements. What is more, they, who since 1988 had acted as moral supporters of Artsakh (Karabakh), which had launched a liberation struggle against the perpetrator of the genocide, demanded the Soviet leadership to find a solution that would be in the interests of the Armenians in Artsakh, changed their attitude in 1991 when the break-up of the USSR was deemed unavoidable. It turned out that they had encouraged the Artsakh (Karabakh) movement only to dissolve the USSR, foreseeing the possibility of turning it into a weapon for the imminent collapse of the Soviet super power. It also turned out that the plan to break the USSR into union states there had been on the agenda since 1988. The Republic of Azerbaijan (where the non-Turk Islamic peoples had been forcibly assimilated, and Armenians - massacred or deported) was recognized with the illegal borders of the former Soviet period including occupied Nakhijevan and Artsakh that never had belonged to it; the Artsakh native Armenians stood up for their independence. On September 2, 1991 the Artsakh Armenians proclaimed the Artsakh Republic (NKR).

The Western attitude not only betrayed the democratic ideals proclaimed by itself, but encouraged the criminal and instigated the Artsakh (Karabakh) war authorizing Baku to wage a war against the freedom-loving native Artsakh Armenians for the lands which never belonged to artificially formed Azerbaijan, using the principle of territorial integrity as a means to hide the genocide.

Baku was pardoned from committing explicit violations of the international law and universal moral norms; the West completely ignored the genocide against the Armenians in Azerbaijan, and all this was done for the oil and gas that it could receive more easily from Azerbaijan which should have been punished for the genocide of Armenians, and the native peoples of Eastern Transcaucasia would be freed from national and racial oppression and persecutions.

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<sup>17</sup> The organization that led the mob committing massacre was called “Popular Front party”, the name of which was a proof of unity of the Turkish mass with authorities in the question of the massacres.

*Yeghern* is a concept meaning killing a nation in its Homeland. Without doubt, it fully corresponds to the internationally recognized definition of the concept of *genocide*. In content it embraces the common features that are typical for various genocidal acts.

Holocaust as a type of genocide underlines the means of eradicating people belonging to the same nation or community by burning them in gas chambers. The Armenian Genocide has its specific feature - native Armenians were massacred and dispossessed of their Homeland, as a result of the crime committed by Turks. These characteristics of the Armenian Genocide are reflected in the concept of *Yeghern* and it is high time that the conceptual meaning of *genocide of a nation in its Homeland* becomes a universal concept finding its place in international documents.

One of the basic characteristics of the Armenian Genocide was the fact that the crime was committed against the background of an international political system which, in fact, had sufficient potential to prevent the atrocities or to punish the criminal: the victorious Great Powers who had won World War I were really capable of doing that. But the Great Powers responsible for the international security failed to realize the fatal mistake they made when restrained from the punishment of the crime of the Armenian Genocide after 1915. It was not an ordinary mistake, but rather a criminal indifference toward the responsibility that history had granted them. They not only forgave the murderer, but encouraged him as well, silencing the crime and upsetting the ready plan of the Armenian nation to restore the Armenian statehood also in the western part of its Homeland - Western Armenia. This was sure to affect the entire international system of security and the future course of history. It was sure to have consequences for both the criminal and his supporters.

The Turks have acquired the complex of impunity and over-permissiveness. Moreover, they have become confident that genocide, violence, impunity could be applied in international relations as ordinary, and in fact, legal tools of political practice. The Turkish precedent of the gravest crime against humanity that was committed and was left unpunished provided grounds for the imitation of the crime by all the forces that were inclined to solve problems in a similar way. The epidemics of genocides, terrorist acts, violence is becoming more and more rampant in the contemporary world, and one must be blind in mind to fail to notice that they have the Armenian Genocide as their source in modern history - the crime against humanity and civilization that has not received its due punishment so far. In its estimates of impunity and over-permissiveness, international terrorism is the transformation of genocide. Northern Cyprus, Azerbaijan, Rwanda, Kamboja..... New York 9/11, Paris January 7 - Charlie Hebdo... these are the destructive boomerangs that the Great Powers threw into history at the outset of the previous century. Today, they are back to hit themselves and the entire humanity - that is the suicide road of mankind.



Whether or not the world superpowers will change their attitude to the issue, each and every reasonable person, alone or with supporters, should do his utmost to build a genocide-free world, a world where genocide has no place. It is important that on March 3, 2015 the European People's Party (EPP) adopted a resolution recognizing and condemning the Armenian Genocide, appealing to international organizations, especially the European Union, as well as Council of Europe member states to restore historical justice and pay tribute to the victims. The resolution, in particular, stated that the EPP condemned the genocidal acts against the Armenian people, planned and continuously perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire and various regimes of Turkey in 1894-1923, dispossession of the Homeland, the massacres and ethnic cleansing aimed at the extermination of the Armenian population, the destruction of the Armenian heritage, as well as the denial of the genocide, all attempts to avoid responsibility, to consign to oblivion the committed crimes and their consequences or to justify them, as a continuation of this crime and encouragement to commit new genocides. Then it follows: "We commemorate the one-and-a-half million innocent victims of the Armenian Genocide in 1915 and bow in gratitude to those martyred and surviving heroes who struggled for their lives and human dignity. Moreover, we recognize that the genocide resulted in the death and dispossession not only of Armenian people but also extended to the Pontic Greek and Assyrian peoples, and we commemorate them as well. We join and strongly support the commitment of Armenia and the Armenian people to continue the international struggle for the prevention of genocides, the restoration of the rights of people subjected to genocide and the establishment of historical justice... It also invites the European Union, its Commission, Council and Parliament, and the international community as a whole, in assessment of the honoring of commitments and obligations undertaken by Turkey, to accord continued attention to the recognition, restoration, and restitution of our shared heritage as herewith tendered, and hereafter officially to commemorate April 24 as a day to remember and condemn the Armenian Genocide and man's inhumanity to man..."<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> <http://armenianweekly.com/2015/03/03/epp-genocide-resolution/>