

EVENTS OF 24 APRIL 1915: ARMENIAN GENOCIDE OR RESETTLEMENT

*Armenian troops moving from Turkey to the Caucasus.
Photo in a 1917 English magazine*



Armenians constantly claim that they had been subjected to genocide and raise this issue with the parliaments of all countries, especially of the great powers, on 24 April every year, whereas this event was not genocide as the Armenians claim. **It was a defensive measure prepared by the Ottoman state to ensure its security and prevent Armenian revolts and massacres carried out against Turks.** Thus, the activities of Armenian committees and parties were terminated on 24 April 1915, and 2,345 Armenian terrorists were arrested in Istanbul (12, p. 213; 22, p. 40; 24, p. 146). Therefore, there can be no talk of any murder or criminal offense here. The Armenians have declared 24 April, the date when Armenian committee members were arrested, as genocide day. If we are talking about the resettlement of Armenians by Ottomans, and the Resettlement Law on their relocation was adopted on 27 May 1915 (13, p. 61; 24, p. 259; 32, p. 131). Therefore, "24 April"

is not the date of the resettlement that led to genocide, as the Armenians claim, it is the date when members of committees such as Dashnaksutyun, Hinchak and Ramkavar were arrested. The fact that the arrested Armenians were not rank-and-file citizens and were members of committees and terrorist organizations was confirmed by the British intelligence service. A dispatch sent to the British military command in Egypt shows: on 24 April 1915, three Armenian clerics, including the owner of the Armenian newspaper Puzantion, and a great number of Armenians were apprehended, and they will soon be sent to Ankara. Among those arrested, 500 are members of the Dashnak organization, 500 Hinchak and others Ramkavar (8, p. 62).

One of the important issues that need to be highlighted is that the real origin of the resettlement and the events presented as "Armenian genocide" in this connection came from the desire of the Ottoman state to protect its legal rights of defense ahead of war like any independent state. It is also true that the Resettlement Law adopted in 1915 applied not just to the Armenians, but to all those who raised a revolt against the Ottoman state and cooperated with enemies. When the text of the law is studied, there is no word "Armenian" there (2, p. 124; 24, p. 149; 37, p. 605).

Here we consider it extremely important to clarify the word genocide both in terms of vocabulary and norms of international law. The extermination of unarmed and defenseless people for racial, national and religious reasons is an act of genocide (31, pp. 630-631). Were the unarmed and defenseless Armenian people, who were Ottoman citizens, really subjected to genocide by Turks for national and religious reasons?

The Armenian Legion created by French instructors for the war against the Ottoman Empire. 1916

Que les Arméniens, dès le début de la guerre, ont été
des belligérants de facto,



It is extremely erroneous to believe that the Ottoman state, which had established its relations with ethnic minorities at a better level than modern states throughout history, would have resorted to such a crime in the 20th century. First of all, the reason is that if the Armenians had been the only target from a national point of view, would some of them have become pashas, ministers and members of parliament in the Ottoman era?

According to facts put forward by scientific-research works, the Armenians had a special place among the non-Muslim peoples of the Ottoman state and had lived in peace with Turks in Anatolia for centuries. **Apart from religious beliefs, there was no difference between Armenians**

and Turks in terms of all social and cultural particularities. If the state of minorities in the Ottoman Empire is assessed impartially, we can see that Armenians and even Greeks had linguistic and religious freedoms, were not called up for military service, had the right to engage in trade and occupied high positions in the state. **Historical sources show that among the Armenians who were referred to as millati-sadika (loyal nation) there were 29 pashas, 22 ministers, 33 members of parliament, 7 ambassadors, 11 consuls general, 11 university teachers and 41 high-ranking officials** (for detailed information, see: 1; 2, p. 121; 15, p. 137-152; 24, p. 9). Even religious tolerance was shown toward the Armenians in the Ottoman state within





the framework of the “people of the book” status, and all conditions were right for opening churches (7, p. 156-158).

As can be seen, contrary to numerous false reports and lies, the Armenians achieved financial welfare, well-to-do life and economic and cultural progress. Taking many leading factors as a basis, they collected a lot of wealth and strengthened their economic positions to a significant extent (23, p. 56).

The prominent Turkish researcher Azmi Suslu writes that the Armenians, who were a distinguished people within the framework of a legal status, enjoyed all the benefits of the Ottoman state from its early days. The privileges and rights that were granted were supplemented with new ones at certain times. It is also true that the privileges granted to Armenians in the Ottoman state, the rights they had and the positions they held in social, economic and political life were not granted to Armenians and other minorities outside the Ottoman state (32, p. 12-13).

Documents in the Ottoman archives and the results of many scientific studies show that **in the 18th and 19th centuries, Armenians had a very good position in the Ottoman economy** (34; 35).

The observations and conclusions of the Russian consul general to Van and Erzurum, General Mayevskiy, are very valuable for revealing some aspects of the problem under review. In his report to the general staff of the Russian army, he wrote: “The complaints about the oppressed situation of Armenians in Turkey cannot apply to Armenians living in cities. They enjoy all forms of freedom, security and well-

being. Their social situation is also good from all points of view. We can confidently say that the population centers of Armenians in Turkey are always filled with food products and from a financial point of view, their condition is better than that of peasants living in Russia. Had the living standards been really unbearable, the Armenian people of Turkey would have definitely gone bankrupt and be finally wiped out” (25, p. 7-8).

In this situation, it becomes clear that the allegations about Ottomans carrying out genocide against Armenians are groundless. Contrary to the Armenian allegations, it was Turks, not Armenians, who were subjected to genocide. According to information in documents of the Turkish Military History and Strategic Studies Directorate (ATASE), genocide was carried out against Anatolian Turks with the direct support of the Armenian Church and organizations (3, p. 1; 4, p. 33; 5, p. 83; 6, p. 159).

According to the same documents, Hinchak, Dashnaksutyun and other organizations who had committed large-scale crimes against the Turks were supported by deputies of the Ottoman Majlis (4, p. 41).

Armenian historian Dikran Kevorkyan writes that taking advantage of the Ottoman state’s good intentions toward the Armenians and their feelings of brotherhood towards the Armenians as sons of the same homeland, the committees continued planting dynamite at the foundation of the state, betraying the state and sowing seeds of dissension between the two peoples. They valued every opportunity and resorted to anything to achieve their goal. They espe-

cially used religious leaders, teachers and anyone who could write to implement their intentions (16, p. 245).

Since documents prove that the Armenians organized themselves and created armed detachments, instead of calling the events that occurred “genocide”, it would be more correct to call these events “a rebellion” unleashed by the Armenians and measures taken by the Ottoman state against this rebellion using its legal authorities. There are many examples when countries of the world took such measures. For example, in 1939-40, the French government resettled Alsatians living in areas bordering on Germany to Dordogne in southwestern France. In the same way, the US government moved American citizens of Japanese origin from the Pacific to the Mississippi valley after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor (9, p. 42).

The fact that the Armenians incurred no losses within the framework of the Resettlement Law and the measures taken by the state to count the full cost of the property they left behind and give it to its owners are evidence that ruin allegations of genocide with historical facts (See more: 10, p. 129). The Armenians, who present the issue of resettlement to world countries as genocide, also exaggerate the number of people who died during the resettlement. They indicate

a number of 1.5 million, whereas there were not so many Armenians living within the limits of the Ottoman Empire. Based on Ottoman and Western sources, American historian and Professor Dr. Stanford Shaw provides very interesting information saying that in 1890, 1,139,053 Armenians and 12,585,950 Muslims lived in the Ottoman state, in 1897 – 1,162,853 Armenians and 14,111,945 Muslims, in 1906 – 1,140,563 Armenians and 15,518,478 Muslims and in 1914 – 1,229,007 Armenians and 15,044,846 Muslims (28, p. 330).

As can be seen, the number of Armenians living in the Ottoman state in the late 19th and early 20th century ranges from 1 million to 1.3 million. On the other hand, historical sources show that 700,000 Armenians were resettled according to the resettlement decision (29, p. 300; 30, p. 34; 33, p. 25). The prominent Turkish historian Kamuran Gurun says that the number of those killed indicated by the Armenians started from 300,000 in 1915 and reached 2 million in 1980. It is normal that the population of a nation increases as years pass, but it is very strange that the number of people who died at a certain time gradually increases (12, p. 223). The point that came up as result of comparative analyses is that the allegations about 1.5 million Armenians being subjected to genocide do not reflect the reality. People may die of

Armenian gunners led by English instructors shoot at Turkish-Azerbaijani troops. 1918. Azerbaijan



various diseases during resettlement. This is an undeniable truth, but is it possible to call these events genocide? If so many people were exterminated en masse, then how did the Armenian population whose number exceeded 1 million people at the end of World War I survive? Second, what was the government supposed to do about the activities of the Armenians who raised a revolt against the Ottoman state and collaborated with the enemy?

American historians Justin and Carolyn McCarthy write that the intention of the Ottoman government to move the Armenians out of some regions was to prevent the rebellious activities of the Armenians who collaborated with foreign forces from reaching a dangerous level. This intention totally originated from reasons of military security.

The measures taken by the Ottoman state in connection with the rebellion and massacres carried out by the Armenians as part of collaboration with the enemy and the casualties that came up for various reasons during the implementation of these measures were used by the Armenians as a propaganda weapon in order to draw the attention of world powers. Today's policy is being conducted in the same direction.

The main purpose is to put up the so-called Armenian genocide for debate by the whole world and international organizations and get it recognized (in some way, they have achieved this) and then to force Turkey to accept it in subsequent stages and legalize their demands for reparations and land.



Shusha, the capital of Karabakh, after the Armenian-Azerbaijani clashes in 1905-1906

Evaluating the presence of Armenians in strategic regions as a threat to the state, they decided to keep them away from these regions (20, p. 52).

Let's evaluate the events through a prism of impartiality: people died and were killed on both sides, and both sides faced dire consequences. But it was not genocide, it was a war. At the same time, when you go into detail, it can be clearly seen that the resettlement was encouraged not by the Ottoman state, but directly by Armenian committees and organizations. **Had it not been for the rebellions they started and their collaboration with foreign forces aimed at partitioning the Ottoman state, there is no doubt that there would have been no need for the resettlement.**

The words that one of Dashnak ideologues Hrant Markaryan pronounced about the so-called Armenian genocide in an interview with Armenian Forum magazine totally prove the aforesaid: "...As far as the salvation of West Armenia is concerned, there is a great difference between 'annexation and salvation'. If Armenia makes territorial claims to Turkey, from one point of view, this could be presented as an expansionist move. But if we pay attention to the fact that we were subjected to genocide in our motherland and were expelled from these lands, then what we want to annex is not just a piece of land, but our own property. The fight for the salvation of West Armenia is not a territorial dispute between states, but a fight for our homeland. Attempts to have the genocide recognized are not an end in itself. These attempts are a page opened

An Armenian infantryman and English instructor at positions near Baku. 1918

in the fight for the salvation of West Armenia..." (19, p. 23)

We should also note that when Armenians raise these claims, they take as a basis the strategy of creating similarities and parallels between the so-called Armenian genocide and the Jewish genocide, or to be more precise, the Holocaust. According to the claims of the Armenians who call the events of 1915 "pre-Holocaust", i.e. "Holocaust before the Holocaust", there is no difference between the genocide carried out by the Nazis against Jews and the genocide carried out against Armenians. They even claim that the Nazis were inspired by these crimes of Turks and carried out genocide against the Jews precisely for this reason (27).

In order to establish a connection between the Jewish genocide carried out by the fascists and the so-called Armenian genocide, some influential circles take advantage of Hitler's words "Who remembers the Armenian genocide now?" (18, p. 115), claim that Hitler borrowed the idea of genocide from the Turks and at the same time, present the world community with fake documents under the title of "Secret Turkish correspondence" ordering the brutal killings of Armenians (14, p. 62). In fact, these documents and the words attributed to Hitler have no grounds.

The strategy of drawing parallels with the Jewish Holocaust is an integral part of the Armenian ideology. Although Israel and the Jewish lobby insistently and systematically reject the similarities and parallels between the events of 1915 and the Jewish Holocaust, which the Armenians want

to create, the establishment of such a parallel and similarities is of extremely great importance from the Armenians' point of view. The purpose is to gain from benefits gained by the Jews, whereas there is absolutely no similarity between the Jewish Holocaust and the so-called Armenian genocide. When the Jewish Holocaust is analyzed, the biggest factor that comes up is the centuries-old hate for the Jews, which led to the emergence of anti-Semitism. In other words, the hostility and hate that lasted for centuries turned into genocide at some point, whereas when the Armenian problem is looked into, it becomes clear that the Turks had no hostility or hate for the Armenians.

On the other hand, unlike the Armenians, there was no armed revolt in the Jewish Holocaust and there were no armed clashes between Jews and other groups of society. All crimes were committed in the form of the unilateral policy of violence by fascist Germany. At the same time, unlike the Armenians, the Jews did not receive political or military support from any country, whereas the Armenians had been arming themselves since the 1870s and these armed revolts were supported by the great powers.

Third, the Jews were not resettled from one region to another and only extermination was planned. However, unlike the Jews, systematic killings of Armenians were not planned, and they were resettled from one place to another inside the Ottoman state.

Fourth, unlike the Armenians, there was a big difference

in strength between the Jews and the German state. The Jews did not arm themselves secretly and did not set up groups.

Historical comparative analyses conducted indirectly allow us to say that **there is no similarity between the events of 1915 and the Jewish Holocaust**. Such parallels serve certain political aims, which are directly linked to the ideology of "Greater Armenia".

Claims related to genocide are of great political importance. Both sides understand the political essence of the issue and are trying to silence the opposite side and prove that they are right. The range of disputes between the sides is so wide that states have even turned the issue into a political tool in their hands. As the first important condition for membership of the European Union, a great power like France demands that Turkey recognize the events as genocide and apologize. This issue was clearly confirmed by the former French President Nicolas Sarkozy's book "My Confessions": "...Turkey's policy of joining the European Union and its activity seem very obstinate to me. I see and understand the strategic calculations underlying this thought... If Turkey is determined to enter the European Union, it should definitely recognize the Armenian genocide..." (26, p. 192).

The United States also approaches the issue from a similar prism and notes that the Turks are responsible for the events that happened in 1915 and for the killings of Armenians, but they do not use the word "genocide". The reason is that the USA has strategic interests in Turkey.

It is impossible to increase the number of examples. As a result of this, some states use the allegations of genocide constantly raised in many countries every year as a tool of pressure on Turkey.

It must be noted that foreign scientists who assessed the events of 1915 impartially were stalked by the Armenians, threatened with death, and some of them were murdered. Threats made against Stanford Shaw, Bernard Lewis, Justice McCarthy, Samuel A. Weems and other scientists are a graphic example of this. The American researcher Samuel A. Weems was mysteriously murdered a short while after writing his book "Armenia – Secrets of a 'Christian' Terrorist State". The researcher highlighted letters of threats he had received from Armenians in connection with the book:

"...I will never forget my revenge, so be ready for it! There are trillions of people like me in the whole world. Keep smiling!...

You deserve to die like a beast. Some Armenians will kill you one day and you will taste Armenian wrath!!!!...

I want to note that your book is as stupid as you because writing such a book against Armenians who were the first in

Russian Bolsheviks teach Armenian troops in Baku. 1918



the world to adopt Christianity and are scattered all over the world is insulting to us, and if I can find you, I will kill you..." (36, p. 22-23).

Another American historian Justin McCarthy noted that he had become the target of a campaign inflamed by an Armenian journalist for rejecting allegations of genocide and had received letters and phone calls full of threats demanding his resignation from the University of Louisville where he was working (21, p. 126).

One of prominent US scientists, University of California Professor Stanford Shaw also had a bomb thrown into his house, had his office in the university ransacked and had received verbal and written threats. The main reason for these threats was that in his book "History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey", he exposed the activities of the Armenians and showed their true colors. After these threats, Shaw was forced to give up his lessons and hide. In connection with the threats made against the researcher, the deputy chancellor of the university, William D. Schaefer, noted that since there is an international terrorist organization in this business, the university had extremely limited power to resolve the issue (11, p. 17). The famous historian Bernard Lewis was convicted in France and sentenced to paying a heavy fine (17, p. 58; 21, p. 126; 24, p. 249). **As a result of this, most of the scientists living abroad have no courage to write on this subject. This has become one of the biggest obstacles in informing the world community about realities related to the genocide.** ✨

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