

The Armenian Genocide: The International Political Boomerang of the Crime

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Abstract

The Yeghern – Genocide of Armenians in their homeland – has relatively recently become an object of political debate after decades-long silence. The already revealed facts of the universal evil, concepts and definitions shaping the public perception, among them the widely held and publicized formula of *“The Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire in 1915-1923”* which does not correspond to the factual and political content of this crime against humanity, await new interpretation. To this day the Genocide of the Armenians of Eastern Transcaucasia remains outside the Turkish crime. Consequences of the international political implications of Yeghern, as well as the irresponsibility of world powers as the main guarantors of international security, have not been adequately evaluated, and this is sure to lead to the establishment of new genocidogenic states and the legalization of criminal behaviour.

Key words: The Yeghern / Genocide of Armenians, the sources of the genocidal behaviour of Turks, the Genocide of Armenians of Eastern Transcaucasia (Azerbaijani Armenians), the international political consequences of the Yeghern, new countries perpetrating a genocide, genocide and international terrorism, international law.

Introduction

On April 24, 2015, Armenians throughout the world are going to commemorate the innocent victims of the Mets Yeghern (The Armenian Genocide). On this day the progressive people of the world will be standing next to us – Armenians, for whom the year of 1915 and April 24 have turned into symbols of condemnation and prevention of the greatest crime against humanity – genocide. The Yeghern committed by the Ottoman Empire decades before 1915 and later by the Republican Turkey remains a bleeding wound for Armenians. It will remain fresh as long as the perpetrators go unpunished, as long as the criminal does not face universal condemnation, does not repent and return Armenians what they took from them by treacherous murder. After decades-long silence over the Genocide, the gravest crime has relatively recently become an object of public debate. Numerous dark pages of the crime wait to be revealed. The already revealed facts of the universal evil await new interpretation. On the eve of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide we draw the attention of the world community to some of these facts presented in the form of brief observations.

Observation One

The formula “The Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire in 1915-1923” does not reflect the true geography of the crime.

The formulation under discussion geographically connects the crime with the Ottoman Empire only, despite the well-known and irrefutable evidence that Turks pursued the policy of extermination of Armenians beyond the borders of the Empire both under the sultan and after his removal from power, namely in north-western parts of Iran, in Nakhichevan and Eastern Transcaucasia. The attempt to circumvent this fact can be accounted for by several reasons.

For decades the West has been seeking to free its military ally – Turkey, from the burden of the crime committed at the wake of the 20th century leaving it to the remorse of the long-perished Ottoman Empire. The fact was also overlooked by Soviet Moscow which hoping to export the “Red Revolution” to the Muslim East saw Turkey and Soviet Azerbaijan as the pioneers of this revolution. In the 60s of the 20th century when the tabu on the issue was removed, Moscow allowed the circulation of the formula “The Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire in 1915-1923” watching carefully that the Armenian massacres in Nakhichevan and Eastern Transcaucasia are not referred to, since it would undermine the realization of the political myth of “Lenin friendship” between Armenians and the people of Azerbaijan. This is how the massacres of the Armenians in the South Caucasus by the Turkish regular army and local Turks that invaded into the region in 1918 escaped the corpus delicti of the crime. This is how the formulation of the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire in 1915-1923 that ignored the above-mentioned crime was put into circulation in information sources and literature. Now that the European countries have set the recognition of the Armenian Genocide as a prerequisite for the normalization of their relations with Turkey, we must speak out and tell the world that the Armenian Genocide in Western Armenia, Nakhichevan and Eastern Transcaucasia are different stages of the same genocide. The same is the villain and the same is the victim. This obvious fact is left unnoticed whereas it can serve as the key argument in unveiling the Turkish denial policy over the Armenian Genocide. So far the key argument of the Turkish denial of the Armenian Genocide with which Ankara reverses the charge is that Turks did not possess a pre-planned program of a genocide. Rather, they displaced Armenians because of their being unreliable for the Ottoman Empire which was at war at that time. The “accidents” that happened to the caravans as a result of the attacks by “mobs” on the way, as claimed by official Ankara, cannot be labeled as Genocide.

The massacres of Armenians in Nakhichevan and Eastern Transcaucasia reveal this falsehood once and for all.

In 1918 it was not the Turkish and Kurdish mob but the Turkish army that burnt down Armenian settlements and killed the innocent inhabitants along the way to Baku and then in Baky, as well. This fact, well grounded and confirmed by numerous evidences and documents does not leave room for the false claims of the unreliability of Armenians in the Turkish file on the “justification” of the displacements (part of the documents was presented in the collection of documents under the title “the Massacres of Armenians in

the states of Baku and Elizavetapol in 1918-1920" published in Yerevan in 2003). The Armenians living in their historical lands in Nakhichevan and Eastern Transcaucasia for centuries were not Ottoman citizens and thus could not be labeled as unreliable. They did not expose any threat to the Empire or Turkey, either. They were not displaced, but were slaughtered on the spot for one reason only – they were Armenians.

Observation Two

The genocide policy was not stopped in Turkey in 1923 as presented in the formula "the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire in 1915-1923".

Another issue of concern is the clarification of the data. April 24 of the year 1915 is a symbolic day of commemoration of the victims of the Armenian Genocide. It is not the beginning of the Turkish policy of killing Armenians as the formulation under question supposes. The Armenian massacres in the Ottoman Empire had started decades before 1915. The year of 1915 being the year of the cruelest and most inhuman deeds was selected by Armenians as the year of the Armenian Genocide / the Mets Yeghern.

However, the political content of the Turkish crime distorts not so much the Turkish attempts to consider 1915 as the start of the Armenian Genocide, whether by chance or on purpose, but rather the limitation of the policy with 1923, i.e. with the end of the history of the Ottoman Empire. The century-long attempts to push the crime out of the pages of the world history and to deny it, the defalcation of the properties of the victims, the tactics of stifling the Republic of Armenia and Artsakh in the circle of blockade, the defalcation and destruction of the centuries-long Armenian cultural heritage, the forceful conversion and Islamization of the survivors of the Genocide, all these are the continuation of the policy of the Ottoman Empire that has been adopted and consistently pursued by the Republican Turkey since the very first day of its foundation, a state that was established by the political forces directly involved in the Genocide.

Observation Three

The Turkish people and authorities are equally responsible for the massacres since they equally participated in the crime.

The present-day Turks inherited their behaviour in intranational issues from their ancestors – the oghuz Turks who invaded Asia Minor in the Middle Ages. To seize the fertile fields and lands of the region and to settle in the site they took to displacing the local people and killing them, destroying their settlements and robbing them. This was the sole method applied by them which was practiced by the whole tribe – male and female, old and young. This bloody lifestyle was still in use after they established medieval state formations and later an empire with their culture of extensive development. But even after that Turks retained the key characteristics of lifestyle and the paradigm of progress formed during the nomadic period which leads their development to quantitative growth and territorial expansion. The royal arsenal of crave for expansion was enriched with yet another bloody weapon – demographic raid. The Turkish authorities and the Turkish mob, in the spirit inherited from the times of raids, remained consistent in robbing the other nations of the Empire with different religions, in exploiting and killing them and settling in the lands

of others. The mob remained a key phenomenon characterising the Turkish national behaviour which reflects the unity of the Turkish authorities and the Turkish mass in their policy against the "others". The people that had adopted the culture of "massacre" and "theft" and the state it had established could not have a historical prospect and it was evident already in the 19th century that the Ottoman Empire had not only fallen behind of the general flow of civilization but hindered the flow, as well.

It was at the crossroads of the 19th and 20th centuries, during the state crisis, that the lifestyle, which was formed through the tradition of merciless exploitation and plunder of the peoples and the rules empowered by the authorities, developed into a conscious genocidal behaviour.

The bearers of this consciousness were not a small group of state officials or a thin layer of the society. The true criminals of Armenians, Greeks and Assyrians was the social layer in majority who happened to hold the reigns of state authority both in the Ottoman Empire and in the Republican Turkey that keeps on reproducing itself in all layers of the society starting from the state elite, lower administrative circles to the "ordinary Turk". Today it is this mass and not the sparse opposing layer that dictates the state policy of Turkey over the denial of the Armenian Genocide. This consequence unites the responsibility of the Turkish people, the Ottoman Empire and the Republican Turkey for the crime against humanity. It is this very consequence that brings together the notions of "genocidal Turkey" and "genocidal Turk" which the peoples living in the region and beyond its borders have perceived as synonyms and have endorsed it in the widely used expressions "Turks went through there", "Turk never changes". As far as the Turkish case is concerned, the formulation stating that genocide is a state policy is evidently incomplete because of the mass involvement of Turks in it. This truth is rarely voiced because of the unnecessary expression of hypocrisy and tact whereas the mere acknowledgement of it would help the Turkish people to get to know themselves better and shrug off the burden of the sin. Genocide will remain a characteristic of the Turkish identity and statehood as long as the deniers of the crime form a majority in the society and dictate the state policy of the country. That is why the claims to recognize the Armenian Genocide that are addressed to Turkey, are in fact addressed to the Turkish people.

Observation Four

Turkey established and continues to establish genocidal countries internationally legalizing the genocidal practice.

The genocidal nature of the Turkish civilization in the 20th century manifested itself not only in the Ottoman Empire but also beyond its borders trying to annihilate Armenians, Greeks and Assyrians and by establishing states deriving from the same genocidal culture. It has already established states bearing the gene of its civilization – the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus through the genocide of Greeks and the Republic of Azerbaijan through the genocide of the Armenians of Nakhichevan and Eastern Transcaucasia. The impact of the Turkish political culture of genocide is more than evident on the break-up of Yugoslavia and on the current developments in the Middle East.

The first Turkish-plan-based state was the so-called Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan which was established in September 1918 by the Turkish forces that reached Baku over the dead bodies of Armenians.

The metamorphosis of the states in the region bearing the name "Azerbaijan" in the 20th century have left no change in the historically inherited genocidal behaviour (inherited from their genocidal culture) of the part of the ethnic group of Turks who held power in the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan, Soviet Azerbaijan and present-day Azerbaijan. The Bolshevik center that was a hostage to the Stalin plan of forming a new Azerbaijani nation in the Soviet times turned a blind eye upon the Baku policy of the ethnic cleansing of the Armenians who lived in the republic. This was carried out by national persecution. This had already caused the ethnic cleansing in Nakhichevan in the 70s and in 1988 starting from Sumgait turned into mass killings of Armenians in the entire Republic. Armenians were not the only target of the genocidal policy in the Ottoman Empire, Turkey, as well as in the Soviet Azerbaijan. Similarly the authorities pursued the policy of forced conversion of native Islamic nations. The only way to resist was to shut oneself in a unique national shell as most of the Lezgi, Talish, Tatar and other native peoples have done. During the last years of the Soviet Union, all the Islamic nations that had been converted into Azerbaijanians by force vanished from the ethnic map of the once multi-ethnic Soviet Azerbaijan. All these happenings in the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan that was established by the Turkish Army, all that happened in the Soviet Azerbaijan founded by the Russian XI Red Army and all that is happening in the present-day Republic of Azerbaijan is not at all different from what happened in the Ottoman Empire and what is in process in the present-day Turkey.

The famous formula of Heidar Aliev – the President of the Post-Soviet Azerbaijan "One nation, two countries" came to prove that the assassinator is the same Turk both in Ankara and in Baku. It comes to endorse the common characteristics that unites the Turks of the South Caucasus and Turkey – Turks,¹ both in the captured territories of Asia Minor and South Caucasus, have persistently been pursuing the policy of annihilation of the other nations living in the region disguising themselves as Muslims, Caucasian Tatars or Azerbaijanians.

It is not a mere chance that the blockade of Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh is imposed by Turkey and the Republic of Azerbaijan together. It is no less accident that during the war unleashed against Nagorno Karabakh, Turkey and Azerbaijan chose Armenian settlements as the main targets for bombardment. It is no accident, either, that the criminals of the Sumgait pogrom in the Republic of Azerbaijan and Ramil Safarov who had axed his colleague in sleep are idolized the same way as the principal perpetrators of the Armenian Genocide – Talaat and Enver Pasha are in Turkey.

This is the same nation, the same political behaviour. The Genocide of the Armenians in Nakhichevan and Eastern Transcaucasia is the manifestation of the same Turkish policy of the Armenian Genocide that was carried out by the states bearing the label "Azerbaijan", the last of which is the current Republic of Azerbaijan.

Observation Five**Why didn't the super powers punish the perpetrator of the Genocide?**

Back in May, 1915 Russia, France and Great Britain came up with a joint statement qualifying the atrocities against the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire as "new crimes against humanity and civilization" and agreed that the Turkish government must be punished for those crimes. It seemed that the big powers were to administer the punishment to prevent a possible recurrence of the crime. It seemed that the international community realized the hazard this crime against humanity and civilization contained. It turned out to be a misbelief. The threat of the Turkish germ of genocide, practically lethal for civilization, was literally ignored. The West preferred to use the dubious plan of using Turkey against Soviet Russia and in 1923 it threw away the Treaty of Sevres that it itself had adopted. The Treaty envisaged the restoration of the Armenian statehood in some part of the Armenian lands. It should be particularly stated that supporting Armenians to restore their statehood in their historical lands as stipulated in the Treaty did not anticipate punishment for the villain. It simply stated that the super powers defended the legal right of Armenians to restore statehood in their own historical homeland. However, they failed to make the smallest move in Lausanne in 1923. The Armenian lands were left to Turkey – the perpetrator of the Armenian Genocide. The crime was not only left unpunished, but was encouraged, instead. What is more, while forgiving (actually encouraging) Turks for some political considerations for decades, the West became a participant of the Turkish plan to keep the fact of the Armenian Genocide under lock and key and to erase the tragic events from the pages of history. It was Adolf Hitler who broke the silence in 1939 asking "and who remembers it" not for condemning the Turks, though, but rather for copying them. The Bolshevik Russia was no less different from the West. Only several years after the Genocide, in an attempt to entice "the anti-imperialist Turkey," Moscow presented Turkey with Kars, Ardahan, Surmalu, St. Mount Ararat, that had never belonged to the Ottoman Empire before.

This was followed by still new donations. On demand of Turkey, Moscow broke away the Armenian Nakhichevan and Nagorno Karabakh from the Soviet Union by force and placed it within the borders of Soviet Azerbaijan. It seemed that the ally of the Nazi Germany would face a severe punishment after World War II. However, universal interests and values were sacrificed once again – this time in the political games between the Soviet Union and the West. Turkey, a Nazi ally, left the war with no losses. The Armenian lands were left to it this time as well.

The collapse of the Soviet Union provided the West with yet another chance to adopt a clear-cut position over the rejection of genocides and the exclusion of it from the practice of national relations, the condemnation of genocidal acts and the punishment of genocidal governments and states. It seemed that the "Armenian-free" Nakhichevan, several "Sumgaitis" committed by united Turkish barbarians one after another on the "democratic front" would leave no doubts for the West to qualify the tragic events as genocide. However, the western capitals avoided clear-cut qualifications and ended up with standard statements. What is more, the West that had acted as a moral supporter of Karabakh-Artsakh that since 1988 had launched a liberation struggle against the committor of the

genocide, demanded that Russia find a solution that would be in the best interests of the Armenians in Artsakh, turned its back on Karabakh in 1991 when the break-up of the USSR was deemed unavoidable.

It turned out that it had encouraged the Karabakh movement only to dissolve the USSR, foreseeing the possibility of turning it into a weapon for the imminent collapse of the Soviet super power. It also turned out that the plan to break the USSR into Soviet Republics had been on the agenda since 1988. The Republic of Azerbaijan where the non-Turk Islamic people had been massacred through forced conversion, and Armenians – through bloody slaughters, was recognized with the borders of the former Soviet Azerbaijan including Nakhichevan that never had belonged to it and Artsakh which stood up for independence.

Due to this political decision the West not only betrayed the democratic ideals proclaimed by itself, but encouraged the criminal and instigated the Karabakh war authorizing Baku to wage a “just” war to “liberate” the lands which did not belong to it under the treaties in force using the principle of territorial integrity as a means to hide the genocide.

Baku was pardoned with explicit violations of the international law and universal moral norms. The West completely ignored the Genocide of the Armenians living in Azerbaijan. Europe ignored the fact that Azerbaijan had turned Nakhichevan into a toll bar on its way to Asia. All this was done for the oil and gas that it could receive more easily from Azerbaijan, which should have been punished for the Genocide of Armenians and where the native peoples of Eastern Transcaucasia could have been freed from the national underground, and this could become an underlying factor in the democratic development of Azerbaijan.

Observation Six

Yeghern is a concept meaning killing a nation in its homeland.

The labelling of the Turkish crime calls for special investigation. Without doubt, it fully corresponds to the internationally recognized definition of the concept of “genocide.” In content the concept embraces the common features that are typical of various genocidal acts and does not reflect the specificities of such acts. Only Jews were able to make the “Holocaust” by the Nazi Germany against Jews an internationally recognized concept which contains the characteristics of a genocide.

Holocaust as a type of genocide underlines the means of eradicating people belonging to the same nation or community by burning them in gas chambers. The Armenian Genocide, too, has its specific feature – a whole nation has been slaughtered in their historical homeland. Armenians were deprived of their homeland as a result of the crime committed by Turks. This characteristics of the Armenian Genocide is reflected in the concept of Yeghern and it is high time the conceptual meaning “genocide of a nation in its homeland” spread and found its place in international documents.

Observation Seven

The Boomerang effect

The world witnessed genocidal acts before the 20th century, as well. However, one of the basic characteristics of the Armenian Genocide was the fact that the crime was com-

mitted against the background of an international political system which, in fact, had sufficient potential to prevent the atrocities or to punish the villain: the big countries that had won World War I were really capable of doing that.

But there was a lack in understanding the true menace of the spread of the virus, and there was no political will of joint struggle against the crime either. The great powers responsible for the international security failed to realize the fatal mistake they made when restrained from killing the germ of genocide after 1915. It was not an ordinary mistake. But rather a criminal indifference toward the responsibility the world had granted them. They not only forgave the murderer, but encouraged him as well, silencing the crime and upsetting the ready plan of the Armenian nation to restore their statehood in their historical land.

This was sure to affect the entire international system and the future course of history. It was sure to have consequences for both the criminal and his supporters.

Turks received the complex of being impunitive. Moreover, now they were confident that genocide, violence, impunity could be applied in international relations as ordinary, and in fact, legal tools of political practice.

The Turkish precedent of the gravest crime against humanity that was committed and was left unpunished provided grounds for the imitation of the crime by all the forces that were inclined to solve problems in a similar way. The epidemics of genocides, terrorist acts, violence is becoming more and more rampant in the contemporary world, and one must be blind in mind to fail to notice that they have the Armenian Genocide as their source in modern history – a crime against humanity that has not received its due punishment so far.

One must be blind in mind to fail to notice that in its estimates of impunity and over-permissiveness terrorism resembles genocide and becomes its modified version. Cyprus, Azerbaijan, Jugoslavia, Rwanda, Komboja..... New York 9/11, Paris January 7 – Charlie Ebd... these are the destructive boomerangs that the world history threw back into history at the outset of the previous century. Today, they are back to hit themselves and the entire humanity.

The problem has another aspect as well. It goes without saying that the perpetrator of a genocide takes on a deeply distorted nature and a more aggressive behaviour. However, the criminal is not the only one to change. The one who hides it, let alone the one who encourages it, takes on a different consciousness and behaviour. It is already many years that the US supreme authorities and several Western capitals avoid calling the Turkish crime with its name thereby turning the recognition of the Armenian Genocide into a an object of indecent political games and grounding it with the fact that they do not want to “hurt Turkey” or hinting that it is their military ally.

This cannot but distort the nature and the mentality of the nation, which first approves of or understands the behaviour of its authorities toward the condemnation of the Turkish crime, the decision of the US to provide moral support to Karabakh and then to hand it to the criminal Azerbaijan. It itself, willingly or unwillingly, is doomed to become a participant of those deals.³

The fact that the official Washington has not recognized the Armenian Genocide

and so far has failed to denounce the perpetrator, speaks of the psychologically and morally deficient authorities, American society or at least the majority of it. This is true of the West. Though it has pertained to be the pioneer in democracy and human rights related issues, it recognized the Republic of Azerbaijan with Nagorno Karabakh, as well as occupied Nakhichevan that Azerbaijan turned into a toll bar on the way of Europe to Asia.

It was the West that granted Azerbaijan the privilege to continue the Genocide with war, and now it sends obscure messages to the both sides urging them to find a fair solution to the conflict ignoring the fact that the real aggressor is the criminal which was encouraged by the West itself.

What hinders super powers and the West in the first place to see the things in the light of truth? It fails to understand that the issue of the punishment of the one who perpetrated a genocide must not be turned into an object of political transactions for temporary interests. By no means must punishment be replaced by encouragement. Like a century ago, contrary to some formal statements, they still lack the clear consciousness that genocide leads to the suicide of mankind.

Conclusion

The principal conclusion of this analysis stems from the concept which proclaims that the widely held and publicized formula "The Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire in 1915-1923" does not correspond to the factual and political content of this crime against humanity.

Whether or not the world super powers will change their attitude to the issue, each and every reasonable person, alone or with supporters, should do his utmost to build a genocide-free world, a world where genocides have no place.

Notes:

1. The Turks but not tyurks. This explanation is highly important, since the theoreticians of Ankara and Baku attempt to involve other tyurk nations in the genocidal acts committed by themselves claiming that the charges made against Turks over Genocide is an insult and charge against the tyurkic ethnos as a whole.
2. It is noteworthy that the organization uniting the barbarian mob bore the name *National Front* thereby confirming the unity of the Turkish murderers in Azerbaijan and the authorities in carrying out the massacres.
3. The only western country that annually shows modest financial support to the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh is the US. By doing this Washington emphasizes its specific position among the co-chairing countries. At the same time that is a jesture of disregard towards Baku which has made up a "black list" of those visiting Artsakh in order to terrorize them, though it does not dare utter a word in respect to the USA. However impressive this step taken by Washington may be, it does not counterweigh its decision to leave Nagorno Karabakh to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

**Հայոց ցեղասպանությունը.
հանցագործության միագային քաղաքական բուներանգը**

Եղեռնը՝ իր հայրենիքում հայ ժողովրդի ցեղասպանությունը, լուրջան տասնամյակներից հետո համեմատաբար նոր է դարձել քաղաքական քննարկումների առարկա: Վերախմաստավորման կարիքումեն համամարդկային այդ աղետի արդեն իսկ հայտնի փաստեր, հանրային ընկալումը կաղապարող հասկացություններ և ձևակերպումներ, այդ թվում և լայնորեն շրջանառվող *«Օսմանյան կայսրությունում հայոց ցեղասպանությունը 1915-1923 թթ.»* բանաձևը, որը չի համապատասխանում մարդկության դեմ գործած այդ հանցագործության փաստական ու քաղաքական բովանդակությանը: Ցայսօր թուրքական ոճիրի հանցակազմից դուրս է մնում Արևելյան Անդրկովկասի հայության ցեղասպանությունը: Չեն գնահատված Եղեռնի, ինչպես նաև գլոբալ անվտանգության գլխավոր երաշխավորների՝ խոշոր տերությունների, անպատասխանատվության միջագային քաղաքական հետևանքները այդ հարցում, որը տանում է նոր ցեղասպան պետությունների հիմնադրմանն ու այդ հանցագործ քաղաքական վարքի լեզվացմանը:

**Геноцид армян:
международный политический бумеранг преступления**

Егерн – Геноцид армянского народа на своей родине – после длящегося десятилетиями периода замалчивания сравнительно недавно стал предметом открытого политического обсуждения. В переосмыслении нуждаются многие факты, относящиеся к злодеянию понятия и формулировки, в том числе широко распространенная и задающая рамки общественного восприятия проблемы формула: *“Геноцид армян в Османской империи в 1915-1923 гг.”*, которая не соответствует фактическому и политическому содержанию преступления. По сей день вне состава преступления остается геноцид армянства Восточного Закавказья. Адекватно не оценены как международно-политические последствия Егерна, так и безответственность в этом вопросе мировых держав как главных гарантов международной безопасности, которая ведет к учреждению новых геноцидогенных государств и легализации этого преступного поведения.