

THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

TURKISH METHODOLOGY *Decapitation of a Nation*

The **Armenian Genocide** is a term used to designate a series of crimes and atrocities committed against the Armenian people during W.W.I. These events were centrally planned and administered by the Turkish government against the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire.

Between the years 1915 and 1923 the Armenian people were subjected to mass deportation from their ancestral homeland of Armenia and other parts of the Ottoman Empire. The Turkish authorities also carried out deliberate starvation of the deportees, systematic massacres along the deportation routes, and the government-sanctioned rape of men, women, and children, as well as the forced Islamization of orphaned children.

In addition to the efforts to annihilate Armenians, the entire national wealth of the Armenian population was looted by the Turks or confiscated by Ottoman authorities through the enactment of "abandoned properties" laws applicable specifically to Armenians.

The decision to implement the crime of genocide against the Armenian people was made by The Committee of Union and Progress, also known as the Young Turks, the political party that ruled the Ottoman Empire from 1908 to 1918. In addition to the overt actions of Young Turk officials with armed elements of the Ministry of War and the Ministry of the Interior, Turkish authorities created a secret unit called the Special Organization (*Teshkilati Mahsusa*) whose primary function was to carry out the deportation and mass slaughter of the Armenians.

The Turkish Nationalists between 1920 and 1923 perpetrated further massacres, expulsions, and depredations of the surviving Armenians. The Kemalist government that toppled the Young Turks and represented a new political movement, shared the common ideology of the Turks to create a new Turkey built in large part on the ashes of over 1.5 million Armenians and their homeland that had been Armenian for the previous 3,000 years.

To this day, the Turkish government has denied the genocide, and the crime remains unpunished.



Young Turk Leaders with their German Advisors, 1917

February, 1914

After a series of massacres by the Turks in 1894 and 1909, the Reform Agreement is signed by the European powers and Ottoman Turkey. Terms of the treaty mandate the restructuring of the six Armenian Provinces into two regions to be governed by European Inspectors.

May, 1914

L.C. Westenak and Nicolai Hoff are accredited by the Ottoman authorities as Administrators of the redefined Armenian provinces.

August, 1914

Beginning of World War I. A secret alliance is forged between the Ottoman Empire and Germany.

September, 1914

The Young Turk government distributes arms to Muslims on the grounds that Armenians are to be considered unreliable.

October, 1914

News of requisitions imposed on Armenian owned businesses as 'war contributions' reaches Constantinople from every province.

Enver, Minister of War, authorizes the combined German-Turkish navy to carry out a surprise naval attack on the Russian Navy.

A Proclamation of Jihad against England, France, and Russia, is issued in Constantinople.

November, 1914

Mass execution of Armenian soldiers in the Turkish army.

January, 1915

On the Eastern front (*Caucasus*), the Turkish army is defeated by the Russian forces.

February, 1915

In the provinces, attacks on Armenians are reported, along with rape and looting.

March, 1915

A commission of parliamentarians tours the provinces. They address the population in the mosques, describing the Armenians as enemies that must be destroyed.

Lootings, arrests and killings of Armenians are reported in the six Eastern provinces.

April, 1915

Hundreds of villages in the province of Van are destroyed. Within few weeks, over 64,000 Armenians are slain.

Over 1,000 Armenian leaders are arrested in Constantinople and elsewhere.

May, 1915

The Allied powers send a note of protest to the Turkish government, holding it responsible for the massacres of the Armenians.

In the early hours of April 24, 1915, the Turkish government placed under arrest over 300 Armenian community leaders in Constantinople (*now Istanbul*), the capitol of the Ottoman Empire, and elsewhere. Subsequently, over 1000 political, cultural and spiritual leaders of the Armenian community in the Empire were taken into custody and summarily executed.

The decapitation of the Armenian leadership on April 24, 1915, is commemorated as the symbolic and official date of the Armenian Genocide. For Armenians dispersed worldwide, this date is also the symbol of a crime that intended to destroy an entire civilization and the disappearance of a major portion of their



- Ⓐ Krikor Zohrab, Member of parliament, lawyer.
- Ⓑ E. Agnouni, community leader.
- Ⓒ Siamanto, poet.
- Ⓓ Rouben Sevag, physician, community leader.
- Ⓔ Sister Nalbandian, catholic nun.
- Ⓕ Daniel Varoujan, poet.

JOINT DECLARATION ISSUED BY THE GOVERNMENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN, FRANCE AND RUSSIA

For about a month the Kurd and Turkish population of Armenia has been massacring Armenians with the connivance and often assistance of Ottoman authorities. Such massacres took place in middle April (new style) at Erzerum, Dertchun, Eguine, Van, Bitlis, Mush, Sassun, Zeitun, and throughout Cilicia. Inhabitants of about one hundred villages near Van were all murdered. In that city the Armenian quarter is besieged by Kurds. At the same time in Constantinople Ottoman Government ill-treats inoffensive Armenian population. In view of those new crimes of Turkey against humanity and civilization, the Allied governments announce publicly to the Sublime Porte that they will hold personally responsible [for] these crimes all members of the Ottoman Government and those of their agents who are implicated in such massacres.

May 24, 1915

This Proclamation Is Unprecedented in Three Ways:

- 1- FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY, THE TERM "CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY" IS OFFICIALLY USED TO DESIGNATE A CRIME.
- 2- THE OFFICIALS OF A STATE ARE HELD DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR CRIMES.
- 3- THE CRIMES ARE DESIGNATED "NEW," SUGGESTING RECOGNITION OF PREVIOUS CRIMES, AS WELL AS THEIR NEW (GENOCIDAL) NATURE.

The Mufti of Diyarbekir preaching a Holy War (*Jihad*) in the presence of the Vali (governor) of Diyarbekir and leaders of the Hamidiye troupes and local militia leaders prior to the massive killing of Armenians of the region.



Example of the Turkish "justification" of the Genocide, as it appeared then, and as cited today by the Turkish Government as an element of its program of denial.

Dispatch 3rd Army, Erzurum, September 19, 1914

To All Units

According to reliable information from the Armenians in the Caucasus, the Russians have provoked Armenians living in our country, by promises that they will be granted independence in territories to be annexed from Ottoman land, and that they have brought many of their own men disguised as Turkish peasants to the Armenian villages in our country, that they have stored arms and ammunition in many places to be distributed to Armenians, and moreover, the Russian General Loris Melikow* went to the Van region for the same purpose.

Mil. History Document, Published by The Military History and Strategic Studies, 1986. Dept. of the Turkish General Staff.

* Loris Melikow, a distinguished Russian commander during the Russo-Turkish war, had died in Nice, France, in 1888.

"To the allies of Turkey [the Ittihadists] will plead as an excuse an alleged revolution of the [Armenian political] party Dashnakzoutiun. Moreover, local disturbances and Armenian self-defense endeavors will be played up and used as pretext for justifying the compulsory transfer of the Armenians from threatened border areas. On the way, the Armenians will be murdered by Kurdish and Turkish gangs, and in certain spots by gendarmes, through the instigation of the Committee."

SCHEUBNER RICHTER, Co-Commander of Turko-German Expeditionary Forces.