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ONE IMPORTANT PUBLICATION ABOUT THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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Arshag Chobanian's extensive article "La nation Arménienne et son œvres culturelle" published in 1945 is dedicated to the Armenian Genocide, committed by the leaders of the Young Turks. They chose the following solution for the Armenian Question - Armenia without Armenians. It cites many testimonies of contemporaries, which are full of terrifying facts, and shows us the brutality of the Turkish government. It makes an accent on many glorious facts of the historical past of the Armenian nation, which confirm the most honorable role of Armenia in the history of mankind.

It is shown that, although the Armenian inhabitants of Western Armenia were exterminated, they continued their historical course on a territory much smaller than their historical motherland, and were revived.

There are many facts about how great the role of Armenians was in developing Turkey in the fields of culture, industry and especially architecture.

I dedicate this article to the 90th anniversary of the publication of the heroic novel *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh* where an episode of Armenian's self-defence struggle against the Genocide of Armenians is skillfully depicted due to Franz Werfel's humanitarian impulses.

Keywords: *Arshak Tchobanian, Talaat Pasha, Morgenthau, Samantha Power, the Armenian Genocide, Young Turks, historical past.*

Introduction

Human justice, I spit in your face.

Siamanto

(Great martyr-poet of the Armenian Genocide)

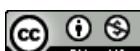
The Genocide of Armenians, committed by the Young Turks in Western Armenia in 1915, was the first in its kind in the history of humanity. The fact of the genocide has been documented by foreign diplomats, politicians, writers, as well as eyewitnesses.

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Since 1915, foreign figures, engaged in various fields of activities, have highlighted the issue of the Genocide of Armenians throughout the world. Samantha Power in her book “A Problem from Hell” presents the following meeting between US Ambassador to Turkey Henry Morgenthau and Turkish Minister of Interior Talaat Pasha. Morgenthau, being quite concerned about this matter, informs the governing circles of Washington that the authorities of Turkey forbid him even to show interest towards the internal affairs of their country. According to him “there seems to be a systematic plan to crush the Armenian race”(Power, 2003, p.7). Talaat Pasha asks Morgenthau in surprise when the latter speaks about genocide: “You are a Jew, these people are Christians... What do you have to complain about? Why can’t you let us do with these Christians as we please? Morgenthau replied “You don’t seem to realize that I am not here as a Jew, but as the American Ambassador...” (Power, 2003, p.7)

The famous French specialist in Armenian Studies Frederic Macler did a very important job by publishing the book “Autour de l’Arménie” in Paris in 1917. This comprehensive collection begins with a bibliographic reference to all the multilingual materials used by the author (Macler, 1917, p.III-XVI).

Macler was so deeply involved in the problems of the past and modern history of the Armenian people that in 1909, with the support of the French government, he was sent on a long business trip to Yerevan, Etchmiadzin, Oshakan, Tiflis and Istanbul and, as a result of this visit, he wrote an exceptionally valuable travelogue about the Armenians. Macler was so loyal to Armenia that he even sometimes put the surname Makleryants under his articles.

The Armenian people are grateful to all those foreign philanthropic individuals who have written in different years about the Genocide of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. On the occasion of the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide, a collection titled “The Black Book” was published in Yerevan (“The Black Book”, 2011). This book was a summary of the materials, provided by prominent foreign authors on Turkish crimes and the Armenian Genocide. Among the numerous thoughts and opinions in the book are those of Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Lev Tolstoy, Anatole France, Jean Aicard, Henri Morgenthau, Janis Rainis, Romain Rolland, Winston Churchill, Peyo Yavorov, Johannes Lepsius, Fridtjof Nansen, Valery Brusov, Maxim Gorky, Armin Wegner, Yuri Veselevsky, Franz Werfel, Bogdan Gembarski, Joseph Stalin, Osip Mandelstam, Louis Aragon and others. Many books were written on that topic in France in previous times and in our days. Genocide scholar Yves Ternon’s book called “Arménie 1900” is among the most interesting ones. It is co-authored by J.C. Kebabdjian. The book is very influential. It is illustrated and shows us what kind of hard-working, peace-loving, educated nation was massacred. The book includes the map of Greater Armenia with its historical provinces. At the end of the book we see the following citation: “It was an apocalypse, 1915 took a million and a half lives.” (Ternon & Kebabdjian, 1980, p. 147). A comprehensive, rich in facts on accusations book by Yves Ternon and Raymond H. Kévorkian was published in 2014. There are

many essential documents in it that confirm what a monstrous plan was carried out against Armenians (Kévorkian & Ternon, 2014).

The book by Stefan Ihrig, published in London in 2016, called “Justifying Genocide: Germany and the Armenians from Bismarck to Hitler”, makes a focus on the Armenian Genocide from a completely new perspective (Ihrig, 2016).

Arshak Tchobanian's new article about the Armenian Genocide

Arshag Tchobanian's extensive and valuable article “*La nation Arménienne et son œvres culturelle*” was published in 1945 on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Prominent Armenian intellectuals who lived abroad organized Genocide commemoration days. In those years, such initiatives were forbidden in Soviet Armenia, because Turkey positioned itself as a friendly country to the Soviet Union. On November 7, 1920, Adonts sent a letter to the editor of the newspaper “*The Times*”, based in London. He finished the letter with the following words: “Perhaps at that time Armenians will turn away from Europe once and for all with the painful conviction that conscience, the best of human virtues, has been hopelessly silenced there” (Dolukhanyan, 2022, p. 104) And on April 24, 1929, during the ceremony dedicated to the victims of the Armenian Genocide, the prominent specialist in Byzantine Studies Adonts said: “There is no victory without defeat. When the branches of a tree are cut, new ones grow on it. Each of you must do your duty for the sake of freedom” (Dolukhanyan, p. 106).

Since 1896, Tchobanian raised his protest by writing about the violence against Armenians in Turkey. He remained loyal to the issue of the Armenian Question throughout his life. Accordingly, presenting the tragic events and condemning them, this outstanding national figure, writer, philologist, translator did not forget to make a focus on the cultural values of the Armenians. The same phenomenon is also present in the article “*La nation Arménienne et son œvres culturelle*”.

The article begins with the speech of Talaat Pasha, a member of the Committee of the Young Turks, made in 1914. He says that it is necessary to do so that not a single working hand of that nation is left. Tchobanian presents the testimonies of foreign authors about the horrific episodes of the genocide.

Martin Niepage, director of the German Technical School in Aleppo, informs his government that people returning by rail from Baghdad have seen the terrible condition of the caravans of displaced Armenians (Tchobanian, 1945, p. 3). There were many bodies of naked Armenian women along the railway road who were raped. Their bodies were scattered everywhere. And the consul of Mosul, on his way from Mosul to Aleppo, sees so many severed children's hands in different parts of the road that they could be used to pave the road. M. Holstein, the German consul in Mosul, saw pits filled with Armenian corpses near one village in the neighborhood of Aleppo. Europeans bought Armenian girls from Turkish soldiers at a very low price, all of whom were insane (Tchobanian, 1945, p. 4). According to the consul, more than a million Armenians were killed or starved to death just in one month. It is said that

before the war of 1914, more than two million Armenians lived in the Ottoman Empire, but after the genocide, just about 80000 remained, who lived in Constantinople or several cities in Turkey's Asia Minor.

The Armenians who survived the genocide took refuge in the Caucasus, Syria, Lebanon, and Cilicia, which was occupied by France at that time. Later they settled down in France, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Egypt, the USA, South America and several other countries.

An interesting fact is mentioned. At the beginning of the war in 1914, the Turks suggested that one of the Armenian parties should organize a rebellion against Russia in the Caucasus. Armenians did not do that. After that all young Armenian men were taken to the battlefields and actually nobody returned home.

Tchobanian reminds us that throughout its long history, Armenians had statehood and independent life, power and glory and often fought for their freedom and independence (Ibid., p. 6).

When Armenians lost their statehood and appeared under the yoke of Persia and Turkey, they continued to provide great services to those countries in the fields of culture and industry. Those services were the largest in Turkey (Ibid., p. 7).

Tchobanian makes a focus on the history of Armenia in the civilizational context. Armenians had a developed civilization from the time of Urartu. They were the first in the world to adopt Christianity as a state religion. In the 5th century, Mesrop Mashtots created the Armenian alphabet, which the great linguist Antoine Meillet called a masterpiece (Ibid., p. 7).

Armenian literature is the most unique in the whole East, written by historians and chroniclers.

Ancient Armenian translated literature has international value. The works of the pioneers of the Christian Church were lost in their originals. They are known to the world only through Armenian translations. Ancient Armenian literature includes magnificent poetry, fables, historical verse conversations, prose prayers and rhyming verses, all in classical Armenian. In addition, there are love songs, educational didactic poems, historical poems, verse tales, epics created in the vernacular language. According to Tchobanian, Grigor Narekatsi's collection of poetic laments "The Book of Lamentations", the hayrens (old form of Armenian folk poetry) of Nahapet Kuchak and the epic "David of Sassoun" are three works of genius (Ibid. p.8). Gabriel Mourey considered Narekatsi and Kuchak to be authors of global significance. Before Heinrich Heine, Kuchak presented masterpieces expressing the feeling of love.

Tchobanian presents how the famous Austrian art theorist Josef Strzygowski and the famous specialist in Byzantine Studies Charles Diehl described Armenian architecture and evaluated it. They see the influence of Armenian architecture in Sainte-Sophie in Constantinople, Saint-Vital in Ravenna and Saint-Pierre in Rome, as well as Saint Sophia in Kiev (Ibid., p. 9).

The wonderful temple of Aghtamar (10th century), as well as the illustrated Gospel of Queen Mlike (9th century) are mentioned.

The famous French music critic Louis Laloy expressed his admiration for the concert of Armenian vocal art by Komitas in Paris in December 1906 (Tchobanian, 1945, p. 12).

Tchobanian writes the names of prominent Armenian writers of the 19th and 20th centuries, representing both Western and Eastern Armenian literature.

He also mentions how many outstanding cultural figures of Armenian origin have lived and worked in many foreign countries. Scientists were also among them. This phenomenon existed both in Byzantium and in the times of the Russian Empire (Ibid., p. 14).

Armenians rendered great services especially to the Ottoman Empire. The architects of all the royal palaces and magnificent buildings of Constantinople and Adrianople were Armenians. Many prominent figures of Poland, Romania and Hungary were also Armenians by nationality. It is interesting that in 1965, during the ceremony dedicated to the 50th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, the famous specialist in Armenian Studies Frederic Fayde reminded us what kind of benefits the Armenian nation brought to the world and humanity. He noted that the nation that suffered so many losses gave so many famous people to the world (Dolukhanyan, 2008). In 1917, the voluminous poem "Armenia, the Armenian Lament", written by the poet Jean Aicard, a member of the French Academy, was published on the Island St. Lazarus in Venice. It ends with the belief that the Phoenix bird of Armenia will be reborn from the desolation, ruins and ashes of Armenia, being more glorious and more powerful (Dolukhanyan, 2005, p. 61).

In 2017 I translated the book "I Promised I Would Tell", authored by Holocaust survivor Sonia Schreiber Weitz, into Armenian. In the preface of the book, the author writes about the genocide of the Armenians and reminds the readers the words uttered by Hitler: "After all who remembers today the Extermination of the Armenians" ("Le premier Genocide du XX siècle", 2004, p.3).

Weitz states with great pain that the massacres of Armenians are still historically a "forgotten genocide" (Weitz, 2017, p. 23).

Conclusion

A huge amount of literature has been created about the 1915 Armenian Genocide in various languages. They are testimonies of eyewitnesses, survivor memories rich in facts, highly critical articles of political figures of various nations, articles of protest published in international well-known periodicals by prominent Armenian scholars, as well as fictional works such as Franz Werfel's immortal novel "The Forty Days of Mount Musa", based on authentic facts,

Arshak Chobanyan, the great patriot, politician, writer, philologist, publisher, literary critic, and translator has authored many literary and public writings on the Armenian Genocide.

One of them, the last one is the book "La nation Arménienne et son œvres cultuelle" published by him in 1945. It is rich in facts and exposes the Armenian Genocide organized by the Young Turks in 1915, as a protest to the world community.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no ethical issues or conflict of interests in this research.

Ethical standards

The author affirms this research does not involve human subjects.

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**ՀԱՅԵՐԻ ՑԵՂԱՍՊԱՆՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ ՄԵՐԿԱՑՆՈՂ
ՄԻ ԿԱՐԵՎՈՐ ՀՐԱՊԱՐԱԿՈՒՄ**

Աելիտա Դուլուխանյան

Արշակ Չոպանյանի՝ 1945-ին տպագրված “La nation Arménienne et son œvres culturelle” ծավալուն հոդվածը նվիրված է Հայոց ցեղասպանությանը, որի հեղինակները երիտարքերի առաջնորդներն են: Նրանք հայկական հարցը լուծեցին հիմնովին՝ Հայաստան առանց հայերի:

Հոդվածում բերվում են ժամանակակիցների բազում վկայություններ, որոնք լի են սարսափազդու փաստերով: Թուրքական կառավարության

վայրագությանը հակառակ՝ թերվում են հայ ազգի պատմական ձանապարհը լուսաբանող բազմաթիվ փառահեղ փաստեր, որոնք հաստատում են Հայաստանի ամենապատվավոր դերակատարումը՝ մարդկության պատմության մեջ։ Նշվում է, որ թեև Արևմտահայաստանի հայ բնակիչներին բնաջնջեցին, հայերը շարունակեցին իրենց պատմական ընթացքը հայրենիքում և վերածնվեցին։

Թերվում են բազմաթիվ փաստեր, թե որքան մեծ է եղել հայերի դերը Թուրքիան զարգացնելու մշակույթի, արդյունաբերության և հասկապես՝ ճարտարապետության բնագավառներում։

Այս հոդվածը նվիրում եմ «Սուսա լեռան քառասուն օրը» հերոսավեպի լուս ընծայման 90-ամյակին, որտեղ Ֆրանց Վերֆելի մարդասիրական մղումներով հմտորեն պատկերված է հայերի ինքնապաշտպանական պայքարի մի դրվագ՝ ընդդեմ հայերի ցեղասպանության։

Բանալի բառեր՝ Արշակ Չոպանյան, Թալեաթ փաշա, Մորգենթաու, Սամանտա Փառեր, Հայերի ցեղասպանություն, երիտրուրքեր, վերածնունդ։