# THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE



Turkification of Armenian orphans in Damascus.

"When the Armenian population was driven from its homes many of the women

were not killed but reserved for a more humiliating fate. They were mostly seized by Turkish officers or civilian officials, and consigned to their harems. Others were sold in the market, but only to a Muslim purchaser, for they were to be made Muslims by force.'

Lord Bryce, The Treatment of the Armenians in The Ottoman Empire.

# **Choices Worse Than Death**

The deportation policy created circumstances of starvation, exhaustion, and victimization in which Armenians --particularly mothers who had survived after their husbands' murders-- were forced to make cruel but necessary judgments to maximize survival.

· *Is my life more valuable than my child's?* 

- If all of my children cannot survive, which shall I seek to preserve?
- Is it better that we die together, or that some survive alone?
- · Is it preferable that my children die, or that I give them to a passing Turk or Kurd, knowing that they will lose all

Before Pol Pot, Stalin, and Hitler, there were Jemal Pasha, Enver, Shakir and Talaat, leaders of the Young Turks and the decaying Empire of the OttomanTurks who had committed the first Genocide of the twentieth century. Yet, unlike the other criminals, the modern Republic of Turkey has bestowed on these perpetrators of genocide the highest honors, and considers them national heroes. One of the most prominent avenues in the capital of Turkey, Ankara, is named after...Talaat Pasha.



Doorstep-babies: An orphanage "specialized"

in sheltering Armenian women who were raped

by Turks or Kurds and their babies.

Armenian Orphans in a <u>Turkish orphanage.</u>

THE EXTENSIVE **RESULTS OF MASS RAPE AND FORCED ISLAMIZATION OF** ARMENIAN CHILDREN, **ELEMENTS OF THE GENOCIDAL PROCESS. ARE** MADE CLEAR BY THE TENS OF **THOUSANDS OF** ARMENIAN **CHILDREN IN** TURKISH **ORPHANAGES AT** THE END OF W.W.I..

Halide Hanum with a group of Turkified Armenian girls destined to be distributed amongst "good" Turkish families.

A larger aim of the genocide is obliterating a people's heritage, their cultural and spiritual existence, in addition to killing and dispersing actual people. Thorough genocide requires destroying their historical importance, the memory and even the fact that they existed.





# *May*, 1918

Russian armies pull out of the Transcaucasus. An Armenian Republic is proclaimed, while Turkish armies pursue massacre of the Armenian population that was part of the Russian empire.

## *October*, 1918

An armistice is signed at Mudros between Turkish forces and the Allies. This document makes provisions for the return of the Armenian survivors to their homes.

*November, 1918* Talaat, the Grand Vizier, Enver, Minister of War, Jemal and others flee Turkey.

*February, 1919* A Turkish court martial to address war crimes committed by the Turks is convened in Constantinople. Ultimately, Talaat, Enver, Jemal, and Dr. Nazim are condemned to death in absentia.

## December, 1919

In a secret meeting on the status of Cilicia, the Turks demand the withdrawal of Allied armies. Acceptance of Turkish terms by France leaves Armenian survivors who had returned home from their ordeals at the mercy of Kemalist Turkish forces.

## January, 1920

After the withdrawal of the Allied forces from Cilicia, the city of Marash is attacked by Turkish Nationalist forces. In a series of new massacres, 10,000 Armenians are killed.

*April, 1920* The San Remo Conference delegates the United States President Woodrow Wilson to determine the new borders of Armenia.

## August, 1920

In France, the Treaty of Sèvres is signed by Turkey, the Republic of Armenia and the Allied powers. The Turkish government promises to hand over all wartime criminals to the Allies. Articles 88 and 89 recognize Republic of Armenia as a free and independent state. The new borders of the Armenian Republic, drawn by President Wilson, include the territories previously under Russian rule and the six Armenian Vilayets of the Ottoman Empire. Vilayets of the Ottoman Empire.



identity, but pernaps survive. Such moral dilemmas plagued mothers each step of the march.

"...the frightful sight of the swarms of orphans increase daily. At the sides of the camp, a row of holes in the ground covered

with rags, had been prepared for them. Girls and boys of all ages were sifting in these holes, heads together, abandoned and reduced to animals, starved, without food or bread, deprived of the most basic human aid, packed tightly one against the other and trembling from the night cold.



Armin T. Wegner, German Officer/Sanitory Worker



surviving children waiting to be admitted to an orphanage.

30,000 children of "Orphan City", administered by the an American charitable



International Herald Tribune December 26, 1986. News article by Sytske Looijen.

In Istanbul, the publisher of a Turkish edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica faces charges of *weakening Turkish national feelings* because the work says an Armenian state existed in Southern Anatolia in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Isfendiyar Bariounu, chief prosecutor at the state Security Court, said the statement was "*contrary to historical facts*." If found guilty, Hulya Poturoglu, the publisher, could be sentenced to four and half years in prison.

In Damascus, Syria, Franz Werfel and his companion and future wife, Alma Mahler, visited a carpet weaving plant. The owner personally conducted a tour through the factory. Passing along the rows of looms, the two were visibly shaken by the sight of emaciated children with El Greco faces and enormous eyes. "What strange children are these?" Werfel inquired. "These poor creatures? They're the children of Armenians killed off by the Turks," the owner explained. Leaving the factory in a daze, Werfel was unable to get the scrawny children out of his mind. The visit proved to be the catalyst that inspired his epic novel, *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh.* 

A group of corphaned children under the care of Danish missionaries.



Turkish Nationalist forces maintain their military operations against the Republic of Armenia.

Bolsheviks of Russia and Turkish Nationalists led by Mustafa Kemal form an alliance.

## November, 1920

While Woodrow Wilson expresses his frustrations about implementing the new borders of the Republic of Armenia, Soviet forces regain total control of the Caucasus.

**December, 1920** The Republic of Armenia becomes part of the Soviet Union. A new treaty between the forces of Kemalist Turkey and Russian Communists provides a territory consisting of less than 10% of the homeland defined by US President Wilson.

*January, 1921* The Ottoman government abolishes the courts martial.

### November, 1922

Following the impasse after the Paris Peace. Conference, the first Lausanne Conference is convened in Switzerland.

## February, 1923

The Lausanne Conference deadlocks over the "Armenian Question".

The dire conditions of the Armenian population The dire conditions of the Armenian population living in the Ottoman Empire attracted the attention of the international community. Ultimately, the expression "**The Armenian Question**" came to designate persecution of the Armenians of the Empire. In 1878, the Treaty of San Stefano as well as the Treaty of Berlin used the term "Armenian Question" as a reference to the sufferings of Armenians and their rights for fair and humane treatment.

## July, 1923

The Treaty of Lausanne is signed by Turkey and the Allies. The final text excludes all mention of Armenia or Armenians. The Armenian homeland, as defined by the Treaty of Sèvres, disappears within the newly recognized borders of the Republic of Turkey.

August, 1939 A week before the invasion of Poland and the start of World War II, Adolph Hitler speaks of his orders "to kill without pity or mercy all men, women, and children of Polish race or language," and concludes his remarks by asking, "Who, after all, speaks today of the extermination of the Armenians?"