



Հարգելի՛ ընթերցող.

ԵՊՀ հրատարակչությունը, չհետապնդելով որևէ եկամուտ, ԵՊՀ հայագիտական հետազոտությունների ինստիտուտի համացանցային կայքերում ներկայացնում է իր հայագիտական հրատարակությունները: Գիրքը այլ համացանցային կայքերում տեղադրելու համար պետք է ստանալ հրատարակչության համապատասխան թույլտվությունը և նշել անհրաժեշտ տվյալները:

**THE TURKS  
ABOUT TURKS**

**SUMMARY**

**Translated from the Armenian  
by Gourgen Gevorgyan**

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The Turks about Turks: Summary/Translated by G. A. Gevorgyan.  
YSU Press, 2011. 80 p..

The English translations present more striking extracts from the three volumes of the Armenian collection “The Turks about Turks”, thus completing the opinions on the Armenian Genocide and the Armenian Issue.

## **PREFACE**

In 2011 the book “The Turks about Turks” came out in Yerevan in three volumes, which presents the speeches and publications on the Genocide of Armenians and the Armenian Issue made by Turkish journalists, historians, statesmen of various times. In the first two volumes we come across facts that the Turks themselves, sometimes the direct participants of the crime, in fact, confess their crimes but with undisguised pride. The third volume deals with the articles and interviews of the representatives of modern Turkish historiography who express views differing from those of the Turkish official point of view. This work in three volumes definitely completes just the Turkish viewpoints on the Armenian Genocide.

Passages from more interesting materials in the three volumes are presented in this collection with their English translations.

## PUBLICATIONS

**Shule Betinjek** – a Turkish public figure and journalist about the contribution of Armenians to the Ottoman Empire.

Having lived on this land for hundreds of years, the Armenians have their contribution to this country. By their dishes, music, ornaments, by their artistic spirit and by other activities they have beautified all the corners of our country. Everywhere you look, you will see the tenderness of their spirit, the result of their skilful hands, their taste and flexibility. They were “among the first” of Turkey, beginning with polyphonic music till the theatre and fine arts. With a western perception, the first theatres in Turkey were created in Armenian seminaries... The first actress to appear on the stage was again Armenian – Arusyak Papazyan.

The founders of polyphonic music, opera and the first operetta were again Armenians. The first Turkish opera and the operetta were created by Tigran Chukhajyan who was called Ofenbakh and Verdi in the west. G. Minasyan founded the first orchestra, E. Voskan was the first “Turkish” statue-maker, he founded the seminary of fine arts as well.

In the history of painting of the whole world, Toros Ruslin is said to have been the first to introduce the rule of spaciousness in Hromkla... The first teacher of the violin is H. Muhentisyan, and the first teacher of the piano is H. Sinanyan, who was the author of the march of the young Turks as well.

E. Manas organized the first Turkish choir... The family of Zildjyan created the famous “Turkish cymbal” in the world...

The first flower shop in Polis was opened by M. Garagash, who was also the first opera singer (soprano).

The author of the first etymological dictionary of the Turkish language is P. Kerestjyan. This book has not had anything equal so far...

The “Manifest” by K. Marks was translated into Armenian in 1887, a year earlier than the English edition... H. Vardanyan founded the first Turkish humorous newspaper... M. Berberyan and H. Hekimyan created the Turkish caricature...

The blessed hand of the Palyan family is on Stambul. They had a great impact on the Ottoman-Turkish architecture... The mansions of Dolmabahch Chraghan Baltala, Eldz, Belyerbei, Galenter, Ainalgavak, Gioksu, Ykhlomur, the military barracks of Balmumdj, Rumi, Selimie, Topchular, Tashkshlugh, Gjumashsu, the mosques of Valide, Nustratie, Ortaguigh... various reservoirs... the clock tower of Tophane... the leather factory of Bei-Gaz, the factory of silk in Hereke... A bank, buildings of the military ministry and the university... If we were to give a complete list, the pages of the periodical might not suffice...

The first Latin alphabet of the Turkish language was prepared by jeweller Mazlumyan... The signature "K. Ataturk" has been created by V. Chershyan.

In the Ottoman period more than 40 Armenians held the most important ministerial positions... They were also trusted to hold the positions of an ambassador, adviser, member of the state council, and that of a delegate... The Ottoman finances, 20 percent of the industry and crafts, almost the whole foreign trade, 60 percent of the domestic trade were in the hands of Armenians. Armenians were the leading lawyers, physicians, journalists, chemists<sup>1</sup>...

**From the book "Turkish-Armenian relations" by Doctor Erdal Izteri published in Ankara in 2001**

The Armenians, both in the XIX and XX centuries, as well as nowadays deceiving the world, introduce themselves skilfully as a Christian nation subjected to violations, pressures, genocide by the Turks and carry on this propaganda so far...

The Armenians relying on their interests with foreign states, raised the "so-called" Armenian Issue at the time, when the danger of fall was threatening the Ottoman Empire. Through preaching, the Armenian

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<sup>1</sup> "Marmara", May 6, 1987, reprint from the Turkish periodical Iki Bine DoAru", "Le probleme armenian", neuf questions, neuf reponses", Institut de Politique Etrangere le Probleme armenian. Ankara. 1982.

organizations were carrying out those activities by exerting psychological pressure on the public. In our days as well, in many countries of the world, especially in the USA and in European countries, the Armenian scientists and the Armenian organizations with the support of the leaders of some countries, putting this issue on the agenda, insist that the Armenians underwent illegalities in the Ottoman empire<sup>1</sup>.

**Turk Vehib Pasha declared to the Armenian delegation during the negotiations in Batumi.**

You see, that destiny drives the Turks from the West to the East. We left the Balkans, we will leave Africa as well, but we will stretch out to the East, our blood, religion and language is there. And this has a natural attraction... We should have a way there... And you Armenians stand on our way... You should stand aside and give way to us... This is where our basic disagreement is<sup>2</sup>...

**A Turkish military mayor about Armenians**

The Armenian has progressive, cultural qualities, the Armenian is hard-working and diligent, the Armenian is courageous by his reason, spirit and thought. The Armenian was able to master European civilization, preserve his church, religion and language being in extremely tough conditions. The Armenian created and developed the trade of our country. flourished our literature, contributed to the progress of our printing. He was able to save us from complete collapse several times as well... So, if we satisfy the state of that Armenian, if we leave his wealth in his hands, if we give him an arena to develop, prosper and grow, one day he will rightfully abuse our trust and say: "Because you are incapable in politics, because you prohibit the general enlightenment and progress of mankind, so you have no right to rule us. We

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<sup>1</sup> Turqological and Ottomanological studies, Yerevan, 2006, pp. 287-288.

<sup>2</sup> **Khatisyan A.**, Origin and development of the Republic of Armenia, Athens, 1930, p. 70.

have to rule you..." and Europe infected by the disease of enlightenment will not only give right to the Armenian but will also support him to rule us<sup>1</sup>...

### **A Turk about Armenians**

For centuries the Armenian in the struggle for existence has rendered a helping hand to the sons of Allah – Mohammedans...

The treasury of the state was filled by Armenians, craft and trade flourished through them, the political leaders of the country were Armenians as well.

We have no life without Armenians, we ourselves cut the hand which was feeding us<sup>2</sup>:

### **The Turkish landlord of Bitlis said to the high-rank English diplomat E. Diloni**

Until recent times thanks to diligence and ingenuity, the Armenians have been materially better off. That people gives us bread, and we not only make them buy a right to work for us at a high price, but we also deprive them of the means of work, not realizing that if Armenians become completely bankrupt, poor days will start for the Turks, and they will have to work<sup>3</sup>.

### **Turkish army commander Khurdish in his book "Siahed Name"-Khudud" published in 1863 wrote.**

All the craftsmen and the greater part of farmers are Armenians... There is not only one master among the Mohammedans but also a helping worker. Armenians are hard-working people, and the Mohammedans are the contrary<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> "Nor Dar" (New Age) 1895, number 84.

<sup>2</sup> "Droshak" (Flag). 1896, number 8

<sup>3</sup> "Daily News" 29, April, 1895.

<sup>4</sup> **Artsrun G.** The economic situation of Turkish Armenians. Moscow. 1880, p. 20.

### **Famous Turkish admiral Khali Pasha in a speech of 1830 expressed the following thought.**

I am sure that if we don't hurry to be like Europe, we have to make up with the idea, that we have to pass Asia again<sup>1</sup>.

### **On the number of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire (1845)**

The first census in the Ottoman Empire was conducted in 1845 during the reign of Sultan Abdul Medjid. This first attempt (according to official data) showed that in that year the number of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire was 2.5 million, out of which 400 thousand lived in K. Polis and in European Turkey, and the rest lived in Armenia and in Asia Minor<sup>2</sup>.

### **Mustafa Nedim, secretary of Sultan Abdul Hamid II on the atrocities of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire.**

... There was no end to arrests. Especially the policemen were the source of disgrace and meanness. For instance, one of the miserable and bribe taker commissars when he was going to a public house or play hall, he used to order one of his faithful policemen to go to the owner of a trading house familiar to him to "borrow" 30 gold coins. If the owner of the trading house paid the sum demanded by the commissar, it would be much better for him, otherwise the searchers of the police would unexpectedly enter the house of the owner of the trading house and would find several European newspapers or letters under his bed or inside his cupboard. They would put handcuffs on the hands of the miserable, and astonished man and would take him to prison and beat him. After a few days' investigation there came the news that he had been either exiled somewhere or had been sentenced to a few mouths'

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<sup>1</sup> **Petoyan V.** Sasun in the past and the liberation movements of Sasun, Yerevan, 2005, p. 87.

<sup>2</sup> **Piperchyan A.** Ottoman State, K. Polis, 1913, pp. 25-28.

imprisonment. After this incident this commissar used to get anything he wished to get... All other policemen began to make use of this situation, and after some time, there was not a single Armenian in Asia Minor who had security for his life and property... There was not a single Armenian who had not heard about the atrocities and depressions that the Turks used towards Armenians... Enis Pasha was the governor of Kharberd. That man was extremely ignorant and foolish. All his worth was that he was the father-in-law of Pasha Zek. In his heart he was faithful to high rank thief officials and received his share from them. Taking advantage of the atrocities, other officials started to depress Armenians still more. Especially the conduct of policemen in this respect had become unbelievable. To collect "taxes" the policemen went to villages. The peasants were panic stricken. On entering the village, they beat whoever they met and everywhere their cries and shouts for help spread. They immediately called the Christian dignitaries of the village, the governor of the village, demanding money instead of the tithe. Those, who dared to say that it was impossible to raise so much money during such a short period of time, were beaten to death. The Armenian men in despair went out into the streets, fields and collected the money in their pockets, they also took the gold coins from the women left from their fathers, grandfathers, took them to the policemen and threw before them. And the policemen gave a signed piece of paper as a certificate which had no worth or importance and the poor were again in debt. Some time later, the policemen began to collect rugs, thick-felt bags, ciderdowns and even such simple things as ropes... The policemen increased their damned deeds... In addition to taking the Armenians' money, they had in mind their honor. The Armenians of Kharberd were honor-loving people. In the huge province nobody had ever heard the name of an immoral person. Seeing and not putting up with these violations of the policemen (Mustafa Nedim) sent a note to the ruler Djevad Pasha, who did not like violations... Djevad Pasha, taking into account my note, handed it to the council of ministers for consideration. Zeki Pasha, in order to protect his father-in-law, sent him a letter ordering him to collect his thoughts, but stupid Enis Pasha, boasting,

showed it to everybody; he even showed it to me as well. and I sent the second letter to the governor-general. This time Enis Pasha was impeached...

...From the body guards of ruler of Kharberd I learnt that the chairman of the Armenian committee as if had been arrested. I made inquires and wanted to see him. I was horrified to see Yazchyan Grigor Efendi before me who resided in the village of Kesrik. He had inherited great wealth from his father and lived well... He was a very hospitable man, he always had 15-20 guests at dinner. In summers my family and I stayed at his house...

Very often I criticized with vigorous enthusiasm the policy of the Turkish government, but Yazchyan Grigor didn't say anything as far as the government was concerned. Really, he had absolutely nothing to do with politics and diplomacy... Now, how can one see this man as the chairman of the committee and not get surprised... I made the deputy of the governor understand this truth, but he did not attach any importance to what I had said<sup>1</sup>...

**Abdul Hamid II, in 1877 under the pretext of the Russian-Turkish war, dissolved the deputies' assembly and declared;**

I wanted to follow my father Abdul Medjid's steps... He tried to introduce reforms at the expense of sacrifices and liberations. I see that I am making mistakes. From now on I shall walk along the path of my grandfather Sultan Mahmud. Like him I see as well, that the people entrusted me by God can be moved from their place only by force<sup>2</sup>.

**An extract from the meeting of the Armenian Patriarch T. Nerses Archbishop and Sultan Abdul Hamid II (August 12, 1877).**

**Armenian Patriarch T. Nerses Archbishop came to Abdul Hamid's palace (Eldz) on the order of Sultan Abdul Hamid II!**

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<sup>1</sup> **Mustafa Nedim**, Armenian Genocide and my testimonies, 1936, pp. 1-19.

<sup>2</sup> **Sarukhan**, The Armenian issue and the National constitution in Turkey, Tiflis, 1912, p. 339.

On arriving at the palace, the Armenian Patriarch was met by the master of the ceremony of the court and was shown into a room, where he was received by the Sultan in a quarter of an hour.

The Patriarch wanted to bow to the Sultan, but Hamid did not allow to do it and ordered him to sit on the chair specially prepared for him, which was placed very near to the crown of the Sultan.

The Patriarch said. "Your Majesty, it is honorable even to stand in front of a ruler like You."

The Sultan ordered, "Please, take a seat."

The Patriarch took a seat bowing, then the following conversation took place between them.

The Sultan said, "How are you? Are you well? Are you calm? I have been longing to see You for a long time, but I had been waiting for a proper time. I love You, this seat is Yours, whenever You wish, You may come to me."

Patriarch: "Your Majesty, we have quite forgotten ourselves and we are thinking only about Your majesty and about the royal army praying day and night. The Armenian nation is always willing to help the royal army at all costs..."

Sultan: "Yes, I know that, but I am very sorry for the present times. I, who is sorry to stamp an ant, seeing so much bloodshed, I am so sorry. But God be my witness, I am not responsible for this war..."

Patriarch; "You are the greatest among the kings and You exceed your predecessors. They were glorified by science in their times, but You glorified the Ottoman flag in alarm and in trouble. Your Majesty, when You came to the throne, You did not rest a single day., that is, You are greater, and we nationwide pray for Your arms to be always glorious and these miserable days pass, for You to be able to implement the reforms promised by glorious Khatto, establish trading and farming schools and promote the growth of crafts."

Sultan; " I am extremely pleased with my Armenian nation and I am thankful to everybody. Please, tell my Armenian nation my thanks and love. I am pleased with the Armenian officials working in my Highest Court who work selflessly. I know, that the Armenian nation has suffered a lot because of this war, but all the Armenians should know

that instead of all these sufferings, they will have a lot of happy days and will enjoy the result of their loyalty and will be happy. I love all my subjects, especially my Armenian nation which displayed its century-old loyalty in these tough times. There is no difference for me between a Muslim and a Christian, everybody is a citizen of the Ottoman Empire, religion refers to God. I granted them Constitution, but everybody must be guided by the principle of brotherhood."

The Patriarch here makes long wishes for Sultan's life. The success of the Turkish army to carry out its high mission stating that the Armenian nation is inseparable from the Ottoman Empire. Relying on his chair of justice he wishes continuity and stability. The Sultan was listening eagerly and repeated continually that he was thankful. The Patriarch was about to leave but the Sultan ordered him to sit down saying; "Let the Highest accept your prayers and requests for me to put all my evil intentions into force. But I am very sorry for the Bulgar nation, who sinned against ignorance.

Patriarch; "Your Majesty shouldn't be sorry, but I think not the whole of the Bulgar nation has dishonored Your name and the bread they have shared, but only a small part that is mistaken, so Your Majesty should certainly have mercy on those who have not sinned being in citizenship."

The Turkish newspaper "Osmanl" has written about the use of the word Haiastan (Armenia)

It is not compulsory to use historical names, especially when these names by their historical meanings, may cause an illusion of revolutionary ideas and revolt against the existing situation in people's minds... Nobody would have thought to raise this question, if a few intriguers would not have thought up an Armenian issue, the end of which, according to them, was supposed to be the separation of the mentioned provinces, and perhaps the formation of a new government<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> "Masis", September 29, 1880.



**One of the copies of the official paper "Tanin" of the young Turks says.**

Who can assure that today article 23 desiring to rise again (it is the article of Berlin treaty on Macedonia) won't be followed by article 61... Therefore, when we speak about the interference of Europe and to a counterbalance our inner affairs, we have to think not only about Rumelia but also about eastern Anatalia, because after the collapse awaiting Rumelia, it will be impossible to save Anatalia as well<sup>1</sup>.

**One of the Grand Veziers of Sultan Abdul Hamid Said Pasha, in 1881 openly declared:**

To eliminate the Armenian Issue for ever, it is necessary to annihilate Armenians<sup>2</sup>.

**In 1883, in October, Turkish army commander Mukhtar Pasha answering the correspondet's question of Vienna newspaper "Standard" said:**

The Berlin treaty has obliged us to make reforms in Armenian regions. But what is Armenia? There is not such an Ottoman province by this name and the administrative name, the borders of Armenia, as stated by the Berlin treaty, is very difficult to clarify... What You call Armenia is more within Russia and Persia. Armenia is not so much on this side of Ararat as on the other side<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> **Antonean A.** Illustrated, detailed history of the Balkan war, H.G. K. Polis, 1912, p. 499.

<sup>2</sup> **Pileryan A.**, Great Powers, the Ottoman Empire and Armenians in the French archives. (1914-1918), Yerevan, 2005, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> "Eastern press", 1883, October, pp. 483-484.

**The message of Zeki Pasha and the letter of Sultan Hamid to the Kurdish highly esteemed.**

Honorable chiefs, our Kurdish compariots, our best regards from Eldz, from His Majesty Padishah, from the Great Khalif of Muslims. The Armenian nation which has led a rich life for five hundred years thanks to the mercy and justice of our Sultans, deceived by the foreigners and infected by the disease of ingratitude, has raised the banner of rebellion against our decent innermost and eternal power. Encouraged by the Greeks, Rumins, Serbs, Bulgars and other irreligious and hostile peoples, it also wants autonomy... The Armenians residing in the Caucasus and are subjects of Russia, have secretly concluded a treaty with those who live in Turkey and confess the same religion, will invade the border with a lot of military preparations, will burn all the villages of Krdstan, will erase the name Kurd... These Armenians - a deadly enemy of our tribe and religion, having taken in their hands the trade, farming and the whole wealth of the country, squeeze blood out of the Islam nation. Under the pretext of immigration, sheltering in the prosperous and flourishing centres of Europe and America, they provoke revenge among all the Christians of Great Powers, against Muslims, in particular against the honest and courageous Kurds qualifying them as murderers, thieves, villians, barbarians,... If we leave this situation as it is, very soon within a few years not a small land bearing the name Krdstan will remain on the earth... Tomorrow this irreligious nation will occupy this country, will exile or will convert to Christians all the Kurds...

This is the will of His Royal Majesty: "Honourable chiefs of the noble Kurdish tribe, I appeal the knightly spirit of your noble sheikhs and the frank feelings of loyalty, and I am asking for your support and practical assistance to exercise in the present uneasy situation the highest directions of Eldz, which should have been known to you to this day... So, be ready to respond to the first signal. It rests with the wisdom of Your and Hamid's regiment commanders to order the participation of each tribe-groups in the coming events. I wish you ability, glory to your arms, and complete success to your wishes..."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> **Boyachean G. (Jirair)**, Eltze Sasun, K. Polis, 1910, pp. 192-194.

**Adviser of Abdul Hamid II, army commander Izzet Pasha about the Armenian issue.**

The only way to solve the Armenian Issue is the physical annihilation of Armenians<sup>1</sup>.

**Shakir Pasha already as the general commissar of the Armenian provinces has declared:**

The word Armenia is despised among us, yet I shall be thankful, if you could show me the borders of Armenia. I am going not to Armenia but to Krdstan. I am going to resume the former friendship between Turkey and England<sup>2</sup>.

**Zia Bei about the foreign diplomats and the Armenian massacres.**

Among the permanent representatives of great and small powers in Eldz, we had arguments more often with the diplomats of Germany, Russia, France, Italy and England. Nearly each state considered Turkey to be a big chunk trying to benefit for his country in case of a favorable opportunity. The competition was basically among the mentioned Great Powers. In recent times, Japan joined them as well. As far as USA and China were concerned, they did not cause us trouble. Personally, I openly gave preference to the representatives of China. Of course, I don't speak about Germany to whose position Hamid attached great importance.

He was strongly convinced that Germany would always assist him in crisis... It rarely happened that the representative of Germany left us dissatisfied ...

Each diplomat thought that he could influence Hamid, and, of course, most of them were mistaken. During the Armenian massacres, when the

representatives of the Great Powers were light-heartedly looking at the merciless slaughter, a European famous ambassador, is said to have received a coded message from Stambul. hurried to send it to Eldz demanding to stop the massacres. Really I cannot say whether this has been so or not, but one thing is for sure, the massacre stopped only on Monday by the personal wish of the Sultan. Because Hamid had decided that it was enough to punish the disobedient. Really, who has the right to interfere in our domestic affairs. No matter how weak we felt, we did not interfere in the personal decisions of the Sultan...

This gloomy past will long be remembered by everybody... To give a detailed description is the job of a historian, and let him tell us, how an ordinary man, who, having no political talent, made fool of so many clever and educated people. When the massacre stopped, the representatives of the powers came to us one after another.

Hamid in his turn managed to convince everybody that he was extremely upset and would do his best to punish those who were guilty. Looking at him, one might suppose that this cunning man was really sorry for the innocent victims who had been killed because they were Armenians. I had never seen such hatred that the Sultan had towards this nation. The thought that he might be suspected of an Armenian origin, drove the ruler of the Ottoman Empire mad. He was ready to prove at all costs that it was a falsehood and that he hated all giavurs (Armenians) without exception<sup>1</sup>...

**Sultan Abdul Hamid II about Christians and Mohammedans.**

Who knows our history in the West, who learns it there generally?... I think, that who has lived in the East for a long time and has preserved his objectivity, should say that the Mohammedans compared with the Eastern

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<sup>1</sup> Akcam T., SiyasI Kulturumuzde zulum ve iskence, Istanbul, 1992, s. 301.

<sup>2</sup> "Echo " / Ardzagank /, 1895, number 100.

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<sup>1</sup> Khadjetlashe M., Murderer on the Throne. Notes of the Secret Police chief in Turkey. Petrograd, 1918, pp. 29-33.

Christians are better people... One should be surprised at the patient Turks, because they have made Armenians spoilt so far and as a gratitude from them, Turks are attacked in their own homes... The bile has entered the blood. Armenians, those anarchists, didn't they kill us with daggers and bombs? The Armenian issue is not the issue of Armenians<sup>1</sup>...

#### **Zia bei about the attitude of Hamid towards Christians.**

Hot-tempered and ardent religious Sultan had been a deadly enemy of the Christian community without national belonging. The rumors that his father had been an Armenian troubled him. In spite of his common sense, he was trying to prove somebody by subjecting that people to brutal violence, that there was not a more false lie all over the country. There is nothing surprising that he was a toy in the hands of our clergymen and the court idlers whose past was extremely suspicious. If I had carried out or had time to carry out all the orders of Eldz, the population in Turkey would have decreased by one third<sup>2</sup>...

#### **Ex-governor of Syria Ismail Kemal Bei about Armenians**

In 1894 the kind relations of Turks towards Armenians turned into a policy of suppressing them consistently... Abdul Hamid was afraid of Armenians as bearers of progressive ideas and by anti-Armenian policy, he gained the support of the Russian government... About 3-4 million Armenians scattered live in 14 Turkish vilayets among about 12 million people belonging to another race... There is only one way out - to create an

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<sup>1</sup> **Bozdog I.**, Abdul Hamid hatira defteri, (Belgeler ve resimlerle) Istanbul, 1975, s. 55.

<sup>2</sup> **Khadjetlashe M.**, Murderer on the Throne. Notes of the chief of the Secret Police chief in Turkey, Petrograd, 1918, p. 47.

Armenian autonomous state in the Caucasus with the capital of Echmiadzin which will include the provinces divided among Russia, Persia and Turkey, as well as those around Aragats<sup>1</sup>.

#### **The eye-witness to the massacres of 1894-1896, Turkish intellectual Eken has written:**

If any Armenian family happened to leave their home to travel, bandits and unworthy mean people surrounded them and caused them so much trouble that travelling was becoming impossible. It was a misfortune for the one who dared to come back and demand from the government the return of the kidnapped members of his family. In this case more troubles might occur. If somebody were to write down what had happened, the reader would be horrified or lose his consciousness by all means... Most of the Armenians, leaving behind their *motherland, relations and friends wished to emigrate to America or to Europe. They wanted to emigrate not for the sake of emigration or lack of love for their country, but being in despair they wanted to escape from the unbearable situation created by the Turks... The usurpers had opened the doors for Armenians to emigrate*<sup>2</sup>...

#### **The Young Turks used the massacres of 1894-1896 against Armenians to criticize the government of Sultan Abdul Hamid II. Editor-in-chief of the Turkish newspaper "Mesveret" Ahmad Riza has written about Hamid:**

"Disgusting suckler Hamid has become furious",  
"We must kill the infuriated dog (the Sultan)",

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<sup>1</sup> Political archive of the ministry of foreign affairs of Kaizer Germany, R14098, AB360.

<sup>2</sup> **Poghosyan S.**, At the crossroads of the struggle for survival, Yerevan, 1988, pp. 259-260.

“We must blow up the Eldz of the villain Padishah.” “Take an example from our compatriots Armenians to repent the sins committed in the past and render them a helping hand”, “Fathers, mothers, brothers and children who became victims of the cruelties of the tyrant”, “Revenge, revenge”...<sup>1</sup>

### **Young Turks’ newspaper “Mesveret” about Abdul Hamid**

**January 1, 1900** The relation with the criminals has created the conviction in him that he cannot remain on the throne and rule over the rescals autocratically. He is crazy...Shame on all those states who cooperate with the errors of such a mischievous ruler. Hamid is the executioner of his brother Murad. He had him arrested in a mean way to seize his crown which he keeps in his bloody clutches.

**March 15, 1900** We blame him for the massacre of thousands of innocent. The blood of his subjects flowed abundantly.

**June 1, 1900** He shed the blood of 300 thousand victims, and when the arms of the criminals got tired, he carried out usual beheadings for his bandits, who received salaries, to be always skilful to organize other bloodsheds in the future.

### **Damad Pasha, a statesman**

Not being satisfied with his victims, Abdul Hamid turned his bloody look to the Armenians whose moods he did not like for a long time. Deciding to make himself safe he put poor Armenia to the sword<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> “Mesveret”, 01.01, 15.03, 1900, 01.01, 01.02, 15.05, 01.08, 10.10, 1901.

<sup>2</sup> “Droshak” (Flag), 1900, number 7.

### **Speech by Enver Pasha in the Armenian Patriarchate of K. Polis, on July 15, 1909.**

We will never forget the material, moral and human serious sacrifices the Armenian nation undertook to overthrow the despotic regime of Hamid. We confess here with pleasure that the Armenian revolutionaries, and in particular the committee of the Armenian revolutionary dashnaksutun were our teachers and the forerunners in the Geon-Turkish revolutionary movement conducted by us against the tyranny of Hamid. Yes, we are grateful to Armenians for ever...

But if the Armenian nation undertook conspiratorial, secret activity against the new and free regime having separation in mind, like you did in the times of Hamid, I can fearlessly say that we Ittihatci will fight severely against such a national betrayal that you will look for the blackest days of Hamid’s tyranny<sup>1</sup>.

### **The decision made at the meeting of Soloniki on August 10, 1910**

**Article 1.** Making use of the third and fourth clauses of the law of partnership to hamper the activity of all Armenian companies and to arrest the workers in their administrative bodies and among them who acted against the Ittihat government and send them to the provinces like Mosuli, Baghdad and to destroy the roads or other places.

**Article 2.** To collect all kinds of Armenian weapons.

**Article 3.** By private proper means to propagate the Islamic opinion in such places as Van, Erzurum and Atapazar where the Armenians with their families are already disgusted by the Islams, to set up organized events like Russia did in Baku.

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<sup>2</sup> **M. Vardanyan** History of A. R. Dashnaksutean, v. 2, Cairo, 1950, p. 462.

**Article 4.** In provinces like Erzurum, Van, El Aziz and Bitlis leave the acts of annihilation absolutely to the people, to use the troops and the disciplinary forces as if to prevent the massacres. And in such places as Adana, Prussa, Nikimidoi and Izmir, on the contrary, to help the Muslims with military forces.

**Article 5.** To exercise the annihilation, in particular of men and school teachers under fifty. Leave the girls and children to convert to Islam.

**Article 6.** Those who managed to run away destroy their families and take actions to disrupt their contact with their country.

**Article 7.** The Armenians holding positions in the government should be removed on the pretext of espionage.

**Article 8.** Those who are in the army, should be annihilated by the government.

**Article 9.** The act of annihilation should start simultaneously everywhere not to leave time for self-defense.

**Article 10.** To take extreme care for this order to remain secret and only one or two people should know it<sup>1</sup>.

**Halidi, a deputy, from an announcement made at the National assembly in 1923.**

We must annihilate the Armenian people. We must keep our hatred towards Armenians<sup>2</sup>.

**From the protocol of the sitting held in the middle of February 1915 of the central committee of the Young Turks' party.**

The sitting was chaired by Taleat. Doctor Nazemin took the floor to make a speech.

He said; "... Armenians, considering the war a convenient pretext and contrary to their promise of neutrality, creating volunteer gangster groups, joining the Russian army, killed without mercy the population of the occupied village and town, and, raising a rebellion here and there, attacked us and threatened the lines of retreat of our army. What do the Armenians want, annihilating us, possessing our villages and estates. they want to say: "You, Turks, get out of here, you are not the owner of this land... It was ours before the creation of the Earth."

It is necessary to act quickly, if we are content with partial slaughters which occurred in Adana and in other regions in 1909, it will do harm instead of good, because with this we are awakening those elements, which should be removed from the way as well. I mean the Arabs and Kurds. Thus, the danger becomes threefold instead of one and it becomes difficult to realize our goals... The Armenian nation should be eradicated, so as not to have a single Armenian on our land and even the name Armenian has to be forgotten.

Now we are at war, we won't have such a convenient chance. The interference of the Great Powers and the noisy complaints of the world press will remain unnoticed, and when they know they will already face the fact and the question will be closed. This time's act should be the act of annihilation. The annihilation of the last Armenian is a necessity...

I became your friend, companion – in arms and brother to revive Turkification. I want only the Turks to live on this land and be master of it. Let all non Turkish elements be annihilated irrespective of their nationality and religion. This country should be cleared of non Turkish elements."

*Behaeddin Shakir.* "If such a miserable as Movses, such a tramp as Jesus and such an orphan as Muhammed were able to create separate greatest

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<sup>1</sup> "Azdak" June 11, 1965 or R. Pinon, L'Europe of la Jeune Turquie, Paris, 1913, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> "Pravda," April 15, 1924.

religions on the earth, why cannot we, with a strong will and strong mind, create and spread the religion and the idea of Turan...

In our national culture we can allow the flourishing of only Turkish seeds. We are obliged to clear our motherland of not kindred peoples still existing, to eradicate them like weeds. This is the goal and motto of our revolution. That's why we gave the name of "Government of New Turkey" to the government of Ittihat nullifying the name "Ottoman".

The Ottoman mortar consisting of various elements does not have its national face, it is like a collection of various domestic animals on one farm; Armenian, Greek, Bulgar, Bosnian, Pomak, Serb, Albanian, Kurd, Cherkez, Arab, Georgian, Laz – all these elements differing from each other as if formed a whole under the name of Osmantsi<sup>1</sup>. We should refuse such a concept. Like ducks, geese, hens, sheep, cows, bulls and calves live side by side without changing their species, the peoples likewise have remained on our land without changing their nationality. In favorable conditions they troubled Turks and got separated from them seizing territories as Rumanians, Serbs, Bulgarians and lastly Macedonians did. In our national estate we can allow only progress and flourishing of only the Turks. We are obliged to clear our land of old and not related and harmful peoples, to eradicate them like weeds. This is the goal and motto of our revolution..."

*Hasan Fehmi* "Now we are at war, we will send the Armenian young people to the first line of the war, where the Russians from the front, and from the back the forces sent by us for this purpose, will capture them and destroy. We will order our believers to annihilate their sick, old elements, wives and children who remained at home. We will rob the Armenians' property and will kidnap their daughters."

*Djavid – Minister of Finance.* "The Turk works under the strong rays of the sun in his field, brings the harvest and sells it to the trader Armenian of the town, making him rich, providing his rest. The economic power is in the hands of Armenians, the complete annihilation of the Armenians from the

point of view of our national policy is as compulsory as it is important to create an economic superpower for the Turks<sup>1</sup>."

*Taleat* put an end to the argument declaring. "As minister of domestic affairs, upon my own responsibility I will act with Armenians in the way I find expedient."

The members of the central committee of the young Turks unanimously voted for the annihilation of all Armenians<sup>2</sup>.

### **Announcement of Behaeddin Shakir at the first sitting of the Triple Alliance committee.**

We should form such armed forces which will be out of control of the local government... they will implement our orders... (and) we must accept only the central government and consult the council of ministers which is its representative...

The responsibility we have assumed is to kill and annihilate Armenians without exception – whether a woman, a child, a girl, an old man or a sick man... this cannot be done either by soldiers or by people.

This is a simple and brutal crime, a soldier, taking away an infant from its mother, cannot break its head in front of his mother's eyes... he will consider the implementation of such an order against his military honour and he will rebel. A soldier cannot nail an old man to a post from his breast when his hands are tied... he won't call ferocity heroism...

And to arm the people is dangerous because we will give a chance and power to a number of adventurers... to rise against us. I think I have found people convenient for us... I found them in prisons... They are people who

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<sup>1</sup> **Mevlan Zade Rifat** Dark pages of the Ottoman revolution and the policy of Ittihat to annihilate Armenians, Halep, 1929, Yerevan, 1990, pp. 88-101.

<sup>2</sup> **S. Akuni** History of annihilation of a million Armenians, K.Polis, 1921, pp. 187-188.

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<sup>1</sup> Osmantsi \_ inhabitant of Ottoman Empire.

have committed crimes, murders or have evaded from military service. If by setting them free we can make them obey us, and distribute them into groups. I think we will create a very good special organization<sup>1</sup>.

### **Opening the session of the Ottoman parliament, Ahmad Riza issued a declaration on December 2, 1918**

Beginning with our participation in the war until the fall of the government of Taleat Pasha, and because of the errors made by him, the crimes, massacres, public crimes, insecurity of the person, confiscation of estates and buildings, and the exploitation exercised towards the Ottoman people, I have demanded that the general prosecutor's office start trial in the name of the public rights and the criminals be disclosed and brought to justice<sup>2</sup>.

### **Djema's - former manager of Yozghat, testimony in the military court.**

The criminals of the prisons were used to carry out the massacres of Armenians. I heard this from Yozghat's my cook. Her brother was also in prison because he had committed murder. The cook told me that her brother had been set free from prison to kill Armenians<sup>3</sup>.

### **Note of the Entente powers of May 24, which was submitted to the Ottoman government through the agency "Havas".**

The authorities of France, England and Russia unanimously agree that the following notification be made public.

More than a month the Turkish and the Kurd population, in cooperation with the Ottoman governmental officials and, moreover, with their support,

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<sup>1</sup> **Mevlan Zade Rifat** Dark pages of the Ottoman revolution, pp. 107-112.

<sup>2</sup> "Time," 13.12.1918.

<sup>3</sup> Archives of Jerusalem, number M 534.

killed Armenians unsparingly. This slaughter had taken place particularly in Erzurum, Derjan, Bitlis, Mush, Sasun, Zeitun, and in the whole area of Cilicia by the middle of April. Having annihilated almost the whole population in the villages near Van, the Ottoman Empire became dangerous for the harmless Armenians living in the capital.

The authorities of the Entente informed Bab Ali publicly that for this newest slaughter exercised in Turkey against humanity and civilization, not only the members of the Ottoman government will be specially responsible, but also all those who have participated or will participate in these butcheries<sup>1</sup>.

### **Directive on apostasy signed by Taleat, number 61/666 (of November 26, 1915) of the committee of the ministry of domestic affairs for accommodating the tribal groups and refugees.**

**Article 1.** Apostasy of the Armenians is accepted who have remained in their settlements and have not been deported.

**Article 2.** The apostasy of those will be accepted who have been left on half the way by special order during the deportation and have been sent to their homes or somewhere else.

**Article 3.** Those Armenians whose apostasy is accepted according to the above mentioned conditions, should receive their property, and if it is sold – its value.

**Article 4.** It was considered expedient that during the deportation the women and girls who married the Mohammedans locally should be given houses from the deserted buildings.

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<sup>1</sup> Memoirs of the Great Genocide, p. 1091.

**Article 5.** When the inhabitants of the provinces, villages and districts submit requests to become Muslims individually or on a mass scale, apostasy formalities should be carried out and after distributing them among villages, care should be taken that the number of the Armenians in that locality not exceed 5 % compared with the Islamic population.

**Article 6.** If the children have received permission to stay in certain places and the sum received from selling the property belonging to the children, is completely or partially allocated to pay their debts, then those children should be given something in return from the deserted properly registered property in the name of the state<sup>1</sup>.

### **The announcement of Enver Pasha at the meeting of the Turkish, Kurdish and Arab celebrities.**

Pashas and heroes.

For the sake of Pashas and heroes of the Ottoman Empire, I welcome the heroic sons of our motherland, because while realizing our national ideal, we cleared our motherland of the *giavur* Armenians. I visited the eastern provinces myself: Anatolia, Arabia, Mesopotamia. I saw with my own eyes and will stress the patriotic service of all of you.

I regret to say, that in many places there are Armenian archins over 8-10 years alive or are adopted or converted to Turks... Our only goal is to destroy the *giavur* Armenian generation completely from the earth. Not to leave even one as a sample.

This must be our motto everywhere...

So, I oblige you when you return to your regions, make another effort to eliminate the Armenians from the earth.

Everywhere I visited I didn't see any distinctions in the means. Good for you. Towns and villages were burnt down, the places of prayers destroyed, the population deported and killed. The Ottoman motherland is cleared of the lawless. Our only goal is clear-cut - to clear our country of these irreligious people, to make the Ottoman Empire united, with one religion, homogeneous, we won't put up with the idea that the sword of Damocles hang above us... That sword will never appear in the sky of the Ottoman Empire when all the Armenians are annihilated...

Good for you... You have done a good job...

At the decision of His Majesty Emperor and the Council of ministers there will be promotion of ranks and positions and rewards for those who have proved their loyalty to the most powerful Ottoman Empire...

Now I am addressing you to clear the area of Halep, Mosul and especially Niseibin of the Armenians completely<sup>1</sup>...

### **Mahmed Bei – a slaughter, Cheteachief**

I can boast, the whole world may witness that I have assisted the government and carried out all its orders loyally.

I am proud to say that I have killed more than 4-500 *giavurs*<sup>2</sup> with my hand (extending his right hand).

... more than 8000 have been sent to the green pastures with my own efforts and my horsemen... About two years ago the governor from our tribe Ras Ul Aini called me personally and I went to him. He said it was time to begin the work. Here you are, the arena is open. I have received official directive to destroy the *giavurs*. You are a trustworthy person, collect your courageous people, here is a letter to the Mutesarif of Der Zor. You will get the orders from him, and I hope you won't let me down. I got ready at once

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<sup>1</sup> Shavershan, Armenian Great Genocide, Buenos Aires, 1987, pp. 467-468.

<sup>2</sup> *giavur* \_ contemptuous name of Armenians.

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<sup>1</sup> Griker The documentary history of the Armenian massacre of Eozdat. pp. 327-366.



and the next day with 200 horsemen I left for Der Zor. What we saw here amazed me, brother, as if we were in Mush or in Van, the Armenians had settled here like they were in their own homes: the shopkeepers were from them, the tradesmen were from them, the teachers were the giavurs, finally everything was in the hands of giavurs. The former damned Mutesarif (governor) of Der Zor had granted them everything...

We started to chase the giavurs... We began to kill the Armenians who were in tents in the country. The police had empowered me to do what I could. I crossed the bridge at once and surrounded the tents inhabited by 10 thousand Armenians with my 200 horsemen and the Arab forces, whom only I gave orders... We began the search at once... Weapons, money, goods of all kinds, to capture the beautiful women. Being there for the first time, I didn't want to do harm to their lives. We had hardly approached them, when they began to fire at us with pistols... We took up arms and fired at them from all four parts.

The Mutesarif, the head of the police and the gendarmes came who helped us... After four hours of continuous shooting we went to the tents with swords, and sabers... We had never seen so much wealth, so much luxury. Elderly people, young people, women, children were all under our feet... This work cost us much, because it was a difficult job to plunder one by one, search and look for beautiful women in the dark of the night. But we did a good job. It was past midnight when we retreated, we had a whole heap of what we had robbed, because the next day we were to divide it among the Mutesarif and the policeman Mudiri. Half of the plunder was to be given to me, and I was to give a share to my horsemen servants... One of my servants... had brought 5 women – girls for me, they were very beautiful. At the same time three commanders of my horsemen came and said that the giavurs had swallowed their gold when they were still alive. Their bodies were to be dissected to take the money out. I approved of that and we carried it out in the morning...

Remaining with the women, I came up to them, but these disgusting things attacked me like a devil, held my hands and struck with their fists, these shameless creatures wanted to take my pistol. Fortunately one of the servants came in, and fired at one of the women who, like a wounded bull, struck my testicles. I fainted. My four servants, who had come to help me, tied the four women. I gave the wounded woman to one of my servants to rape before she died in the presence of everybody. After enjoying for some time, a mat was brought, her breasts were cut and given to her, then she was rolled in the mat, only her feet were out and began to tickle her and in this way we made her die within half an hour. I raped the other four when tied. The last of them struck me with her head in such a way that my nose bled. After that my servants raped them. We took them to the river in the night. My servants standing on both banks of the river pulled the rope when the women sank and when they appeared to the surface, they loosened the rope, and the women again sank, this fun lasted for a long time until the women got drowned.

At dawn we opened the abdomens of the dead Armenians and took out the gold coins, then we dug pits and after extracting the golden teeth of the Armenians we buried them.

On the left of Khapur we were chasing a huge crowd. The Mutesarif of Der Zor and the governor were there too. I was ordered to take 2000 giavurs and look at Ijab. In the evening we separated the men from the women 500 in number, disrobed them and buried together. We disrobed the women as well, extracted their golden teeth... then the rape and the game of death started.

While we were loading the horses with the plunder, the shouts of the women and the children shocked the air. Those who managed to toss the children up and while they were reaching the ground they fell on the stuck out sabre, or who broke the infants' skull with one blow of his fist, or by biting the infants' neck he cut its head, were rewarded. The women were more hardly than the children. They were weak because of the heat, hunger and thirst, but the appetite of our brave men was great. Everything was going

on in a military way. The orders were carried out in such harmony that the women who were under our brave men admired in wonderment. Those, who revolted, their breasts were cut and thrown to their mouths and eyes. So, the one who revolted did not avoid dishonor even if she died...

The outdoor hours under the moon light were more than interesting. There were pregnant women as well who needed a nurse but my brave men possessed that skill as well, one blow of the sabre was enough... to take the infant out of its mother's belly. After all this was over, those who had remained alive were killed by various tortures. As far as men were concerned, we took them with us by the blows of the guns, we left that area in two hours and at 4 o'clock reached an open field and made them stand in a row to take aim under the moon light. Having got bored with our firing for 3 hours we stopped shooting and took to sabers and when we made sure that everybody was dead, we poured the fuel out of the tin pots on their dead bodies and burned. We had a wonderful supper there, sang, danced near the flames of the people's illumination. It was about 9 o'clock, the illumination was gradually fading. At dawn, when we set off on horsebacks, the flames were still sparkling vaguely and the fat liquid was flowing on the surface of the field drying every plant<sup>1</sup>.

#### **Hasan, a choachman about the murder of D. Varuzhan and his four friends**

(One day somebody came to our place) and ordered that I had to go to a place at a distance of a quarter of an hour from the village in my carriage at the disposal of the police... I had to obey... A police official with a gendarme was there, as well as five effendis exiled from Polis to Chankm. One of them

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<sup>1</sup> K. Gabikean Genocide of the Pokun Armenia and the great capital of Sebastia, Boston. 1924 or Memoirs of the Great Genocide, pp. 540-550.

was young with a black beard and twinkling eyes... The police official offered my carriage to them...

We were at a distance of half an hour from Tune, when the same person (whom Hasan had seen the previous day) suddenly appeared in front of us. He came straight to my carriage, got off his horse and holding the reins of my horses, wanted to direct the carriage under a hill off the road to a deep canyon which had been formed by flood...

At that moment four people appeared in front of us armed to the teeth. The stranger, who seemed to be their chief, made a sign. Those people... got the five exiles out of the carriage, ordered them to hand in the money they had. But as their hands were tied the policemen undertook the search and robbed everything... The policemen whispered a few words in the ear of the Chetens' chief...and getting on the other carriage (the policemen) left. I was authorized to return to town. Coming up to the exiles, the four Chetens and their chief ordered them to follow them... Crossing the canyon they got to the other side where the little forest decorated the hill...the people attacked the effendis, took off their clothes and disrobed them completely...

...Those poor victims were tied to the tree separately... then the chief of the Cheteis and his people striped their daggers and began to slaughter them slowly and quietly<sup>1</sup>.

#### **From the indictment of the party "Union and Progress" leaders' trial.**

According to a special law, the caravans of the deportees were attacked and destroyed by specially organized gangs and their property and utensils were robbed. Those (deeds) led the country to an extremely agitated and uneasy state. And the government, instead of punishing the criminals who undertook those massacres and robberies, on the contrary, dismissed the

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<sup>1</sup> Haikashen Annals, Polis, 1922 or Memoirs of the Great Genocide, pp. 375-376.

valiners and mutesarifs who refused to take the responsibility of the deportations and massacres. To destroy a whole nation forming a separate community in that way, to annihilate and plunder their property had been thought of and carried out by the secret grouping of the party of blood-sucking people.

One of the crimes of the party "Union and Progress" is the law of deportation thought of by the central committee and the tragedy observed in all parts of the Ottoman Empire through its execution. It is completely proved that the deportation in all the eastern vilayets had been thought of and carried out by the Teshkilat Mahsuse group consisting of the leading members of the party Union and Progress, whose chairman was B. Shakir Bei in that period. And for the solution of that problem B. Shakir Bei made use of the regional responsible secretaries, attorneys, and inspectors of the party Union and Progress.

The idea to give special instructions to the valins of a number of vilayets during the deportation of the Armenians was again the result of the malicious ideas of a number of members of the central committee of the party...

It is completely proved that the severity of mutual vindictiveness among all the elements of the empire has resulted from the decisions and secret deals of the central committee<sup>1</sup>.

**An extract from the indictment of Sam Bei, general prosecutor, uttered on February 5, 1919, during the trial of the massacres of the Armenians of Yozgat.**

Justice should be completely administered against the organizers of these events (massacres) directed against civilization to clear away the same bloody vices by which they wanted to discredit the whole Turkish nation and present it to the public as it was...

This (the deportation) is generally the greatest punishment, which as a result of causing greatest damage to the economy of the country, is imp-

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<sup>1</sup> "Takvim – I Vekai", 1919, number 3571.

mented as an administrative and punishing means towards only suspicious, bad and dangerous people...

Besides, the officials having a number of mean people at hand and used them as a tool, the deportation took such a shameful and tragic nature that it is impossible to tell all the details through human language. Even the money those poor people had for bread was taken away by force...

These painful deeds, no matter how they are viewed, are a crime, and those who ordered, those who exercised and those who caused them, should be taken to this court<sup>1</sup>...

**T. Akcham – a historian**

The genocide of Armenians is the first planned mass massacre of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. One can claim, that it served as an example for future such actions. It is also known, that in the light of the general logic of the development of events in recent years, this question acquires actual importance. It is explained not only by the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict. This issue is especially actual for us connected with the issue of the Kurds. This refers to the genocide of Armenians in the past and the inner connection of the present-day issue of the Kurds. The connecting link between them is the Turkish nationalism.

The question whether there has been a genocide or not is not discussed here. On the contrary, we are looking for the answer to the question - why we refuse to accept the genocide and avoid discussions on this problem. The events, as a result of which, even if we rely on the Turkish official sources, 300.000 people became victims, and according to certain Turkish official sources of those times, this figure is 800.000, almost in all the writings it is

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<sup>1</sup> "Battle", February 6, 1919.

argumented and justified by “bad climatic conditions,” “the age of the victims,” “hunger” and so on. Digrace before mankind. In the Turkish writings there is no sign of pain that only in one year a great amount of people became victims. With clear conscience they say; “They deserved it.” Instead of being terrified by those figures (1000 people on average a day) and thinking, how to prevent such things in the future, the authors of these writings are for the following orientation: “Let it be a lesson for them, otherwise we will do the same”, instead of rising against barbarism, being sorry for what has been done, they prefer to justify it. Such a position is fraught with the deduction that in similar conditions we will act in the same way.

This is an emotional state and one should be careful.

In advance I hear the objection of my opponents: “Armenians also killed Turks, didn’t they?” According to approximate data after 1917, for the purpose of revenge, the number of the Turkish peasants killed by Armenians is 40.000. A massacre is a massacre and it cannot be justified in any way. But one should take into consideration the following fact. Though there is no special distinction between the concepts “massacre” and “genocide” in the Turkish language, there is an essential difference between them. What happened in 1915, pursued the goal of annihilating a whole nation. This action had been planned by the state, in particular by the party which was at the controls of the government and was carried out through bureaucratic structures. And the massacre is of more, local, domestic, restrictic nature.

The national peculiarity of the Turks...became the reason to put a “taboo” on the Armenian Issue. In the works by Turkish authors devoted to the Armenian Issue, we face an awful phenomenon – they are written either by official state employees or by nationalistic or by authors having an Islamic orientation. The basic object of the attacks is the Armenians who are blamed for “black ingratitude” and slander, using a very aggressive language...

The statement prevails that in reality it was not Armenians who became victims but the Turks... Proceeding from this, a number of authors in their works tell about the “atrocities of Armenians”, about the “millions of Mohammedans” killed by Armenians.

As the basic goal was to preserve the structure of the multiracial state, the representatives of the Turkish ethnos could not openly display their national “self”. The ideology was proclaimed officially, which enabled to unite all the peoples of the empire into one whole. That is why, they had disguised their Panturkish essence by 1914 under the doctrine of Panosmanism. Before the Balkan wars, members of the Ittihat who had the lever of the government, refused the obvious defense of the ideology of Panturkism, however, after these wars, when the majority of national minorities said goodbye to the Ottoman state, the Panturkish essence of the “madcap” Ittihatci, got free from the obligatory sleepiness and the Turks, at last, spoke loudly about their existence and in the conditions of haste, resulting from the above mentioned being late, they began to implement the policy of ification Turk.

The first ideologists of Panturkism mentioned proudly, that one of their spiritual fathers became the famous ideologist of racism Gabino.

Zia Geokalp laid the foundation of the aggressive nationalism according to which “the borders of the Turks’ motherland include all those areas where Turkish is spoken and there is Turkish culture”.

... The belief is too deep in our consciousness, that we Turks are superior to other peoples and tribes and have the right to rule them...

...Thanks to Islam, the Turks had always been in the privileged state of a “ruling nation”. It is often stated that Islam is tolerant towards other religions. But that “tolerance” presupposed a dependent state for those whom they tolerated. The superiority of Mohammedans over giavurs had been deeply rooted in the codes of morality and in traditions, and there could be no word that they would give up the domineering state.

... The struggle of the Christian minority for independence turned into a conflict on religious basis very quickly ...

Though the feeling of hatred had existed still before Tanzimat, it reached extremity after proclaiming the principle of equality for all the subjects.

In the Armenian massacres the danger of losing the superiority of the Turks over them did not play the last role either. In a number of works with an anti-Armenian nature, the actions of the Turks are presented as “a natural and understandable reaction of the Mohammedans”.

One can state, that before the Liberation War in the Turkish public opinion, in particular, among the opposition, the idea prevailed that the Turks were the inheritors of the powerful and glorious empire, which should be restored.

An account was presented to the Armenians for all the Christian minorities separated from the Empire. And a higher price was decided...

The Armenian massacres in the Ottoman Empire have an old history. It is necessary to divide them into three periods, according to their nature and the way of implementation... The first period involves the years 1890-1909, the second 1915-1917, and the third started from the year 1918. The massacres of the Armenian population have quite an interesting evolution. In the first period they bore basically a local nature and were carried out in the framework of the policy of consistently exerting pressures on the non-Turkish ethnoreligious groupings. And that policy was implemented not only by the state. The ways of its implementation were the following:

- Constant attacks of Kurd and Mohammedan tribes on Armenian villages, plunder, kidnapping girls, mass killings;
- Civil war, clash between the Mohammedans and Armenians and massacre, which was carried out during those clashes;
- Massacres, which had been conducted by the state under the pretence of collecting taxes, chasing gang groups, rebellions of Armenians and suppressing the “disorderlinesses”.

The Armenians’ massacres bore a more systematic nature especially after creating the regiments of Hamid, in 1890. All the costs of these unions...

were covered by the income gained through attacks, plunder, and massacres. The greatest massacres took place in the years 1894-1896...

... The Islamic motif came to the fore as far as the Armenians were concerned... A movement of humiliating Armenians as an ethnic and religious grouping was beginning in the society. The authorities began to pursue a racist policy against Armenians.

For example, Sultan Abdul Hamid calls Armenians “degenerative community”, “eternal slaves”... Knowing perfectly that the stable position of Armenians in society is explained by their economic might, the Sultan desires to destroy that might through discriminative policy.

In this atmosphere it was not difficult at all to convince the Turks that the Armenians were fierce enemies and wanted to take the last piece of bread from them. They started to view the Armenian Issue as the issue of life or death for the Empire...

Thus, unlike the other Christian peoples, the massacres of the Armenians had an organized nature by the official authorities. The government reacted to every event. The attacks on Armenians and their slaughters were used in the Muslim population to strengthen the influence of the state.

... Abdul Hamid armed the Muslim population and made up artificial pretexts to instigate them against Armenians. The participants of the massacres, instead of being punished, were encouraged.

At the same time for the first time not ambiguous calls were heard: to annihilate a whole nation massively as a means to the solution of the Armenian Issue.

In 1915-1917, the massacre basically differed from the previous ones by its nature. It was decided to bury the Armenian Issue for ever. ... probably, the moment had come when the young Turks came to the conclusion, that they would not be able to solve the Armenian issue step by step and a “radical solution” was necessary.

It is officially accepted to consider the beginning of the Armenian Genocide April 24-25, 1915. However, this is a more symbolic date. The deportation and the mass killings had started long before that...

The fact attracts attention that the information given by those people (eye witnesses), though they had been in service in various places and had prepared reports independent of one another, coincided basically, which comes to prove that there had been a united program of (annihilating the Armenians)... in reality the peculiarity of the Armenians' Genocide is its seemingly chaotic nature. The first impression is that it is not the planned actions of the center that count, but the number of massacres which had been conducted as a result of a careless attitude of the local authorities to control the disobedient crowds...

The deportation lasted two years and during that period the Armenians either died of hunger or became victims of mass butcheries. And this was carried by the order from the above. Even the fact that neither in the places where they were sent, nor on the way and neither in the new place nothing was undertaken to organize the move of a whole nation, is a proof, that the deliberation of the government was to annihilate the Armenians from the earth...

The Armenians had been declared a suspicious and untrustworthy nation still before the war began. On September 6, 1914 the Ottoman Empire had sent coded directions to the vilayets which had a dense Armenian population, demanding to follow the leaders and the teachers of the Armenian political parties...

Real use of the genocide was made by the state, which had a chance to create a national state in the area of Anatolia. We can even state that the genocide of the Armenians turned out to be a more "efficient" action which was carried out for this very purpose.

And really all the rulers of the Ottoman Empire and the government of the young Turks were most afraid that the Christian minority would own Anatolia. So, to clear this geographical area of the Christians was not confined only to the Armenians and was carried out still before the World War and Turkification of Anatolia, especially after the Balkan war, became the central policy of the government.

From the memoirs of Jelal Baiar it appears, that still before the beginning of the war a detailed plan of deportation of the Christians had been worked out...

... The genocide of the Armenians can be considered as a constituent part of Turkification of Anatolia.

The unexpected defeat (at the beginning of the war) reminded the Turks about the impending collapse, which became a decisive factor to make a decision about the genocide. It is interesting that still before the war a detailed plan of actions had been made in case of defeat... In case of the military defeat of Turkey, it was decided to get firmly established in Anatolia and to continue the struggle there...

The realization of this plan became possible just after the complete defeat of the Turkish army at Sarighamish...

As a result of permanent loss of areas in Europe and the ruin of the hopes to create Great Turan, the Turks were left only with the areas of Anatolia. In the national psychology of the Turks, Anatolia was given an important place... The realization of its strategic importance happened after the 70's of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

And now (during the first world war) the Turks could lose their last shelter as well, the last piece of the Turkish motherland – Anatolia... The survival of the state and the Turks could be guaranteed only in Anatolia... The centennial process of driving the Turks away from Europe, turned Anatolia into an important, vital area for the Turks...

At first the Armenians were converted to Muslims by force and those who agreed were not deported. However, after some time the number of adopting Islam reached threatening figures which upset the plans of the government. That was why, it was decided to exile all those with an Armenian origin regardless of the religion.

The characteristic feature of the Armenian Genocide is that the civilian population participated in it as well... The civilian population was eagerly

participating in the annihilation of the Armenians, robbing their property, kidnapping women and girls, committing brutal murders...

Official Turkey persistently refused to admit the genocide, putting a taboo on that issue and did not allow discussions about it. And ordinary citizens almost all admitted the reality of that crime. The stories about the genocide pass from generation to generation. It seems, that there is nobody who doesn't know that "there is an impression among the people which testifies to the fact of the Armenian Genocide." However, the society at the same time is indifferent and accepts the nihilistic orientation of the official authorities in a non-critical way...

The Turks' wish to forget the past can be explained by two reasons;

1. The horrible nature of the committed crime,
2. By the reluctance to come back to the nightmare of that period.

The societies of independence were not created for the purpose of fighting against the foreign invasion. The Turks were induced to do this because of the invasion of the Greeks and the creating the Armenian state, as well as the feeling of the horror that upon return the Armenians would eventually take revenge on what they had done...

The majority of the detachments of home guardsmen were created by the members of Teshkilat Makhsuse – an organizer of the genocide. In the first period of the resistance, when the regular army was still weak, these detachments played an important role in the national movement. As a rule, they were guided by the volunteers of the party Union and Progress and the agents of Teshkilat Makhsuse who had played an important role in the deportation of the Greeks (Armenians) and then had gone underground...

The denial of the Armenian genocide responded to the vital interests of the population of the eastern vilayets. It was one of the basic reasons to establish a defense union for the protection of the rights of the eastern vilayets...

The undertaker of creating such societies was the local authority which had become rich having appropriated the property left by the Armenians and was afraid of their return.

Consequently, the basic reason of creating societies to protect the rights by the representatives of the local authorities and rendering assistance to Kemalists, was the blind fear of the vindictiveness of the Armenians for the crimes having been committed.

In other words, the complicity of the Armenians to the genocide and the appropriation of the property, induced the wide layers of the Turkish society to wage a war of Independence.

The leaders of Kemal movement, though they made numerous declarations that they did not belong to the party of the young Turks, were always against trying the members of the party Ittihat... The government of Ankara considered punishment of the Ittihatci as a constituent part of the global plan to separate and destroy the Turks...

It was during the trial of Stambul that a death sentence was passed concerning Mustafa Kemal in his absence, wasn't it?

The government of Ankara could by no means fulfil the demand to call to account the criminals of the genocide (allies), because a considerable part of the agents of the Liberation War were people who had directly or indirectly participated in the genocide of the Armenians or had accumulated wealth as a result of it.

I think the following conclusion won't be an exaggeration – the Genocide of the Armenians played a decisive role in the organization and success of the war of Independence<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> T. Akcham Turkish national "I" and the Armenian issue, Moscow, 1955, pp. 9-11, 24-26, 34, 35, 41, 42, 47, 51, 56, 78, 80-82, 86-89, 104, 111, 120, 130, 135, 137, 141-144.

***“WE HAVE ALWAYS BUILT OUR HISTORY ON DENIAL AND RENOUNCEMENT”<sup>1</sup>***

*(an interview with historian Taner Akchan<sup>2</sup>)*

**Arife Kioshe** - Prime-minister Erdogan announced recently, that he could drive out of the country 100 thousand Armenians who work illegally.

How do you appreciate Erdogan’s these words? Do the Armenians face another threat of exile?

**Taner Akcham** When I heard Erdogan’s words for the first time, I thought that now we have completely deserved the right to become a member of Europe. This is not a joke, I am quite serious. Because Europe is full of parties which pursue the policy of driving out the illegal emigrant employees working in their countries. As I lived in Germany for 15 years, I know, there are a great number of German nationalists, conservative parties and rightsiders, who wanted to drive me out.

Earlier Erdogan had announced that driving the Christians out of this country was the result of a fascist way of thinking. Now that he declares that he intends to drive out the Christians working illegally in his country, let it not surprise you that it will remind everybody of the exile and slaughter of the Armenians of 1915. I suppose that the Turkish people is fed up with 90-year old lies and will embrace the one, who will come and say bravely, yes, brother, such a thing has happened.

**Arife Kioshe** Every time there is a threat to the Armenians living in Turkey, as you have mentioned, everybody remembers at once the exile and the events of the year 1915.

According to you, what is the role of the Armenian Issue in the Turkish national identity?

**Taner Akcham.** This was officially formulated some time ago by the minister of defence of Turkey in Europe: “If we had not driven out the Christians, we would not have been able to establish the Turkish state”.

This is a true statement. Such words were uttered for example, by Halil Mentesh, who was holding the position of the minister of foreign affairs and the chairman of the national assembly under the government of the party “Union and Progress.” There are words in a letter written by him in Malta referring to the fact that if they had not driven out of the country the Armenians and the Greeks, they would not have been able to establish this state. Such words were more clearly said in 1920 in the national assembly of Ankara by Hasan Fehmi: “Before we realized the exile, we knew that we would be called murderers”, he says and asks “Why did we take the risk to be called murderers?” He is asking the question and he himself gives the answer. “We had to do it for the well-being of our adored country.” But at that time a lot more brave people could speak this way. The brief contents of the issue is as follows: the Republic of Turkey was created as a result of the Armenian genocide of 1915, too. Part of the public figures who established our republic were direct participants of the bloodshed or were well aware of it. Every nation has a group of its national heroes, to settle a score with them, is rather difficult or if there are any crimes in their deeds, to face them. The glory of the public figures who have established the Republic of Turkey, is the inseparable part of our national identity. To criticize or to blame them, is somewhat like self-accusation and this is very difficult. Only the societies perceiving a democratic culture are able to do this .

This complex of Turkey is at the same time the problem of the left-siders. You know, our left-side traditions viewed the liberation struggle as an anti-imperialist struggle against seven states. That is why the figures engaged in the liberation struggle, occupy a special and an important place for us. I remember how the left-siders traditionally defended themselves in the courts. They said, that they were the second national army, that the liberation army was unable to realize the revolution properly and they would continue the revolution from the point they had left unfinished. You know, the generation of 1968 defined itself as a national army. That is, the national army has



formed part of our left identity. However, there are people in that group who had a most direct contact with the crime. Here I want to clarify something: I am saying this not to blame a whole generation whose goal was to get rid of the yoke of foreigners. But there are people among the founders of the Republic of Turkey who were participants of the genocide of 1915 or knew about it, and our difficulty to speak freely results from this as well.

**Arife Kioshe** In one of Your articles you have said that during WWI, after the defeat of the Ottomans, they confronted two issues: one of them was what will happen to the territories of the Ottoman state and the right of autocracy and the second was the crimes committed against their own citizens by the party "Union and Progress". You also mention that these two questions have not been forgotten. Could you elaborate on them?

**Taner Akcham** Just after 1918, when Turkey came out of the war defeated, peace negotiations started in Paris there were two central issues for the Ottomans. First of all, would the Ottoman state preserve its territorial integrity? There were two views on the issue – the first was the point, which the Turkish national movement and even the Istanbul government supported.

According to this, the territories left with the Ottomans and which were not yet occupied, were not to be touched, and in 1918 by the truce of Mudros the borders to be determined were to be recognized as the borders of the Ottoman state (at that time there was no notion about the Republic of Turkey yet). This was later to be called the policy of the national pact, which we were supposed to defend, and there were no serious disagreements between the governments of Istanbul and Ankara on this issue. And the second was the viewpoint of the winning states; they wanted to divide Anatolia among themselves and other nations. Greeks, Kurds, Armenians all wanted to establish their states on these territories. That is, the first question was as follows: were the territories to be divided, and if yes, who and which

territory would get? And the second was the question of the crimes committed during the war. England and France used the atrocities committed by the Ottoman state to get America involved in the war, and had declared to the whole world that they would punish the Ottoman rulers. The «Green book» by Toinbi, the memoirs of Morgentau were published at that time to get America involved in the war. During the whole war the allies often used the settlement that there was no obstacle to the crimes of the barbarian Turks, to stop the criminal acts committed against their own subjects. The question discussed in Paris was as follows: what punishment would be fixed for those who had committed these faults?

There are several opinions on this issue as well.

**Arife Kioshe.** What are these opinions?

**Taner Akcham** The opinion of the nationalist government of Ankara was as follows: these criminal acts have been committed and let these responsible be sued, but they are 3-5 members of Ittihat and we can't accept the fact that the whole Turkish nation should be punished besides them. On the contrary, the winning states at the head of the English said that the punishment couldn't be limited by 3-4 members of Ittihat and wanted the list of the sinners to be enlarged. Besides the punishment of individuals, they demanded the punishment of the whole Turkish nation. And that punishment was to be the division of the remaining lands of Anatolia among other nations. As it was, that was the most sensitive point of the issue. In 1919, in April the person, called the Highest Commissar of Istanbul, in the letter addressed to the peace negotiations in Paris, says in a very clear way about this situation: "I consider both ways of punishing Turkey to the point", he said. "First by punishing those who have committed this sin, will be a lesson for the Turks. The second point is that Turkey should be turned into such a small state, that it won't be able to commit such a criminal act any longer." That is, the division of the territory of Anatolia was put on the agenda and was brought to life not as a necessity of the imperialist policy, but as a

punishment for Turkey which had committed a sin against humanity. At that time both Mustafa Kemal in Ankara, and the government of Stambul said: "Let's punish the transgressors, but it should not be done by dividing Anatolia". It should be noted that at that time everybody admitted that a criminal act had been committed: everybody defended the thought that the sinners should be punished. But Ankara and Stambul were against the idea that the punishment be in the form of dividing Anatolia. Ankara, defending the punishment on the one hand, was against founding a national pact on the other one.

A very important thing happened in Stambul during this time. The courts founded by the Ottoman government whose objective was to try the members of the Ittihat who had committed the massacre of the Armenians, began to try the vanguards of the nationalistic movement defending the National pact as well. Mustafa Kemal and his friends were sentenced to death as well in their absence. The same courts began to try those who wanted national independence and preservation of Ottoman autocracy over the remaining territories, and those who were accused of slaughtering Armenians. The court trying the murderers of the Armenians' massacre, also tried the leaders who gave birth to the struggle of independence. I think it was here that the knot was untied. By that moment Ankara considered the accusation of these responsible for 1915 to be a necessary price for the national pact, which was to be paid and assisted it. But when Ankara realized that despite the individual punishment, it would not be able to defend the national pact, even they could not defend themselves, changed its position. That is, remembering the year 1915, demanding punishment for the sinners began to be perceived as "division of the motherland and the nation." Thus, a strange logic was formulated; if you say that 1915 is genocide, the sinners should be punished, it means that at the same time you say "let Anatolia be divided." Because of this while trying Hrant Dink and Mr. Sargis, the court decided that the "use of the word genocide means to put on the agenda the division of the Republic of Turkey." In short, in the 1920s, we admitted clearly that there had been a massacre, such criminal acts had been com-

mitted against the Armenians, but when England identified the punishment of the murderers with the division of Anatolia, since then the movement of Anatolia changed its mind on this issue. After that we forgot that we defended the idea of punishing the murderers. That is why, my basic idea is this and I will say it: if England had accepted the offer of Kemal and the government of Turkey, that is, if they had recognized the borders of today's Turkish Republic as the borders of those of the then Ottoman Empire, and had demanded, today we would speak about the Ittihatci in the way we speak about German Nazis.

I want to bring a couple of examples how the criminal acts against the Armenians were criticized at that time. In October, 1919 in Amasia, the authorities of Stambul and Ankara signed five protocols. It was mentioned in the first protocol that it was a political necessity to try the sinners of the 1915 exile. Later Kemal, while writing the program of his group in the Mejlis of Ankara formed after the elections, came back to that problem and mentioned, that the punishment of those who had committed criminal acts should not remain on paper, a real punishment is necessary as a lesson for everybody. In 1920 at the opening ceremony of Mejlis in Ankara, in his speech he qualified the massacre of 1919 as "a shameful act." That is to say, during the years 1918-21 there was a unanimous opinion that the Armenians had undergone mass extermination, and the members of Ittihat are responsible for those mass exterminations and they must be punished. This was spoken about openly. But when it was required that instead of punishing the Ittihatci and individuals, the punishment be in the form of dividing a whole state, then we forgot that question.

**Arife Kioshe** When we speak about the events of 1915, first of all we recall: what did Armenians do? What do you think about it?

**Taner Akcham** Yes, the moment we begin to discuss what happened in 1915, they say at once that the Armenians did this or that, too. This is a senseless and fruitless discussion. What Armenians did is not important at

all, if we approach that point if there was or not a genocide against them. Therefore, anyone who wants to discuss how to qualify what was committed against the Armenians in 1915, first of all it is difficult for him to put aside the problem what the Armenians did. Such a nonsense discussion cannot be. I want to clarify my point: there is a dead man and there is somebody standing above him. The point is as follows: "has the man on the ground been killed?" or "has the man standing next to him killed him?" In answering this question we will say either "he has killed" or "has not killed." Now while answering this question, if you begin to tell what the man lying on the ground did before dying, you will speak nonsense, because the point is not what the dead man had done before he was killed. The point is if the man lying on the ground is killed or not. That is to say, the discussion we have been having for 95 years whether the Armenians did this or that from the point of the genocide has only one sense, we are telling why we committed a genocide against the Armenians. The answer to the question of the genocide is whether the party "Union and Progress" has killed the Armenians or not. Whatever the Armenians did, whatever the reason, have the Ittihatci killed or not? If you say what the Armenians did, you would only say why the criminal act was committed. These might be only "extenuating circumstances" and not more.

**Arife Kioshe** What is Your answer to this question? For instance, they say that the Armenians were not killed by the Ittihatci consciously, that they died on the way during emigration because of hunger, unfavorable conditions and that's why these events cannot be called a "genocide".

**Taner Akcham** According to one viewpoint the party "Union and Progress" could not have led a policy, the goal of which was to exterminate the Armenians. All right. How many killed are there? As far as the figures are concerned, everybody seems to be of the same opinion. If we leave aside the exaggerations, according to the official Ottoman data of 1919, 800 thousand

Armenians were exterminated. It is easy to say 800 thousand Armenians have been exterminated and it is clear that the state is responsible for killing so many people, and we are explaining such a horrible figure through this or that. Let us consider this answer in more detail: let's say that 800 thousand people died of "hunger, unfavorable conditions, incomprehensible causes" and so on. All right, but in the same years 1916, 1917, 1918 the Ottoman government evacuated more than 1.5 Muslims without any problem. All right, how is that the state evacuated more than 1.5 Muslims without any problem, but was unable to prevent to massacre of about a million Armenians?

These slaughters did not take place at once: they occurred during two years, week by week, month by month. A question might be addressed to the Ottoman authorities.

"You knew about the deaths, all right, but why did you not stop the exile?" There are telegrams from the governors. leaders of provinces which read that "there is no safety, I cannot exile ," in answer to this, you order, whatever happens, exile. That is to say, you predict the deaths. You will say, "it was war time, it was difficult», and the person who says such things is called a murderer. The question is so simple. That is, if you know, that the result of your actions is death and in spite of this, you continue your action, it means you are committing a sin realizing it. In fact, this is just what is called genocide.

There is an important point, too: the Armenians were exiled from all the regions of Anatolia – from Ankara, Bursa, Kutahia, Amasia, Tokat, Samsun, Edirne, Tekirdagh. These vilayets are important. See, where the Armenians are driven away from these vilayets: to the deserts of Siria and Irak. By the way, according to the Ottoman documents Siria and Irak had been declared a war area. You know, we have one official lie: they say "the Armenians will attack us from the rear, were attacking and, that is why, we removed them away from the war areas and took them to safer places for them not war against us." Now I am repeating the names of the vilayets –you are taking the

Armenians from Bolu, Kastamonu, Ankara, Mughla, Izmir, Kutahia, from the centre of Anatolia from the safest vilacts, where no case had ever been, and sent them directly to the war area to war against the English. Isn't there anything strange here...?

Another point as well: they say that the Armenians "died of hunger". But at that time the Ottoman government refused an offer of assistance from the USA and Germany. Those states addressed officially: they said, let us render help in the form of food, tents and in other forms, but it was refused. The representatives of the foreign countries willing to help the Armenians were threatened by death. The Turks or some other Armenians sending aids were arrested. That is to say, any kind of help was forbidden... They possessed the property the Armenians had left without paying them even a ghurush... It seems that these clear facts are enough to show that the party Ittihat had the objective to exterminate the Armenians...

**Arife Kioshe** You know, to prove whether there has been a genocide or not, the main point is whether it had a definite purpose. Isn't there any need for you to show and prove that the Ittihatci had the purpose to kill Armenians intentionally? Is there any document, which will show, what has been committed against Armenians is a genocide.

**Taner Akcham** There are quite a few documents and most of them are published. The question concerning the purpose is important. How to prove the purpose? Two types of sources are used in international law. First, it is necessary to have written documents, orders in the following forms: a decision has been made to exterminate this group. The criminals are not fools. They do not leave such traces behind. Even Hitler has not such an order. The second is the so-called problem of hate speech, which presupposes hatred and hostility towards the group killed. That is to say, if there had been notes and speeches connected with the disaster awaiting the Armenians and the Jews, about the necessity to exterminate, slaughter them, they could be used as a proof. The famous speech made by Hitler at the party

meeting in 1939 is such an example. But it is impossible to find such documents every time. In that case international law faces a serious problem: how to prove premeditation. In 1985, the subcommittee, which was engaged in this question in the UN, adopted a report called Whitaker. In this report something new appeared on the agenda connected with the problem of premeditated massacre. The essence of this novelty was in reality the enlargement of one of the rules of criminal law of England.

This is called a conscious carelessness. That is to say, if you have a purpose for a massacre and its possibility is seen in your actions but you do not prevent it, so it is conscious carelessness. This is enough to call what you have done a massacre. I am repeating, if they cannot find a document, which really shows premeditation and if the governmental group has no intention of a massacre, but as a result of its action people have died and nothing has been undertaken to prevent it, then it is considered to be premeditated.

Our people started the exile of the Armenians at the end of April and early in May, 1915. From May 1915 till the end of 1916 news reached them, that hundreds and thousands of Armenians were being killed and in this respect the Ottoman government took no measures. Even this is enough proof, that they had intended to commit a genocide. Here I can add something else. There is not a single document in the Ottoman archives sent to the centre from the states. I'll repeat, there are no telegrams, documents sent from the government of any state, province to Stambul in the archive, referring to the exile of the Armenians. Why isn't there any document coming to Stambul from Anatolia for two years repeatedly, because they informed about the cases of death. I can adduce two concrete examples. There is one document published in June, 1915. Under the compulsion of the Germans, Taleat Pasha sent a telegram to the governor of Diarbekir Reshid. In the telegram Taleat says: "According to our information, you are killing people in Diarbekir and, without discrimination, you are killing all the Christians. Whereas we have undertaken "these classification measures" exclusively for the Armenians. It is a mistake that we are implementing it

towards all the Christians. Let me know about the situation.” When I used this in Turkey as an important proof of murder and as a document, which showed the awareness of the government, Halachoghlu and his group said. You see, sir, as you see Taleat says, to stop the massacre. First of all, Taleat doesn't say to stop the bloodshed, but only let him know about the situation. Secondly, if 2 thousand people are killed by the governor, what will you do? You will start an investigation, won't you? But there is no investigation here. In my last book I published that while exiling the Armenians, the police and the gendarmerie of Diarbekir were granted highest official medals and financial rewards for their activity. This was done after committing murders in the above mentioned city.

A similar case is connected with Kemal bei – leader of the province of Boghazlyan: the commander of Boghazlyan Mustafa bei sends a telegram to Stambul where he mentions that the leader of the province Kemal bei is responsible for the murder of 3610 Armenians. What was the result? The position of the leader of the province of Boghazlyan was raised. That is to say, it is indirectly obvious, the Ittihatci were pursuing a conscious policy.

Besides these simple examples, there are also dozens of documents in my books, most of which shed light on the proceedings held in Stambul. For example, Behaeddin Shakir has a telegram, which says: “Let us know at once if you have killed or exiled those who are with you?” During the proceedings held in Stambul dozens of documents were discovered like this, directly connected with the massacre. For example, in one telegram sent by the military commander of Kesaria the expression “exile means slaughter” was clearly used.

The governor of Boghazlyan Kemal states in his testimony, that he has received an order to kill Armenians. The governor of Ankara Mazhar, leader of the state Yozghat Jemal in their written and oral testimonies given to the court said, that they had received secret orders from the secretaries of the party “Union and Progress”. And again in 1918, in November, during the meetings of the parliament, member of the government Reshid Pasha states in his speech. “I have held a position in the government for a very short time.

During this time I saw the documents of the ministry of home affairs. Along with the exile, an order of a massacre had been sent to provinces as well. Thus, we have enough proof at hand, referring to the fact, that orders of massacre were sent to regions.

**Arife Kioshe** In what way was the genocide realized? In what way were the Armenians killed?

**Taner Akcham** The Armenians were killed using four different methods. First, in the region of the Black Sea, in Trapizon and Samsun, the Armenians were driven to the shores and were drowned in the sea. In 1918, in October during Stambul meetings deputy Hafz Mehmet said about it. He mentioned that one of the province leaders was killed there because he opposed it. In 1919, in April and May during Stambul trial the very witness-survivors to the Trapizon massacre told about the cases of drowning in the sea. Second, they were killed in their settlements without even being exiled. Especially in the regions of Mush and Biblis, the Armenians were killed in their homes, or burnt alive in the churches. Third, the Armenians were killed in certain places by the secret unions of the party. Those secret unions attacked the karavans of the Armenian deportees and destroyed them. If their number did not satisfy, agreeing with the Kurd tribes, the Armenians were given to these tribes. These were the Kurds who cooperated with the government. The last means of murdering was to drive the Armenians to deserts and leaving them there without food. As a result, according to our data 800 thousand Armenians were completely massacred.

**Arife Kioshe** What do You think, is it possible that in a short period of time any Turkish government will recognize the genocide?

**Taner Akcham** There is no way out. It won't call it a genocide, it will be called otherwise, but will have to admit what has been done is a great

criminal act and a shame. I don't know if it will happen in 5, 10, 20 or 50 years. Turkey can't live covering up this crime. This is Turkey's shame. With this shame Turkey can neither become a member of European union nor have its place in the modern world. Simply, they won't allow. We are calling this centenary as an age of begging for pardon. Turkey was like a boiler: the ministry of foreign affairs was the lid, which was difficult for Turkey "to cover". Now this boiler is boiling over, it is already impossible to keep Turkey from the world in isolation. The boiler erupts from all places. In this age, in this world of globalization, at this level of technology, you cannot convince a Turk with lies, oaths. We have been told in Turkey for 95 years repeatedly that there are no Kurds.

When I was at a secondary school, we were given the books by Fahretti Krgzoghlu which read that "there are no Kurds, the Kurds are also Turks." These were scientific books. It was an academic work with notes and things like that. The Kurds are the Turks wandering in the mountains as if it had snowed, while walking on the snow the sound "Kiar, Kjurt" was heard from the footsteps, and that is why, the Turks living in the mountains were called Kurds, and so on. For 95 years we have been deadened by a lie, that there are "no Kurds." And at this moment what they say about the Armenian genocide is the following. "Nothing happened in 1915. Even if something happened the Armenians are responsible for that." They cannot go further with this lie. This is also deceit like a lie, that there are no Kurds. A state which cannot confront its own history successfully, is the same that a state cannot be democratic. Therefore, if you want to call into being democracy, you should confront the disgrace in your history. In the near future new ethnic groups will appear in Turkey as well, for example, dersimtsiners and will declare. "What has been done with us is a genocide as well. We demand its recognition."

**Arife Kioshe** All right, and what are the steps, the state should undertake in this respect? What is Your opinion to give back a territory or a compensation?

**Taner Akcham** First of all, the Turks should apologize. The Republic of Turkey should announce: "This is a serious disgrace and we apologize." The state can certainly say as well that "There is no connection between the Republic of Turkey and those who committed it." Without declaring this nothing is possible to undertake. After this step, of course, the compensation for the loss of the Armenians suffered will be discussed, thought over and be decided. Various ideas may appear connected with the compensation. You can start with small steps in this respect. I think while discussing the problem of compensation it will be better for Turkey to invite Europe: England, France, Germany to participate. They were participants in this sin as well to a certain extent. The Armenian genocide also constitutes part of the history of Europe.

**Arife Kioshe** When the Armenian Issue was put on the agenda, one of the ideas mostly put forward was the necessity to leave the problem to the historians. What do you think about it?

**Taner Akcham** "Let us leave this question to the historians" this sentence has already bored us. It is known that there is "a committee to struggle against groundless Armenian genocide" in Turkey, there is a similar structure in the National Security council. all the Internet sites (including that of the general headquarters) struggle against "groundless claims of the Armenian genocide." The ministry of foreign affairs and our diplomats somehow have become the greatest historians in the world. And after this, you say, let us leave this question to the historians. That is to say, you will leave it to the historians only when they will say what you want. And on the contrary, you don't let speak those historians, who express viewpoints differing from yours. I think that the "question should be left to the historians" is a bored nonsense." This is a completely political issue and it is necessary that the political leaders of both countries sit and solve this problem.

## ***WHO SEIZED THE ARMENIANS' PROPERTY' AISHI HUIR***

According to German general Gimán Von Sunders, as a result of the horrible actions conducted by the chairman of the war headquarters of the Ottoman Army fourth corps Jafer Taier (Eghilmez), the governor of Izmir Rahim and the general secretary of the party "Union and Progress" Mahmud Jelal (Baia), according to Baia 200 thousand, and according to the leader of the "Special organization" Kushchubash Eshref 1.5 million Greeks were deported from the Ottoman Empire. Similar deportation were used with respect to other Christian minorities but the most awful was towards the Armenians. During the years 1915-1917 the subject Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire under the pretext of "betraying the country" were forcibly deported from the country. Even the official historians think that at least 300 thousand Armenians were killed during that exile. On April 24, 1915, all the famous Armenian people in the Armenian community of Stambul were deported and exiled, and the exile all over the country started officially on May 27, 1915.

Just after the exile the young Turks submitted a law, what fate awaits the property left by the Armenians. And according to the certified protocol of the Ottoman parliament of May 30, 1915 and the decision of June 10 of the same year, the government was to set up committees of "deserted properties" in the regions where exile had been conducted, which comprised two officials dealing with the property and one official responsible for the financial problems. When this problem was being discussed in the parliament, the famous member of the party of the young Turks, Ahmed Rza declared that the information of those properties being deserted contradicted the law, because the Armenians did not volunteer to desert their property but were obliged to take that step. But this objection remained without resonance.

According to the decision, the mentioned committees, after the deportation of the Armenians, were to seal the houses and after evaluating the things inside them, were to register them. The rest of the movable property and the cattle, agricultural produce, the spoilable goods were to be sold by auction and the sums received were to enter into "the cash desks of the property" from the owners' names. The things and the pictorial Holy books were to be certified by a protocol and their preservation was to be conducted locally. Thus, the decisions on paper were rather attractive, but what was their realization?

### **3. Taraf, 02.03.2008**

### **4. Well-known Turkish analyst-public speaker.**

#### **The deserted properties**

By 1916, 33 committees were created for "the release of the deserted properties." Those, who claimed that they were lenders, were personally or through their authorized people, to apply to those commissions within two months. Those who were outside the country, this period was four months. The owners of the applications were to produce a certain address of permanent residence to make a notification or an announcement in the districts where the commissions were. The lender had the right to appeal against the sum stated by the commission within 15 days, the first phase of which could be realized in the court of arbitration, but the resolution of the court was final and it was impossible to appeal it.

First of all, there is no need to be a fortune-teller to suppose that those who were exiled to the deserts of Der Zor, were deprived of exercising these activities. In fact, we know from other sources as well, that part of the confiscated property of the Armenians was seized by local Turkish, Kurd and Cherkez influential people, part of it was taken by the refugees from Balkans. Some part of it was given to "Muslim-Turks" to make them capitalists sometimes even without any charge or at a very low price. Sometimes the whole income received from the buildings, as well as from the fields, grapes

and the crops from various gardens, was given to the army. Some buildings were used as a prison, a school, a hospital and a police sentry post. The rest of the money was used for the expenses of the Armenians' exile and for the expenses of the groupings which organized the massacre of the Armenians in certain regions. As a result, no money was left to compensate the Armenians.

### **Young Turkish reflex**

On October 30, 1918, after Mudros truce, the Ottoman state came out of the war defeated and the Allied states took a decision about this problem, but because of the circumstances in the country, it was impossible to implement it.

But the representatives of the national struggle, who eagerly emphasized that they were not the continuation of the Ottoman state, what did they do about this question? During the secret session of the parliament of January 22, 1921, the minister of defense, Fevzi mentioning that in the country especially in the Black Sea area, about 800 thousand Christians lived, said, that he was worried about the fact, that non-Muslims maintain their positions in the economic life. According to the general, it was necessary to use the Christians as workforce in industry, in improving the works of the roads, bridges, tunnels. The deputy of Malatia welcomed Fevzi's this suggestion by shouting: "Well done, Mr. Fevzi" and said: "Gentlemen, dishonesty and betrayal of the Armenians is known." He also demanded that 500 liras cash money be collected from the Armenians, Greeks and Jews and everybody be involved in the road works of Erzurum, Sebastia. Then he added: "my goal is for them to undergo pressure." The similarity between these suggestions and the one to include the Armenians into "working unions" made by the young Turks in 1914 and then to kill them was striking.

### **Natioal Martyrs**

On August 7, 1921, Mustafa Kemal, assuming all the powers of the parliament according to the law of "General Headquarters", adopted orders of

"National defence" to finance the war against the enemy. Out of 10 orders the 6<sup>th</sup> said: "Those who deserted their country and their property, came into possession of the state treasury, from that property will be confiscated what is necessary for the army and will contribute to it." But it is worth mentioning that on December 25, 1921, the court of Military instance of Stambul sentenced to death the governor of Urfa (Edosia) Nusrat for assuming the responsibility of the massacres during the exile and who was found guilty, and on October 14, 1922 the same court, sentenced to death the governor of Boghazlyan Kemal, for the same reason. They were first declared "national martyrs," then their families were granted pensions from the "deserted property."

Thus, for instance, the Kemalists during the peace negotiations in Lozan did not agree to return the Armenians' property, though they had assumed responsibility for the other debts of the Ottoman Empire. Among the debts assumed by Turkey in Lozan during WWI, the deserted properties of non-Muslims were involved as well, however, when the agreement was signed, the Turks began at once to worry about getting rid of the debts. First, in September 1923 a decision was made to prohibit the return of those who had fled from Cilicia and Eastern Anatolia together with the Armenians during the war. On April 3, 1924 changing the second article of the "general law of registration" ensured the failure of the compensation of the non-Muslims' deserted properties. In May 1927, a decision was announced according to which after signing the treaty of Lozan, those who were outside the country, were deprived of the Turkish citizenship. According to the decision taken on February 2, 1927 a real estate left by Armenians worth 20 thousand liras was given to the wife and the children of the governor Boghazlyan Kemal who had earlier been declared "national martyr." In December 1927, the properties left by the Armenians were given to the family of the governor of Urfa Nusret who was one of those responsible for the exile. The allotments were not finished here. A share from the property of the Armenians was given to the families of Bahaeddi Shakir – one of the leaders of the "Special



organization” and a participant of the most bloody events: governor Reshid of Diarbekir and the adjutant Nusret who had been attempted together with Jemal Pasha in Tiflis. But the horrible thing is that one of the buildings considered to be the symbol of the Republic – the presidential palace Chankaya, was built on the confiscated Armenian land.

### **Total number is a state secret.**

We don't know how much real estate has remained after the Armenians, because the cadastre registrations of the real estate for that period are not accessible to the researchers. I want also to remind that in 2005 under the authority of the real estate cadastre in the private archive, the registration documents belonging to the Ottoman period named “Archive of Real estate”, the demand to turn it into modern Turkish, to place it in the Internet and hand it over to the jurisdiction of the state archives was not accepted by the council of the National security. Moreover, it was declared that such an undertaking contradicts the interests of the country.

And since we cannot get any information from the sources in our country, we have to pay attention to what foreigners say. One of the sources of this study is the archive of the ministry of foreign affairs of England. According to one document here, in 1918 former prime-minister of England James Buldvin and his deputy Herbert Asquit, in their reports to the new prime-minister Ramsey Donald stated, why material assistance should be given to the Armenians living in the empire, the following was said: “Totally 5 million Turkish pound (which is an equivalent of about 33 tons of gold), in 1916 was put into the Reichs bank of Berlin by the Turkish government. Most of this sum belongs to the Armenians. But the amount of the Armenians' gold put into the bank, which has become a myth, is unknown.”

According to a report presented in 1919 in Paris by an Armenian organization bearing the name “Armenian national council”, the approximate value of the confiscated property during the 1915-1917 exile, amounts 19

billion French francs (from 1914 until the end of 1915 one Ottoman lira was 22.8 French francs).

According to the statement of the same organization, the money of the Armenians in the Ottoman and European banks was confiscated. In 1925 during the discussions held in the USA Senate, it is supposed that the value of the Armenians' property is about 40 million dollars. Nowadays certain Armenian researchers insist that after the exile the confiscated property of the Armenians is equivalent to 14.5 billion francs (present day 100 billion dollars). We want to mention as well, that once Taleat Pasha demanded to give them all the money of the Armenians in the American insurance organizations and Extraordinary and Pleinitentiary Ambassador Henry Morgentau remembers Taleat's words: “I wish we had asked the American life insurance organizations to be sent the complete list of the Armenian owners of the promissory note, anyway, everybody is dead now, there are no heirs to receive the money. Of course, all this money will be possessed by the state. Now the government will act as a lawful heir”.

### **Who will obey Lozan?**

According to the stated registration, in 1914 there were 2538 churches, 451 cloisters and 2000 schools belonging to the Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire.

After the exile the first job of the Muslims living in the Armenian villages and towns was to turn the central and beautiful churches into mosques. The rest were used as stores, boiler-houses. The representative of the nationalist wing, racist-Turk of the Parliament Rza Nar said in the letter sent on May 25, 1921 to the commander of the Eastern front Kazm Karabekir: “If we manage to erase the ruins of the city of Ani from the earth, it will be a great service for Turkey.” This referred to the Medieval Armenian capital. Karabekir wrote in his memoirs that he refused Rza Nur's proposal.

because the remains of Ani occupy a space like the fences of Stambul and it was difficult to carry out such work, moreover, such an undertaking would cause anxiety to the other Armenians. But later Rza Nur's intention took the upper hand and Ani was left to the mercy of fate. Though article 42 of 1924 peace treaty of Lozan stated that the Turkish government would guarantee the full preservation of the churches, synagogues, graves and other religious structures, according to the UNESCO report of 1974, only 913 churches and cloisters remained at that time. After that 464 churches were completely pulled down, 252 were left to the mercy of fate, and 197 needed reconstruction badly.

The basis of the official Turkish attitude is that the cause of the Armenians' exile is their betrayal. All right, but why in that case did the young Turks not confiscate the Armenians' property publicly? Architect Eduard Chuhajn from the family Kasabyan who lives in Canada at present thinks that the family Kasabyan did not sell the palace Chankaya to anybody. The government of that time took away from them not only that palace but also all their property and stock, and in 1915 exiled the whole family. Chuhajn says: "My father is from Ankara by birth, under the pretext of working at the railroad belonging to a foreign organization, he took his family to Stambul from Ankara. Besides, the country house of Kechioren was also included into the property belonging to the family Kasabyan, but the family of Vehbi Koch took possession of it. 15 or more years ago the photo of this country house was published in one of the newspapers of Stambul. Vehbi had turned it into a museum. My mother had written a letter to deceased Vehbi, and he had sent my mother a pictured photo of the country house. My grandfather's family and his brothers built a church through their own expenses as well, which was also pulled down".

## *THE VICTIMS OF 1915 AND THE CONFISCATED LIFE INSURANCES*<sup>5</sup>

*Aishe Gjunaisu*<sup>6</sup>

In recent times the question of receiving a compensation from the insurance companies and the massively destroyed life insurances in the years 1915-1916 of the Armenians, was being discussed in media. The fact that in those years there were people for life insurance, seems unbelievable to the inhabitants to today's Turkey, and a little unreal. The reason is very simple. It is really difficult for those, who live in large cities of Turkey today, to imagine that the provincial, basically referred to as rural regions, towns and settlements of urban type, were rich, developed cities at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and that the agencies of the Western insurance companies spread everywhere, were working eagerly to sell life insurance certificates to thousands of people.

Moreover, the majority of the population of today's Turkey which is over 70 million is unaware not only of this but also, that one of five people living in Anatolia was not a Muslim.

How can the one unaware of this know or suppose that life insurance which is not wide spread in Turkey even today, 100 years ago was a successful economic means in Kharberd, Kesaria. Anyway the situation is clear: in those years the motive forces of the newly developing commercial bourgeoisie – Armenian and Greek specialists, their families, relatives, mastered the idea of life insurance, as a result, the Western insurance companies sold dozens of thousands of life insurance to non-Muslims. The value of the certificates according to the money of 1915 exceeded 10 million US dollars.

5 Taraf, 14. 09. 2009

6 Turkish analyst-public speaker, public figure

**The state fixed its eyes upon the money of those citizens whom it had exterminated.**

As soon as WWI broke out in 1914, and the Ottomen entered into that war, and those areas whose population consisted of basically Armenians and Greeks stopped being secure, the insurance companies began to suspend their work. Really, a great turmoil arose, and in the process of mass extermination of the Greeks and Armenians (which was later to be qualified as genocide), the Ottoman state fixed its eyes on the life insurances, whose value had reached a huge amount, and in order those sums were paid to the state, it carried out political activity at various levels. We came across this heart-breaking reality for the first time in the memoirs of Henry Morgentau who was Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Stambul at that time. Morgentau tells the conversation between himself and Taleat Pasha in the following way: "One day Taleat made a striking request to me. The activity which The New York life insurance agency and Equitable Life of New York had carried out, had reached quite a huge volume. The fact, that so many people had ordered life insurance, was another sign, that these people were a success in managing their money. "I wish, said Taleat, we were able to persuade the American insurance agencies to send us the complete list of the Armenian owners' certificates. Since almost all those people are already dead and no heirs have remained, it is necessary that they pass on to the state. At present the state is in the position of a lawful owner. Can you do it for us? "It was too much. I lost my temper. You will never get such a list from me," I stood up and left the room."

Since 1918 there have been people, who knew about the conversation between Taleat Pasha and Morgentau, but it was necessary to wait until 1990 for the details of the point to be revealed.

**What have the archives revealed for us that were kept secret for 75 years?**

The limitation of secrecy laid upon the cases related to that issue was abolished in 1990 by the American National Archives. When permission was granted to investigate the recordings kept secret for 75 years, a lot of interesting documents appeared. From the letters studied earlier, which New York Life Insurance and the French La Compaigne Lunion companies wrote to the ministries of foreign affair of their countries in 1922, when the peace negotiations went on in Lozan between the Entente powers and Turkey, it became clear, that the cases of deaths were the result of mass massacres committed in the Ottoman Empire, for which the Ottoman Empire is responsible. Letters were discovered which demanded a condition be added to the treaty of Lozan, according to which the compensations were to be paid to Turkey. But what is more important, the letters of the Ottoman government of 1916 were revealed when the massacres and deportation of the Armenians continued, where the list of the names from the US government and the Western Insurance companies was officially demanded, having in mind that the compensations of the dead owners be paid to the Ottoman state. Facts were revealed as well, which stated what Morgentau had written: a state which had sent its citizens to death and was responsible for their deaths, asserting on the one hand, that it was only moving them to another state, on the other hand it was asserting that it was necessary to consider them and even their heirs dead, and under this pretext it wanted to possess the financial compensations belonging to those people.

Is a document required? Here it is: American Archive, RG84, case number 850.6, the inner correspondence of the Swiss company bearing the name La Federale Insurance Company. The representative of the company in Stambul in the letter sent to the center asking for help, encloses a letter dated March 10, 1916 by adviser Mustafa, on behalf of the ministry of Trade and agriculture of the Ottoman Empire sent to them. In the letter translated from French into English it was demanded, that the list of accounts belonging to

the Armenians in the mentioned places be presented to the ministries of home affairs and the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture. The places where the Armenians had insurances are classified in this way in the letter: Rodosto (Tekirdagh), Adana, Osmanie, Kozan, Yozghat, Ankara, Erzurum, Bitlis, Halep, Anatolia, Gemlik, Bilejik, Sebastia, Merzifon, Tokat, Samsun, Ordu, Trapizon, Konia, Mamurat-ul Aziz (Kharberd), Izmit, Adapazar, Sivrihisar, Eskishehir, Kesaria, Develi, Nighde, Afionkarahisar, Urfa. The names of these places, their geographic locality prove vividly, how far the Armenian owners of the insurance certificates were spread, whom the Ottoman rulers considered to be dead. The letter demanded that the lists through the managers of the insurance companies in the mentioned places be passed on to the deportation committees of that settlement and in case of their absence directly to the ministry of trade and agriculture. At the same time similar letters were sent to The New York Life Insurance, to the Equitable Life of New York, which required the lists of the Armenians, whose accounts were in those insurance companies. As far as the insurance companies are concerned, the fact that in a very short period of time (in a few months) thousands of insurance owners were killed and their due compensations had reached incredible amounts, induced them to panic. Somebody resorts to an evasive tactics, somebody puts forward the need for the Ottoman state to take the financial responsibility, and certain insurance companies, such as New York Life Insurance in order to pay the compensation, make conditions to the heirs that they should take the death certificates of the relatives and present to them. Who should give the death certificates? The representatives authorized by the state, those who sent them to death and the people who assert that they sent them not to death but to new places of residence? It looks like an evil trick, doesn't it? In another case, the companies resort to an argumentation not to pay the compensations by saying that by April 1915 the systematically paid insurance suddenly ceased to be paid because of this the certificates lost their validity. This is in the case when it is obvious why the insurance sums weren't paid.

It becomes clear from the investigated documents that with the help of the USA embassy in Stambul, the officials and missionaries of the consulate in Anatolia, a small amount of Armenian heirs received a compensation lost during the genocide from the insurance companies in 1919-1921. As life shows, man sees and learns what he wants. Nothing is really inaccessible for those who are interested. To be interested, it is necessary to have a feeling of conscience and justice. Cognition comes later.

### **The deportees of Malta.<sup>7</sup>**

#### *Aishe Huir*

After signing the truce of Mudros on October 30, 1918 by the Ottoman state which was defeated in the WWI, the basic task of the Allied states was to bring to court the sinners of the WWI and those of the exile of 1915. Not only the allied forces wanted all this but also certain circles of the Ottoman government as well. The representative of the ministry of foreign affairs of England in Stambul, demanded officially from the Ottoman authorities that the sinners of the war and the exile, who were in the list made with the help of the Armenian Patriarchate, be handed over to the English. The government was unable to resist the pressures and beginning with the end of January 1919, 112 suspects were moved to the prison "Bekir Aga Kogus" known at that time. After the carried out investigations and having grounded that one million Armenians and 550 Greeks were killed in the labour detachments in the army consisting of non-Muslims, 250 thousand people died of hunger and misery, the process of trying the sinners of the war and the exile started in the Military instance, on February 5, 1919. The first person to receive the punishment was the governor of Boghazlyan, later the acting governor of Yozghat Kemal. On April 10, 1919, in Stambul Kemal was sentenced to death which became the reason of a serious protest of the young Turks. This also influenced the orientation of the government, and

when in 1919, May 15, the Greeks captured Izmir, the psychological advantage was completely on the young Turks' side. The government of Damad Ferit Pasha in order to calm the people down, set free 41 prisoners from the prison "Bekir Aga Kogus". Being worried about all this, the English on May 28, 1919 took under control 67 prisoners and in the middle of September 12 of them were moved to Mudros, the rest to Malta.

**7 Taraf. 28.02.2010**

### **Ankara-Stambul conflict**

During this time the English continued to make a list as well. In the list presented by the Highest Commissar in January 1920, the English arrested 80 out of 173 on the list in the same year, in March. There were people of Ankara among them, too. The death sentences of the military court of Stambul to Mustafa Kemal and about a hundred representatives of the national struggle became the cause of Ankara's tough behavior. Already on August 11, Mustafa Kemal announced, if the sons of the motherland were put to death on August 12 because of the accusation of the exile, they would hang lieutenant-colonel Raulinson and other British prisoners. Raulinson was the responsible for the truce in Eastern Anatolia and in the Caucasus and was arrested by Kazm Karabekir himself and was kept as a hostage. The threats had their impact and since then no new arrests took place in Stambul, and in the Military instance, no death verdict was passed.

### **Collective crime, collective criminal**

The English had realized that if they condemned even those who were in Malta, the realization of the punishment would be impossible. First of all, the party of the young Turks, while conducting the exile of 1915, had made both

large masses of people, and the greater part of the political, administrative and military cadres accomplices. That is to say, there was a collectively committed crime. However, it was possible to condemn those arrested in Malta, but an active cooperation was necessary on behalf of the Turkish party. But neither the English had any force and wish to make them, nor the Turkish side had any intention to support. In July 1910, Harri H. Lamb who was doing his service in the highest commissariate in Stambul, in his report briefly persented the difficulties connected with revealing the documents proving the crime. The English asked the USA as a last hope, because they possessed an important archive, but they received no positive answer from there either, because the Americans had no intention to clash with the Kemal forces as well.

### **An agreement of exchange is signed**

Then the English began to look for ways of exchanging 29 English prisoners out of 64 who were in Kemal forces. All in all, 150 arrested were kept in Malta. During the meetings in London, on March 16, 1921, the English and the minister of foreign affairs of Ankara Bekir Samin (Kundah) signed an agreement of exchange, according to which the trial of those set free from Malta would take place in Ankara, on April 29, 1921. The English set free four arrested Turks, who left for Cilicia. The next day 33 Turks assted were moved to Toronto by an English ship. Now it was the turn to set free the English prisoners, but on May 8, 1921 Bakir Samin was removed from the ministry of foreign affairs and the English were left without a co-worker. Moreover, on May 26, an English subject Mustafa Sagir was sentenced to death because of the attempt on Mustafa Kemal, as a matter of fact, he was to have been included into the exchange list and returned to the English. Because of all this, the English party announced that it would keep 24 prisoners in Malta, who were to be returned to Ankara.

## **Ankara threatens**

At the end of June it was clearly stated in the letter received from Ankara, that they did not recognize the agreement concluded by Bekir Sam, and if the English did not set free all the prisoners they had, the English prisoners wouldn't get freedom either (by that time out of 29 English prisoners only five had been set free).

And when in 1921, on September 6, 16 Turkish prisoners were able to escape from Malta, the English conceded and agreed to exchange all the prisoners. On October 31, 1921, the ships Chrysanthemum and Montenol carrying the Turkish prisoners and the ship Centuar carrying the English prisoners reached Inebolu at the same time and the exchange took place. The prisoners of Malta did not take part in the National struggle and as it was supposed, were never condemned. The following sentences in a report by an Englishman states clearly what saved those who were in Malta:

*"The less we speak about these people, the better, but I will try to clarify this subtle point as clearly as possible, why we set free the exiles in Malta. I think everybody would act like me. The members of the parliament were sure that one English prisoner is worth a ship full of Turks. The exchange took place because of this."*

The greater part of the exiles of Malta were appointed important positions in the Republic of Turkey. Most of them in 1934, during the "law of surnames" took new surnames and removed their traces. However, we managed to make a list of the Malta exiles who later on held high positions in the Republic of Turkey. They are:

**Abdul Halik Renda.** During the exile, was the governor of Bitlis and Halep, son of Taleat Pasha's father-in-law and in 1917 was the adviser of the minister of home affairs for a short period of time. Abdul Halik who was responsible for the massacres of the Armenians of Bitlis and Halep, after returning from Malta was the delegate of Chankr, then governor of Izmir. In

1924-30 he worked at the ministry of finance, then was the acting Navy minister. In 1935 was elected chairman of the Great National Assembly and held this position until 1946. Then in the government of Hasan Sakai, held the position of the state minister.

**Shiukru Kaia** was responsible for the problems of the emigrants during the exile. Shiukru, who was responsible for the exile in the states of Halep and Adana, after escaping from Malta, lived in Italy and Germany for a while. After returning to Turkey he was included into the delegation leaving for Lozan. Then he was mayor of Izmir. In 1924 became the deputy of Mughla. Since 1924 until the death of Mustafa Kemal (1938), held the positions of the minister of agriculture, foreign affairs, home affairs.

**Refet Bele** was the military ruler of Samsun and the adjoining areas and in 1916-17 was sent to Malta to organize the process of exiling the Greeks in the region of Samsun. In the Republic period was the minister of home affairs and the national defense.

**Hasan Tahsin Uzer.** During the exile was governor of Van and Erzurum, because of leading the Armenians' massacres was sent to Malta. Upon return, was elected deputy from Izmir, Adana, Erzurum and Konia. From 1935 until his death in 1939, was the third leading overseer for the department of emergency situations of the people's – republican party.

**Mithat Shukru Bleda** was the minister of public education during the young Turks. Bleda, who was also general secretary of the young Turks' party during the exile, after returning from Malta, turned down Mustafa Kemal's proposal to work together, settled down in Izmir and was engaged in trade. In 1926 during the trial of the known "the attempt of Izmir" was sentenced to punishment and then was justified, again at the suggestion of

Kemal was elected deputy from Sebastia. Mustafa Kemal had even given a guarantee to himself, if it was not possible to be elected deputy from Sebastia, he would invalidate the whole elections of Sebastia. Bleda was elected deputy four times until the year 1950.

**Halil Menteshé.** During the reign of the party “Union and Progress” he was the chairman of the parliament, then minister of home affairs, ministry of justice and foreign affairs. Halil, who was passed over to the English by the Ottoman authorities because of the crimes committed during the deportation and the war, in 1931 was elected delegate from Izmir and continued it until the year 1948.

**Ali Jenani.** During the exile was the delegate of Halep and the responsible for deporting thousands of Armenians. After returning from Malta was a delegate, and in 1924-26, worked as the minister of Trade.

**Ali Chetinkaya.** Member of the “Special organization,” delegate of Afion, chairman of the Supreme court in the times of the Republic and minister of public issues.

**Aka Guinduz.** Member of the party of the young Turks Husein Enis Avni took the name Aka Guinduz during the times of the Republic. In 1932-46 was delegate of the Turkish national Great Assembly.

**Sabit Saghroghlu.** During the deportation was the governor of Kharberd and because of being responsible for the Armenians’ massacre, was exiled to Malta. During the times of the Republic was a delegate from the state of Erznka.

**Ahmed Maumer Jankardesh** was one of the most important members of the party “Union and Progress.” During the exile governor of Sebastia and

Konia, Muamer was appointed by the Republican authorities as governor of Sebastia first, then was elected delegate of the same region.

**Ali Munif Eghena** was minister for public affairs of the Ottoman Empire in 1913-15, governor of Lebanon in 1915-16, and in 1918 member of the Young Turks’ party’s committee. Munif, who had been exiled to Malta for the criminal acts committed against the Armenians and the Christians in Lebanon, after the establishment of the Republic, was appointed mayor of Seihan at first, then was elected delegate from Sehan and Mersin.

**Mustafa Reshat Mimaroghlu** was director of the political police of Stambul, in 1917-18 governor of Chankr and Bolu. After returning from Malta, in the republican Turkey, Reshat was appointed governor of Tokat, then governor of Adana, later was elected delegate from Izmir. He also held the position of the leader of the state structure the ruling people’s party of Stambul.

**Ali Ihsan Sabis.** Commander of the Ottoman army corps during WWI: was exiled to Malta for organizing the massacres of Van, Mosuli and Urmia. After returning from the exile was appointed commander of the first army of the Western front.

**Suleiman Nejmi Selman** was governor of Samsun during the exile and a responsible person for the massacre of the Armenians of that state. He was sent to Malta. In the Republic of Turkey was elected at first delegate of Kastamonu, then of Samsun.

**Zulfu Tigrál.** In the Ottoman period was deputy of Diarbekir and one of the important agents of the Armenians’ massacres. In the republican period continued to hold the position of the deputy of Diarbekir. He was included into the delegation sent to Lozan, as a “Kurd representative.”

**Arif Fevzi Pirinchioghlu.** In the Ottoman period Arif was deputy of Diarbekir and continued to hold that position in the republican period as well.

**Kara Vassf.** An outstanding member of the young Turks' party who later on participated in the national movement led by Mustafa Kemal, and then became deputy of Sebastia. However, in 1926 being accused of organizing an attempt on Mustafa Kemal was tried and sentenced to death.

**Ismail Janbulat** In the period of the young Turks was general director of security, then chief of the city police, minister of home affairs. After Malta was a deputy of the Turkish parliament, but again in 1926 connected with the case of "the attempt of Izmir" was arrested and sentenced to death.

**Fazl Berki Tumturk.** During the Armenians' deportation was deputy of Chankr and as a deputy of the governor of Sebastia played an important role in the Armenians' massacre, because of which was sent to Malta. Already in the republican period was a member of the management council of the organization "Red Halfmoon."

**Musa Hilmi Demokan.** During the exile was the governor of Krshehir and because of the crimes committed against the Armenians was exiled to Malta. While being in the place of the exile, Musa Hilmi was elected deputy of the Turkish Great National Assembly.

**Ilias Sami.** In the Ottoman period, deputy of Mush Haji Ilias Sami, after returning from Malta was again elected deputy of Mush and Bitlis.

**Veli Nejdet Suinktai** was one of the agents who was sent to Malta because he was responsible for the criminal acts committed against the

Armenians of Diarbekir and after his return was not appointed any state position. He was engaged in commercial matters and in 1937 became the chairman of Ankara Chamber of Commerce.

**Mehmet Ejzajbash.** Representative of one of the famous families of Erzuka, member of the young Turks' party, mayor Mehmet was sent to Malta as responsible for the exile and massacres of the Armenians of Erzuka. In the republican period founded the well-known "ejzajbash" firm.

**Kara Kemal.** Member of the Central committee of the young Turks' party, minister of foodstuffs and industry Kemal, after returning from Malta, was trying to give a new breath to the party "Union and Progress". In 1926 during the trial of the "Izmir attempt" was sentenced to death in his absence. Realizing that he would be arrested committed suicide or was killed.

Let us not forget that among the deportees to Malta like Yakub Shefk (Subash), Djemal (Mersinli) Pasha, Djevat (Chobanl) Pasha, Esat (Eshk) Pasha, Zia Giokalp, Husein Jahid (Yalchn), Ali Fethi (Okiar), Husein Rauf (Orbai), Ahmed Agaev (Agha Oghlu), the remarkable representatives of the party "Union and progress" were granted positions of ministers, deputies, prime-minters, generals in the Republic of Turkey. There were, of course, hundreds of other sinners for the Armenians' exile and the war, who had not been exiled to Malta. They were not tried either and held important positions in the Republic of Turkey. In time most of the children, grandchildren of these people held important state positions as well.

The young Turks' ideology has reached our days. It is because of the continuity, which we call accomplicity, that though 95 years have passed, there is no possibility to discover the reality of the Armenians' exile of 1915 (which we can qualify as a genocide).



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THE TURKS ABOUT TURKS  
SUMMARY

1. <http://www.durde.org/2011/04/taner-akcma-tarihimizi-hep-inkar-uzerine-yok-saymak-uzerine-kurduk/>
2. Turkish historian, at present lives and works in USA.
3. Taraf, 02.03.2008
4. Well-known Turkish analyst-public speaker.
5. Taraf, 14.09.2009
6. Turkish analyst-public speaker, public figure.
7. Taraf, 28.02.2010

Կազմի ձևավորումը՝ Ս. Մ. Մելքոնյանի  
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