

WARS, GENOCIDE, BLOCKADES

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Abstract

The historical settlement area of the Armenians, the Armenian Highland, as well as the South Caucasus have been among the most disputed and contested areas in the world since ancient times. This has had far-reaching negative consequences for the people living in this region: Difficulties in establishing a central state or small statehood, strong dependence on competing regional hegemonic powers, foreign domination, insecurity for life and limb resulting in migration or mass exodus and even genocide.

Genocide is one of those crimes caused by wars and civil wars, but also by periods of transformation, by one-party regimes, and by the suspension of parliamentary rule. In the 20th century, serial genocides occurred, not coincidentally, during the two world wars. These wars provided the smokescreen behind which states could realize an intention of extermination usually conceived before the war began.

However, the actual military starting point for the Ottoman genocide of three million indigenous Christians was not the First World War, but the Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913, which became a test run for deportations in the Ottoman province of Edirne (Adrianopolis), which were carried out as death marches. The Young Turk rulers learned from this occasion that people expelled across state borders returned, while a high proportion of those deported to the interior perished.

In the last part of my paper, I analyze four examples of famine and economic blockades in and after wars: the British naval blockades against Germany and the Ottoman Empire in the First World War, the German Wehrmacht blockade against the Soviet Russian metropolis of Leningrad, the Soviet blockade of West Berlin and the Azerbaijani blockade against Artsakh. As these examples show, the conduct of war and the consequences of war are particularly closely linked to intentions of extermination.

Keywords – War, Genocide, Ottoman Empire, Armenia, First World War, Second World War, Colonial Genocide, Namibia, Shoah, War Defeat, Smyrna, Humanitarian Interventions, Blockades.

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Introduction

In this article, I examine the relationship between genocide and war. Wars, including civil wars, are among those situations that incite genocide. This is because wars unleash violence. Furthermore, wars form the ideal smokescreen behind which pre-existing intentions of extermination can be realized. International attention is then largely diverted. The history of the 20th century, which has also been called the century of genocides, provides numerous examples of this, especially during the two world wars in the first half of the 20th century. Nearly three million indigenous Christians fell victim to the genocide during the last decade of late Ottoman rule: one and a half million Armenians, one million Greek Orthodox Christians, and at least half a million Syriacs. Their extermination reached its peak during World War I, when one and a half million out of 2.5 million Armenians of Ottoman nationality perished in death marches and massacres in just 19 months.

Genocide in Colonial War

Much of the Armenian extermination is reminiscent of the first genocide of the 20th century, the German Empire's colonial war of extermination against the Ovaherero and Nama peoples in what was then the German colony of Southwest ("Deutsch-Südwest"), now Namibia.

Lieutenant General Lothar von Trotha, an officer as experienced as he was brutal, had been charged with putting down the Herero uprising. German Africa historian Jürgen Zimmerer characterizes him as follows: *"Although von Trotha knew neither the country nor its people, he possessed a clear conception of world history as a 'racial struggle, 'especially between the 'white' and 'black' races, in which there could be only one victor. Accordingly, he wanted to destroy 'the rebellious tribes with streams of blood'. (...) The hunt ended only at the desert fringe, where the German troops stopped, occupied the water points and denied the Herero, including women and children, the life-saving access to it.*

Already during his approach, still from the ship, he ordered to shoot all resisting Herero. The Herero's resistance became a crime worthy of death, and a negotiated peace was out of the question. Instead, von Trotha planned a large-scale encirclement battle at the Waterberg, where the Herero had retreated with their families and possessions. There he wanted to decide the war. However, he failed with it, because the Herero were able to escape. In mid-August 1904, they fled toward the largely waterless Omaheke Desert in the north of the protectorate, pursued by German soldiers who often shot overrun stragglers without much ado. This chase ended only at the desert fringe, where the German troops stopped, occupied the water points and denied the Herero, including women and children, life-sustaining access to it. Precisely because the German army was also exhausted, it used the nature of the land, as it was called, to achieve a victory that it could not achieve in the classical military sense. Thus, the 'waterless Omaheke (...) was to complete what the German arms had begun: The annihilation of the Herero people,' as the official German military historiography put

it.”¹ Up to 100,000 people died of thirst in the Omaheke Desert or died in battle and in concentration camps.

Genocide during World Wars

The fact that victims resist colonial and genocidal violence is still used to this day as an argument to deny charges of genocide and to refute the victim status of those affected. This also applies to the Ottoman Armenians, of whom, according to estimates by the German embassy in Constantinople, about two million were also driven into desert-like regions.² The organizers of these deportations knew very well that Mesopotamia was deadly as a destination of the euphemistically called resettlement or even evacuation. In the entire Ottoman Empire, including its capital Constantinople, there was a famine during the World War, which was aggravated in the predominantly Arab-populated region of Mesopotamia by administrative restrictions and an Entente naval blockade. The local population was not allowed to fish or hunt, and the government's granaries were not opened to supply the hungry people. The Armenians, however, were driven into this very region, provided they survived the deliberately strenuous death marches at all.

Moreover, wartime defeats spur on pre-existing extermination intentions. Referring to the extermination of six of Europe's eleven million Jews, Martin Bergmann wrote: *"We know that the persecution of the Jews became more systematically organized and increased in brutality as hopes of conquest faded. When there was little prospect of victory over Russia, Germany declared war on the United States in December 1941; a month later, the 'Final Solution,' the murder of all European Jews, was initiated. As the war progressed, the campaign of extermination against the Jewish population became increasingly important to Hitler. It resulted in a race for time, because the 'Final Solution' was to be completed before the irrevocable defeat of Germany. If Hitler did not go down in world history as a conqueror, he would at least receive grateful recognition as an exterminator of the Jews."*³

The Armenians were doomed by the Ottoman defeat in the devastating two-week Ottoman-Russian Battle of Sarıkamış (Armenian: Yeregik; Dec. 22, 1914-Jan. 15, 1915). In the middle of winter, at least half of the 120,000 poorly equipped Ottoman forces froze to death or fell. Although the Ottoman Minister of War, Ismail Enver, praised the Ottoman Armenians for their war effort as late as February 1915, the defeat became an important cause for the final decision to exterminate the Armenians in mid-February 1915.

¹ Zimmerer, Jürgen, „Doch kein Völkermord? Warum der Genozid an den Nama und Herero nicht für journalistische Spiele taugt.“ – IPG, 18.07.2016, <https://www.ipg-journal.de/kommentar/artikel/doch-kein-völkermord-1536/>

² Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes (PA/AA). 1916. „Der Geschäftsträger der Botschaft Konstantinopel (Radowitz) an den Reichskanzler (Bethmann Hollweg), Bericht“, 4. Oktober 1916, [http://www.armenocide.net/armenocide/armgende.nsf/\\$\\$AllDocs/1916-10-04-DE-002](http://www.armenocide.net/armenocide/armgende.nsf/$$AllDocs/1916-10-04-DE-002)

³ Bergmann, Martin S., Wiederkehrende Probleme in der Behandlung Überlebender und ihrer Kinder, In: Kinder der Opfer, Kinder der Täter: Psychoanalyse und Holocaust. Hg. Martin S. Bergmann, Milton E. Jucory, Judith S. Kestenberg. Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1995, p. 265.

In genocide research, a distinction is made between domestic and foreign genocides. Although the Ottoman genocide belongs to the first category, as a result of the war situation, the designated victims, i. e., the Ottoman Christians, were externalized, i. e., declared to be domestic enemies who allegedly collaborated with the Ottoman war enemies Russia and Great Britain. In this view, it does not matter that among the Ottoman victims in Sarıkamış were also numerous Armenian soldiers of the sultan.

The Balkan Wars 1912/13: Triggers of the Ottoman Genocide(s)

The real trigger for the Young Turk genocide, however, lies earlier and did not primarily affect Armenians, but Ottoman Greeks. The two Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913 formed the key event that finally brought about the readiness of the Muslim Ottoman elite to commit genocide against non-Muslims. The Balkan wars had turned a total of 800,000 people into refugees, half of whom were Muslims. Epidemics, especially cholera, were rampant among the uprooted populations. In the northern Greek provinces of Thrace and Macedonia, the Muslim population dropped from 2.3 to 1.4 million; 623,000 of the Muslims living there died in massacres, from the hardships of flight, and from epidemics.⁴ Conversely, before, during, and after the Balkan Wars, Ottoman Greeks fled to Greece from Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace. The Greek and Muslim refugees each brought with them their own experiences of religiously and nationally motivated violence, thus creating further grounds for hatred in their new homelands.

The Young Turk government forcibly settled 1.2 million *muhacirler* – religious (Muslim) refugees - from the Balkans in the Greek settlements of western Anatolia. As in the mid-19th century with the immigration of hundreds of thousands of North Caucasians, however, the administration's refugee management was still dilettantish. It was not until the beginning of 1914 that an Ottoman directorship for the settlement of tribes and immigrants was established. One of the four departments of this new state agency targeted the non-Muslim indigenous population of the Ottoman Empire; another became responsible for deportation and thus for organizing the death marches of Armenians and Pontos Greeks during World War I.

The collected data and human resources of this authority were used during the World War. The World War, then called the Great or European War, provided the occasion and the opportunity to implement the deportation plans that had been made earlier. Already in the Second Balkan War (1913), the Young Turk leadership had learned that it was not enough to chase undesirable populations across the national border. For the 150,000 Ottoman Greeks expelled from eastern Thrace to Greece would return to their homeland at the end of the war. In contrast, of the 50,000 Eastern Thracians deported to Central Anatolia, nearly half did not survive the rigors of the march and forced settlement under Muslim majorities. This provided the blueprint for further deportations before and especially during the World War. The Ottoman provinces of Edirne (Adrianopolis in Greek) and Aydin/Smyrna were the first to see

⁴ Schwartz, Michael, Die Balkankriege 1912/13: Kriege und Vertreibungen in Südosteuropa. „Militärgeschichte – Zeitschrift für historische Bildung,“ 2, 2008, p. 9.

massacres and expulsions of Greeks even before the World War. Edirne formed the European remnant of the Ottoman Empire that remained after the Balkan Wars. The province of Aydin was the most prosperous among all Ottoman provinces. There were significant Greek populations in both provinces.

Since the Balkan Wars, the Young Turk elite had been characterized by a distortion of reality that is common to all genocidal instigators: they saw themselves as victims or feel justified in ‘preemptively’ committing mass murder against minorities in order to save their own group from an allegedly imminent annihilation. In her memoirs published in 1926, the Turkish women’s rights activist and nationalist Halide Edip Adıvar (also Edib; 1884-1964) blamed the radicalization of Turkish nationalism after the Balkan Wars on the double standards of Europeans: “(...) *the massacres [of Muslims] did not arouse a quarter of the indignation which the Armenian massacres had done. These facts spoke bitterly in Turkey against Europe, and in the Islamic worlds in Asia. I believe that the two different measures meted out by Europe to the Moslem Turks and to the Christian peoples in Turkey keenly intensified nationalism in Turkey. They also aroused the feeling that in order to avoid being exterminated the Turks must exterminate others.*”⁵

Ottoman Genocide(s) during Invasions and the Liberation War (1919-1922)

The Ottoman Empire had been at war almost continuously since 1912: the two Balkan Wars were followed by the First World War and, from May 1919, by the Kemalists’ battles against the Allied victors and against Greek forces, who were supposed to protect the Christian population in the Smyrna district on behalf of the war-weary Entente states. However, Greek forces soon advanced from western Anatolia into the interior of the country, almost as far as Ankara. Greece’s state and military leadership pursued an irredentist ‘big idea,’ the *Megali idea*: This meant the unification of all Greek settlements. From the Turkish point of view, Kemal’s struggle was an anti-imperialist liberation strike against the Allied occupation and Greece’s irredentism; de facto, however, this war degenerated into a war of extermination against the remaining indigenous Christians of Ottoman nationality.

The Kemalist invasion of the Republic of Armenia in September 1920 also took on the character of a war of extermination.⁶ By mid-1919, the number of refugees in the Republic had risen to half a million. As in the case of the Young Turk invasion two years earlier, in 1918, the Kemalist conquerors were not satisfied with destruction and looting but immediately set about decimating the civilian population. In the recapture of Kars alone, about six thousand Armenians were killed during a three-day massacre. About three thousand Armenian soldiers and 30 senior officers, including four generals, were captured, and hundreds were taken to Erzurum and Sarıkamış for forced labor.⁷

On 11 May 1921, an investigative commission of the Soviet Provisional Revolutionary Commissariat found that 11,836 bodies had been dug up in the village

⁵ Edip, Halide [Adıvar]. 1926. Memoirs. London (Reprint: Gorgias Press, Piscataway/NJ, 2005), p. 333.

⁶ Walker, Christopher J., *The Survival of a Nation*. (London: Croom Helm, 1983), p. 277.

⁷ Walker, op. cit., 311.

of Kultakhchi (Hamamlu district), 90 percent of which were women and children. Judging from the wounds of the dead, they had been brutally slaughtered and mutilated.⁸ Similarly gruesome incidents in the town of Karakilisa (Karaklis; today Vanadzor, Lori province), where 1,200 to 1,500 massacre victims were found, were reported by an American eyewitness on 20 May 1921⁹; he came to the conclusion that the massacres could only have been committed by a detachment of the trained and regular Turkish army. The oldest male corpses among the victims were 14 years old.¹⁰ After the transfer of power to the Soviets, the number of people killed during the Turkish occupation of the Republic of Armenia in 1920 was put at 60,000, half of them women and children; 32,000 other inhabitants starved to death, 8,000 were abducted, and 25 were hanged.¹¹ According to these calculations, the total number of victims in the Republic of Armenia was 100,000 civilians.

In the decisive Greek-Turkish battle of Dumlupınar, Kemal's forces succeeded in breaking through the Greek front line in late August 1922. In their chaotic retreat to the Mediterranean coast, the surviving Greek soldiers, disappointed in their leadership, set fire to Muslim villages. Tens of thousands of Christian rural and small-town residents joined the fleeing Greek troops in well-founded fear of revenge. As early as 5 September 1922, 150,000 refugees crowded into Smyrna.¹²

In terms of population, Smyrna was the second largest city in the Ottoman Empire. At the same time, it was a predominantly non-Muslim city, which Muslims therefore often disdainfully referred to as 'gavur (infidel) Smyrna.' In the 18th century, Smyrna prospered as an international trade center. According to an estimate by the U.S. consul George Horton in 1922, there were about half a million inhabitants at the beginning of the 20th century, among them 150,000 Greek Orthodox Christians of Ottoman nationality, 25,000 Armenians and Sephardic Jews each, 10,000 Italians, three thousand French, two thousand British, and three hundred Americans.¹³

The tragedy of the Christian population and the numerous Christian refugees was played out before the eyes of a large international audience: missionaries and teachers, diplomats and businessmen, as well as the crews of 27 foreign warships and merchant ships anchored in the Gulf of Smyrna. After an occupation of three years and four months, the Greek troops and administration had disembarked from Smyrna on 8 September 1922. In the early hours of the following morning, Kemalist cavalry units under the command of Nureddin Pasha, the 'Butcher of Smyrna,' occupied the now completely undefended city. They first looted and devastated the Armenian neighborhood of Haynouts before setting it on fire on the night of 13 September,

⁸ Zavriev, D.S., *K novejšej istorii severno-vostočnyx vilaetov Turcii* (On the recent history of the northeastern vilayets of Turkey; Russian). Tbilisi, 1947, p. 96.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Zavriev, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

¹¹ Zavriev, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

¹² Ureneck, Lou, *Smyrna September 1922: The American Mission to Rescue Victims of the 20th Century's First Genocide*. (New York: HarperCollins, 2016), p. 91.

¹³ Horton, George, *The Blight of Asia: An Account of the Systematic Extermination of Christian Populations by Mohammedans and of the Culpability of Certain Great Powers; with the True Story of the Burning of Smyrna*. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Com., 1926), <http://www.hri.org/docs/Horton-HortonBook.htm>.

presumably to permanently displace residents and refugees. The fire quickly spread to the adjacent Greek neighborhood.

For four days, the obviously controlled and manipulated Smyrna ‘Holocaust’, as foreign eyewitnesses paraphrased the crime¹⁴, destroyed the lower, Christian or European parts of the city. Many Christians died in their burning homes or were crushed by collapsing walls. Many more Christians drowned in Smyrna harbor while trying to escape to the Allied fleet, including three American destroyers.

On 16 September 1922, Nureddin ordered that all male Greek and Armenian Smyrniotes between the ages of 18 and 45 be treated as prisoners of war “until the cessation of hostilities,”¹⁵ while refugees from outside were ordered to leave the country by 30 September 1922. After that, men and women were separated, and the men were led away and shot in groups.¹⁶

The example of Smyrna shows the ambivalent nature of war, which on the one hand promotes genocide. On the other hand, military interventions can stop or prevent genocide. If such interventions do not take place, the victims are helplessly at the mercy of the perpetrators. After the destruction of Smyrna, no one on the international stage was willing to fight for the right of Greeks or other Christians to exist in Asia Minor.

In their bilateral treaty of January 1923, Turkey and Greece decided on the mutual forced expulsion and cancellation of citizenship for their ethno-religious minorities. In this way, Turkey realized a long-cherished plan since it had already proposed such a solution to Greece in 1914. However, due to the outbreak of war in 1914, there was no forced exchange of the Christian population of the Ottoman Empire or the Muslim population of Greece. Now, ten years later, the multilateral Treaty of Lausanne of 24

¹⁴ Cf. Rev. Charles Dobson, in: Bierstadt, Edward Hale. 2008. The Great Betrayal: A Survey of the Near East Problem. New York 1924 (Bloomingdale, Il.), p. 224. - In North American and European publications, the persecution and mass killings of Ottoman Christians, especially Armenians, have been described since the autumn of 1895 as the ‘Holocaust’ (Gr. “whole-burning victim”). This term probably appeared for the first time, on 10 September 1895, in an editorial (“Another Armenian Holocaust”) in the *New York Times*. One of the first to use it in her correspondence was the American teacher and evangelical missionary Corinna Shattuck (1848-1910). She had taught at a girls’ school in Urfa since 1892 and helped establish a school for the blind there in 1902. As an eyewitness, she reported in a letter dated 7 January 1896 and under the still immediate impression of the massacre of 28 December 1895 on the “great holocaust” of “perhaps 4,000” Armenians - according to other reports 8,000 - of whom 1,500 burned to death in their cathedral where they had sought refuge. As late as 1927, Winston Churchill, in his work *The World Crisis, 1911-1918* (Vol. 5), called the extermination of the Ottoman Armenians in the First World War “one administrative holocaust.”

At the latest with the seizure of power by the National Socialists in Germany, the genocide of the Ottoman Christians was pushed out of international consciousness, forgotten and with it the use of the term Holocaust as a synonym for such crimes against Ottoman Christians. In a letter to Gunnar Heinsohn, the editor of the *Dictionary of Genocides* (1998), the Romanian-American writer and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Elie Wiesel (1928-2016) said that he had introduced Holocaust as a term for the extermination of the European Jews in 1958 and soon regretted it because the term was immediately used in an inflationary manner. Cf. Heinsohn, Gunnar, Lexikon der Völkermorde. Reinbek bei (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1998), pp. 174-175.

¹⁵ Angelomatis, Ch., *Chronikon Megalis Tragodias*, (Athens: Bookshop of Estia, 1963), p. 262. http://www2.fhw.gr/chronos/13/en/foreign_policy/sources/14.html.

¹⁶ Housepian Dobkin, Marjorie, *Smyrna 1922. The Destruction of a City*, (New York: Newmark Press, 1998), pp. 172-173.

July 1923 followed, in which, as the Swiss historian Hans-Lukas Kieser formulated it, it was retroactively recognized that “(...) *the expulsion and liquidation of millions of people in favor of a breakneck 'national renewal' pursued by a dominant elite at the expense of minorities. There was no more talk about the return of Armenian refugees and the establishment of justice. The treaty also provided for a Greek-Turkish population transfer, the first of its kind on such a large scale, which legalized an 'ethnic cleansing' that had already largely taken place.* Referring to the talks on Kurdish, Armenian, and Greek minorities in his country, Riza Nur, the secretary-general of the Turkish conference delegation, noted that 'these foreign elements are a plague and microbes' and that the Kurds must be 'cleansed of the foreign language and race' by means of an 'assimilation program'”.¹⁷

Blockades during Wars

Wars are accompanied by sieges or blockades if conquerors fail to take a position deemed important strategically, economically, or for other reasons. People - civilians and soldiers alike - inside besieged towns or countries are cut off from all supplies, including food, until they surrender or perish. This method of indiscriminate starvation of civilians and combatants extended to entire states during the First World War, especially through economic and naval blockades imposed by the Entente states on the Central Powers of Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire.

“*On November 11, 1914, the British set out in the most literal sense to starve the German people into submission; an idea best described by First Lord of the British Admiralty Winston Churchill himself when he stated, ‘The British blockade treated the whole of Germany as if it were a beleaguered fortress, and avowedly sought to starve the whole population - men, women and children, old and young, wounded and sound - into submission.’¹⁸ By 1917, this mission was rapidly coming into fruition, and every month the war was prolonged, the situation in Germany became even more dire. While the German people certainly experienced hardship during 1914-1916, it was during the last two years of the war that their suffering reached its zenith. It was also during this period that the frontline soldiers began to truly feel the effects of the blockade for the first time.*”¹⁹

“*More than in the other belligerent states, the people in Germany were troubled by the continuing supply crisis. Before the war, the German Reich had imported 20 percent of its food. Now the Allied economic blockade severely restricted supplies. The shortage situation was exacerbated by the inability of the authorities to ensure proper distribution. Panic buying drove up prices as early as the first days of August 1914. Even the setting of maximum prices was unable to curb inflation; it also encouraged agricultural producers to sell their products to solvent customers. In the summer of 1915, high-quality foodstuffs such as meat, butter and eggs had already become*

¹⁷ Kieser, Hans-Lukas, Armeniermord: Von der Lästigkeit vertuschter Geschichte. „Traverse: Zeitschrift für Geschichte“, 2, 2002, p. 135.

¹⁸ Churchill, Winston, The World Crisis (New York: Free Press, 1931), p. 686.

¹⁹ Janicki, David A., “The British Blockade During World War I: The Weapon of Deprivation”. *Inquiries*, 6 (6), 2014, p. 4, <http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/articles/899/the-british-blockade-during-world-war-i-the-weapon-of-deprivation>.

*unaffordable luxury items for many city dwellers.*²⁰ As planned by the authors of the Allied blockades, these destabilized the enemy states domestically. In Germany, there were 'wildcat' strikes and, fueled by the Bolshevik October Revolution in 1917, hunger revolts.

The Ottoman Empire also suffered from a British naval blockade during the First World War. It particularly affected the Ottoman province (vilayet) of Syria, which at that time also included the present-day states of Lebanon, Iraq, and Jordan. Despite the lack of food, the Ottoman administration did not allow the distribution of existing grain stocks and forbade the predominantly Arab population to hunt and fish.²¹ In terms of population policy, the C.U.P. regime used the naval blockade to dampen the Arabs' aspirations for independence and to further decimate the Armenian deportees. In the predominantly Christian and Druze-populated Mutasarrifate Lebanon alone, up to 250,000 of the approximately 400,000 inhabitants starved to death; in total, half a million people fell victim to the famine.²² At the same time, the food shortage, which was exacerbated by the Ottoman state, particularly affected the 870,000 Armenians who arrived homeless in the Mesopotamian deportation areas in 1915: already completely exhausted, miserable, and robbed or exploited. By October 1916, another 630,000 of them had perished in the region, victims of hunger, epidemics and massacres.²³ Cannibalism emerged in the Mesopotamian deportation area. A particularly sensational and macabre case took place in Mosul, where an Arab couple cooked Armenian orphans and served them as soup in their restaurant. The couple was publicly hanged for their crimes in 1917 in the presence of a huge crowd of onlookers, including foreigners and Armenian deportees.²⁴ The execution was photographed by Walter König from Berlin, among others.

The deadliest starvation blockade, with 1.1 million victims, took place during the Second World War and was directed against the three million inhabitants of the metropolis of Leningrad. As the former capital of the Russian Empire, which also symbolized its drive towards Western Europe, and as the starting point of the Bolshevik October Revolution, which in addition bore Lenin's name, the city was particularly hated by Adolf Hitler. Soon after the start of the war of aggression against the Soviet Union ("Operation Barbarossa"), Hitler informed Germany's military leadership of his "firm decision" to "raze Moscow and Leningrad to the ground in

²⁰ Ullrich, Volker, "Hungern bis zum Aufstand". Die Zeit", ZEIT Geschichte, 1. Aktualisiert am 2. November 2014, <https://www.zeit.de/zeit-geschichte/2014/01/erster-weltkrieg-novemberrevolution-komplettansicht>).

²¹ Rummel, Rudolph J., Statistics of Democide: Genocide and Mass Murder since 1900. (Münster: LIT, 1998), pp. 82, 92.

²² Ghazal, Rym, "Lebanon's dark days of hunger: The Great Famine of 1915-1918". N-World, April 14, 2015, <https://www.thenationalnews.com/world/lebanon-s-dark-days-of-hunger-the-great-famine-of-1915-18-1.70379>.

²³ Kévorkian, Raymond, La deuxième phase du génocide. «*Revue d'histoire arménienne contemporaine*», Numéro spécial, Tome II, 1998, 60-61.

²⁴ Sarkisian Chesnut, Ellen, Deli Sarkis: The Scars He Carried; A Daughter Confronts the Armenian Genocide and Tells Her Father's Story, (Minneapolis: Two Harbors Press, 2014), p. 55.

*order to prevent people from remaining there whom we would then have to feed in winter.*²⁵

Although Hitler initially considered the occupation of the city to be one of Germany's main objectives, he was unable to prevail against Chief of Staff Franz Halder and the Army High Command (OKH), who rejected the necessary transfer of strong tank forces from the central section to the north, since for them the northern section of the front was only a secondary theater of war.²⁶ On 6 September 1941, Hitler gave in to the General Staff's insistence and ordered the preparation of the attack on Moscow, for which all expendable forces were to be withdrawn from the wings. “[Wilhelm] Keitel [Chief of the OKW] had already expressed the opinion at the end of August - certainly in consultation with Hitler – ‘that the population of this city [Leningrad] could not be fed and must therefore be driven out’. (...) This was a continuation of the guidelines for economic policy in the occupied eastern territories that had already been drawn up before the campaign, which took into account the starvation of large parts of the civilian population and announced special measures for Leningrad, which was ‘very difficult to feed’. In planning a hunger blockade against Leningrad, military, economic, and ideological motives entered into a new combination.”²⁷

On 15 September 1941, a leaflet on the “Treatment of the Petersburg Population” was presented, which dealt with the detention of all Red Army soldiers, policemen, communists, commissars, the 200,000 Jews, and “suspicious elements” in prison and concentration camps. In addition, it was planned to register the entire male population, “since hostile acts of terrorism of every kind are certainly to be expected.”²⁸ However, the capture and occupation of Leningrad was no longer planned at this point. As early as 21 September 1941, the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht (OKW) had laid down its ideas about the future of Leningrad in writing: “first, hermetic closure and attrition by starvation, artillery and air force, then depopulation by expulsion and imprisonment of the surviving inhabitants, finally complete destruction of the city and handover to the Finnish ally. Here, ideology and calculation, Hitler’s will to exterminate and the reluctance of the military headquarters to waste the scarce resources of men, material and rations on Leningrad, combined to form a plan of terrifying proportions. And of all things, the 18th Army, which at first wanted to play the role of a ‘normal’ army of conquest and occupation, was, after the final decision of 22 September 1941, to be the henchman and executor of this criminal warfare. This plan was reaffirmed when the Soviet long-range blasts in occupied Kiev provided Hitler with a welcome occasion to decide again on 7 October ‘that a surrender of Leningrad or later of Moscow is not to be accepted’. No German soldier was to enter these cities, and no one was to be let out of them through the German lines. Moreover,

²⁵ Hürter, Johannes, „Die Wehrmacht vor Leningrad: Krieg und Besatzungspolitik der 18. Armee im Herbst und Winter 1941/42“. Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte, 49. Jg., Juli, 3, 2001, S. 391.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Hürter, op. cit., S. 393.

²⁸ Hürter, op. cit., S. 396.

*it was not justifiable to ‘feed the population at the expense of the German homeland’.*²⁹

The blockade of Leningrad lasted 900 days, from 8 September 1941 to January 1944. A land and, since the winter of 1942, a rail connection across the frozen Lake Ladoga - the “Military Motor Road No. 1,” unofficially called the “Road of Death” and later the “Road of Life” - supplied Leningrad with food, at least in winter, albeit in insufficient quantities. In the summer months of 1942, supplies were delivered by ship. Even more important, however, was the “Road of Life” for the evacuation of up to 1.75 million people, including 300,000 children,³⁰ works of art and industrial plants. Nevertheless, the famine in the city, which was almost completely surrounded by the 18th German Army, was so great that cannibalism also occurred in Leningrad. “*Everything of organic origin was eaten, such as glue, grease and wallpaper paste. Leather goods were boiled, and in November 1941 there were no cats or dogs, rats or crows in Leningrad.*”³¹ A total of 1,025 cases were reported to the NKVD by February 1942.

At the same time, the violence of the Soviet ‘security organs’ continued unabated during the siege of Leningrad.³² Both in terms of the deportation of the German and Finnish-speaking minorities and the persecution of alleged ‘enemies of the people’, there was no significant difference to the terror of the 1930s.³³

In international historiography, it took 60 years before the starvation blockade of Leningrad, for which the German army leadership was responsible, was considered genocide. The German historian Jörg Ganzenmüller was the first to describe the death of more than a third of Leningrad’s population as genocide, based on a “racially motivated starvation policy.”³⁴ His US-American colleague Richard Bidlack called the Leningrad famine blockade “*the greatest act of genocide in Europe during the Second World War.*”³⁵ I agree with these assessments, with the qualification that this superlative refers to blockades, because with 6 million victims among the total of eleven million European Jews, the Shoah was unquestionably the greatest genocide in the Second World War.

Blockades after Wars

Blockades or attempts to starve out populations also occur as a result of wars in whose outcome territorial and control issues have remained open. Berlin and Artsakh can be mentioned as examples.

²⁹ Hürter, op. cit., S. 399.

³⁰ Krause, Hermann, „„Straße des Lebens“ führt über das Eis. Blockade von Leningrad endete vor 75 Jahren.“ Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge Online, Kassel, 19 Februar 2019.

³¹ Leningrader Blockade, „Wikipedia“, https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leningrader_Blockade; zuletzt bearbeitet 17. Januar 2023.

³² Ganzenmüller, Jörg, Das belagerte Leningrad 1941 bis 1944: Die Stadt in den Strategien von Angreifern und Verteidigern. Paderborn, 2005, S. 280.

³³ Cf. Ganzenmüller, op. cit., S. 281-290.

³⁴ Cf. Ganzenmüller, op. cit., S. 13-82.

³⁵ Bidlack, Richard; Lomagin, Nikita, The Leningrad Blockade, 1941–1944. A New Documentary History from the Soviet Archives, (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 1.

After the Second World War, Berlin was under the control of the four victorious powers: the USA, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union. It was located in the middle of the Soviet-controlled and occupied eastern zone. A currency reform was carried out in the three western occupation zones of Germany on 20 June 1948. When the new currency was to be extended to the western part of Berlin, the Soviet Union, whose policy towards Germany was aimed at demilitarizing the whole of Germany, took this as an opportunity to separate West Berlin from the western occupation zones. Soviet troops closed all access routes to West Berlin on 24 June 1948. This marked the beginning of the Berlin Blockade, which lasted until 12 May 1949. The effects were quickly felt by the 3,187,470 inhabitants of West Berlin. The blockade of Berlin was the first climax in the Cold War.

In response to this blockade, with which the Soviet Union wanted to bring all of Berlin under its control, the American military governor Lucius D. Clay (1897-1978) arranged for an airlift to be set up. West Berlin was now supplied by air in a gigantic logistical feat. Allied supply planes landed and took off day and night. For almost a year, they brought all vital goods, especially food, building materials and fuel, into the city. The transport planes were popularly called 'Raisin Bombers' because they often dropped small packets of raisins for the children of West Berlin before they landed. The airlift was not without danger for the American and British pilots as well as the West Berliners: on the night of 25 July 1948, two pilots died during a supply flight.

The blockade of West Berlin is thus a consequence of supra-regional and overarching political developments, in this case the Cold War. Although the Western airlift saved West Berlin, it in turn pushed forward the systemic confrontation and, above all, the division of Germany and its rearmament. The price was paid mainly by East Germany, respectively, the Soviet occupation zone with its 40 years of lack of freedom.

The blockade of the "Lachin Corridor," Artsakh's only land connection with the outside world and above all with the Republic of Armenia after the autumn war of 2020, is likewise a consequence of a territorial and self-determination conflict that has remained unresolved for over a hundred years. At the end of Soviet rule, the Armenian majority population of the so-called "Autonomous Region of Nagorno-Karabakh" (AGBK) succeeded in repelling Azerbaijan's attempt to bring Artsakh back under its military control. For 26 years, Artsakh remained a *de facto* independent but internationally unrecognized mini-republic. Even the Republic of Armenia did not dare to recognize, let alone unite with Artsakh. Attempts by the OSCE to mediate a sustainable peace solution were unsuccessful. Azerbaijan took this as an opportunity to attack Artsakh in autumn 2020 in violation of international law and, after years of armament, conquered two-thirds of the territory previously controlled by Armenians. A ceasefire brokered by Russia - as in May 1994 after the first war in and around Artsakh - provides, among other things, for free access to and from Artsakh via the corridor protected by Russian peacekeepers. However, since 12 December 2022, alleged Azerbaijani environmentalists have blocked the access road without the Russian peacekeepers even attempting to force their withdrawal. In doing so, both Russia and Azerbaijan are not only violating their obligations under Article 6 of the trilateral ceasefire agreement of 9 November 2020, but also the responsibility to protect (R2P),

as developed and internationally disseminated by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) in 2000/2001, which Russia has due to its role as a protecting power and Azerbaijan due to its claim to the entire territory of Nagorno-Karabakh; its population would thus have to be protected from acts of violence, including genocide and war crimes, first by the individual states of Azerbaijan and Russia, and in the case of their failure by the international community of states. This failure exists, but the international community has so far not made use of the means at its disposal but has limited itself to statements and appeals.³⁶

Unlike blockades carried out by state security forces - army or police - the Azerbaijani hunger blockade against Artsakh is a covert operation in which the state responsible avoids appearing as a direct actor. *"Civil servants, disguised military personnel and members of pro-government NGOs and youth organizations are reported to be among the so-called 'eco-activists', none of whom appear to have taken part in previous environmental protests in Azerbaijan. Journalists from state publications are also there to cover the roadblock."*³⁷

Since August 2022 and even before the starvation blockade, international organizations and institutions such as the *Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention*³⁸ and the *International Association of Genocide Scholars* (IAGS) have been warning of a "significant genocide risk" for the "*indigenous Armenians*" of the South Caucasus.³⁹ In mid-June 2023, Azerbaijan significantly tightened the blockade, causing Artsakh to run out of fuel and basic foodstuffs. Local public transport had to be suspended. In this situation, international law expert Luis Moreno Ocampo, first chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court from 2003 to 2012, confirmed the genocide threat in his opinion of August 7, 2023: Azerbaijan's blockade complied with Art. II, 3, of the UN Genocide Convention ("Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part").⁴⁰ On August 15, a 40-year-old resident of the capital Stepanakert starved to death.

³⁶ For example: International Court of Justice: (December 7, 2021). "Press Release: Application of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Armenia v. Azerbaijan)", No. 2021/34; European Parliament. 2023: "Joint Motion for Resolution on the humanitarian consequences of the blockade in Nagorno-Karabakh." January 18, 2023, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/RC-9-2023-0075_EN.html.

³⁷ Kitachayev, Bashir, "What's next for the Azerbaijani blockade of Nagorno Karabakh?" Open Democracy, January 25, 2023, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/odr/nagorno-karabakh-blockade-azerbaijan-armenia-citizenship/>.

³⁸ Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention, "Red Flag Alert for Genocide – Azerbaijan," <https://www.lemkininstitute.com/red-flag-alerts-1/red-flag-alert-for-genocide—azerbaijan> "Red Flag Alert for Genocide – Azerbaijan Update 2", <https://www.lemkininstitute.com/red-flag-alerts-1/red-flag-alert-for-genocide—azerbaijan-update-2>; "Red Flag Alert for Genocide – Azerbaijan – Update 5", <https://www.lemkininstitute.com/red-flag-alerts-1/red-flag-alert-for-genocide—azerbaijan—update-5>.

³⁹ International Association of Genocide Scholars, Executive Board, "Statement on Azerbaijani Aggression Against the Republic of Armenia and the Indigenous Armenians of the South Caucasus." October 24, 2022, https://genocidescholars.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/IAGS-EB-Statement-Armenia-Azerbaijan-Oct-2022_update.pdf.

⁴⁰ Moreno Ocampo, Luis, Expert Opinion: Genocide Against Armenians in 2023. New York, August 7, 2023, https://www.agu-online.org/wp-content/uploads/Moreno-Ocampo_Expert-Opinion_Genocide_Artsakh_07082023.pdf.

The threat of genocide posed to Armenians in the South Caucasus is also due to the considerable Armenophobia that is conveyed in the media and in state education in post-Soviet Azerbaijan. Already in 2016, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) of the Council of Europe stated in a report that political decision-makers, educational institutions, and the media in Azerbaijan are to be blamed for the fact that an entire generation of Azerbaijanis has grown up with anti-Armenian hate rhetoric. In an address to the nation during the Second Karabakh War in October 2020, President Aliyev de-humanized Armenians as “*dogs that were driven out of Nagorno-Karabakh*.”⁴¹ Independent Azerbaijani journalist Bashir Kitachayev writes: “*Armenians are always mentioned negatively in the Azerbaijani media and portrayed in school textbooks as evil historical enemies who betray Azerbaijanis. Azerbaijani historian Arif Yunus wrote that Armenians are portrayed as ‘bandits, aggressors, traitors [and] hypocrites.’ He and his wife Leyla, a human rights activist, were later accused of spying for Armenia and imprisoned for more than a year in 2014. State media claimed that Yunis’ Armenian mother had ‘instilled in him a hatred of Azerbaijanis’.*”⁴²

The humanitarian impact of the hunger blockade affected 120,000 residents of the areas of Artsakh not yet controlled by Azerbaijan, including 30,000 children, 20,000 pensioners, and 9,000 disabled people. 1,102 children were not allowed to leave for medical treatment in Armenia, and ten doctors were prevented from entering Artsakh. As the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Artsakh pointed out in its statement of 24 January 2023, Artsakh normally received over 400 tons of consumer goods daily, which were completely absent as a result of the blockade. “*The blockade of Artsakh has not only led to a shortage of essential goods, including life-saving medicines, but also deprived thousands of people of their jobs and livelihoods. At the same time, Azerbaijan imposed an energy blockade in addition to the land blockade of Artsakh, further exacerbating the humanitarian situation. Azerbaijan continues to deliberately obstruct the supply of natural gas to Artsakh as well as the repair of the only high-voltage power line coming from Armenia, Goris-Stepanakert, which was damaged on 9 January in an area under Azerbaijani control.*”⁴³

Under the pretext of an anti-terrorist measure - meaning the crushing of the Artsakh Self-Defense Forces - Azerbaijan attacked the de facto Republic of Artsakh on 19 September 2023. Residential areas also came under fire in violation of international law. Six Russian peacekeepers were shot dead by Azerbaijanis because they had witnessed an Azerbaijani massacre of Armenians.

Like the Berlin blockade, the Artsakh blockade was taking place against a background of changing power and alliance relations in the region. In Armenia, under the government of Nikol Pashinyan, its previously multipolar foreign policy has shifted to a more pro-Western one. There were also clear changes in Armenia's policy towards Artsakh. While Pashinyan still defiantly said during his first visit to Stepanakert on 5

⁴¹ President Aliyev, “Azerbaijani soldiers drive them away like dogs,” Defence.az, October, 4 2020, <https://defence.az/en/news/146240/president-aliyev-azerbaijani-soldiers-drive-them-away-like-dogs>.

⁴² Kitachayev, op. cit.

⁴³ Artsakh Government, “Lachin Corridor Exclusively Under Control of Russian Peacekeepers, Not Azerbaijan,” Hetq online, January 24, 2023, <https://hetq.am/en/article/152419>.

August 2019, “*Artsakh is Armenia, and that's that!*”, he soon adopted a more distant stance toward Artsakh, which he declared an integral part of Azerbaijan in Prague (2022) and Brussels (May 2023). As President Aliyev noted in his address to the participants of the 53rd meeting of the Council of Heads of Security and Special Services of CIS member states on 11 October 2023, this was a turning point for Azerbaijan’s policies: “*The Prime Minister of Armenia declared that ‘Karabakh is Armenia, and that's it.’ This put an end to all negotiations and made them completely meaningless. Not to mention that it was an open territorial claim against sovereign Azerbaijan, as no country in the world, including Armenia, recognized the so-called ‘Nagorno-Karabakh Republic.’ So, this provocative, ill-considered, I would say suicidal, as it turned out, step by the Armenian leadership and other provocative actions, including military actions, led to the start of the Second Karabakh War in September 2020, which lasted for 44 days and ended with the complete defeat of the Armenian army and the restoration of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity.*”⁴⁴

Vladimir Putin has described both Armenia and Azerbaijan as Russia’s ‘strategic partners,’ whereby Azerbaijan carries far more weight than the smaller and much poorer Armenia because of Azerbaijan’s importance as an energy hub. Unlike the blockade of the cities of Leningrad and Berlin, there was no “road of life” and evacuation nor an airlift for the Armenian inhabitants of Artsakh, which the Artsakh Minister of State asked for in a conversation with Swedish state radio on 5 January 2023.⁴⁵

What alternatives could there have been for the starving Armenian population? In a television interview on 10 January 2023, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev promised the Armenians of Artsakh that they would have the same rights and securities as all other citizens of the country under the “Azerbaijani flag”; those who did not want to live under Azerbaijani rule could leave the country freely. B. Kitachayev takes a critical look at this “offer,” pointing out that civil and minority rights are severely restricted or violated in Azerbaijan, the latter not only for Armenians but also for Talysh people. His conclusion is therefore: “*It is hardly surprising that Karabakh Armenians do not want to take up Baku's offer of citizenship. But a safe life for Karabakh Armenians in Azerbaijan is possible – in theory, at least. Many Azerbaijanis are tired of enmity and war, they want a peaceful life and believe they can coexist with Armenians. But the country must take real steps towards democracy and reject a national-patriotic identity based on hatred of Armenians. Azerbaijan is exacerbating a humanitarian crisis in Nagorno-Karabakh when it could be creating conditions for peace between the two countries.*”⁴⁶ But Kitachayev’s optimism is not representative. According to a survey conducted among Baku residents before the mass exodus from

⁴⁴ Aliyev: The entity called Nagorno-Karabakh has never existed in history, Aze.Media, October 11, 2023, https://aze.media/aliyev-the-entity-called-nagorno-karabakh-has-never-existed-in-history/?fbclid=IwAR1MmTPEGudS8YFZQQvF2YsW70LqE3Tny7Hcso0V1OREEnruAcenBE_fZjQ

⁴⁵ Vardanyan to International Press, “We're Baku's hostages,” *Hetq online*, January 7, 2023, <https://hetq.am/en/article/151893>.

⁴⁶ Kitachayev, Op. cit.

Artsakh, only 28 percent of respondents believed in coexistence with Armenians in Karabakh.⁴⁷

An indispensable prerequisite for mutual confidence-building is the restoration of mutual dialogue between the populations and civil societies of Armenia and Azerbaijan. But Azerbaijanis who dare to take this step must fear for their lives even in exile, as the government-critical blogger Mohammed Mirzali, who told the Armenian news portal *Civilnet* in an interview on 31 May 2022: “*You are Armenians, I am Azerbaijani. Perhaps there will be people in our countries who will call us traitors. But our dialogue is the first seed for peace. How long will we continue to kill each other? This must stop.*” In October 2020 as well as in March 2021, Mirzali was seriously injured in attacks in Nantes (France).⁴⁸

Azerbaijan's military onslaught on 19 September 2023 changed the situation once again fundamentally. After nine months of deprivation, almost the entire population left Artsakh. It was the end not only of the 30-year existence of the de facto democratic Republic of Artsakh but also of the two-and-a-half-thousand-year Armenian history of this region. The Armenian settlement area has dramatically decreased in only 111 years as a result of repeated genocides. At the same time, however, the mass exodus from Artsakh constituted a referendum for freedom: for the freedom-loving population of this region could not imagine a life under the authoritarian Azerbaijani regime. The price for their survival in freedom is the loss of their native land. Azerbaijan achieved its goal: Karabakh without Armenians.

Conclusion

War, as the 20th century in particular shows, is, together with system transformations, one of those events that stimulate genocide. It is no coincidence that the first genocides in the early 20th century took place during the period of German colonialism in East and Southwest Africa (today's Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda, and Namibia). In the German colony “Southwest,” the uprisings of the indigenous Ovaherero and Nama people were put down with methods similar to those used eleven years later in the final phase of the extermination of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. In both cases, the victims were deliberately left to starve to death in a desert region. This procedure complies with Article II c) of the UN Genocide Convention.

In Europe, the two Balkan Wars of 1912/13 are considered to be the origin of the mass expulsion and extermination of unwanted ethno-religious groups.

The examples described here show that wars not only provide occasions and camouflage for carrying out genocidal intentions but degenerate into wars of extermination when intentions of conquest and subjugation merge with intentions of extermination. Military defeats do not diminish the intentions of annihilation but even increase them. On the other hand, military interventions can serve to prevent genocide

⁴⁷ “Survey conducted by FOCUS Free Alliance of Euro-Asian Sociologists recently revealed some startling opinions in Azerbaijan”, The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, August 17, 2023, https://mirrorspectator.com/2023/08/17/67-of-azerbaijanis-believe-karabakh-armenians-will-be-killed-or-displaced/?fbclid=IwAR0Pxu_uyCPorAF37taamYhbetSObQCi4Zq5RPaQBCfAeiJQhKEQ8jgyuAI

⁴⁸ Oertel, Barbara, „Blogger in Todesangst.“ *die tageszeitung*, 8.6.2021, <https://taz.de/Opposition-in-Aserbaidschan/!5776881/>.

or to liberate threatened groups, if carried out in time. However, it is often the fear of states becoming involved in armed conflicts that prevents such timely interventions.

In the case of starvation blockades during and after wars, it can be seen that there are factors that reinforce this crime: In the German case, the famine of the German and Ottoman populations was exacerbated by organizational incompetence in the German case and genocidal intent in the Ottoman one. In the Ottoman example, Ahmet Cemal, as governor of Syria, prevented crops from being brought into 'his' province affected by the blockade. In the case of the Leningrad blockade, it was the continued Stalinist policy of repression and the enrichment of the functionary caste that added to Nazi Germany's genocide.

The blockade of the "Lachin Corridor" by Azerbaijan can be seen as a consequence of over a century of failure to determine the legal status of the Artsakh region in a manner consistent with the national right of self-determination of the Armenian majority there. On 7 July 1988, the European Parliament passed a resolution condemning the Sumgait massacres, supporting the reunification of Nagorno-Karabakh with the (still Soviet) Republic of Armenia, and expressing concern for the safety of Armenians living in Azerbaijan.⁴⁹ Such constructive approaches have long been forgotten. The world public perceives the conflict in and around Artsakh as a bilateral conflict between the republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan, in recent years with the unspoken expectation that the people of Artsakh would have to submit to Azerbaijani rule.

Unfortunately, the combination of war and blockade is not unique. The current escalation of the Near East conflict in and around Gaza proves this, where war, blockade, and massive flights occur again, and even on a much larger scale. After the Palestinian militant group Hamas's unprecedented terrorist attack and hostage-taking of 7 October 2023, Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gal(l)ant announced two days later a total siege of the Gaza Strip: "No food, no water, no fuel! (...) We are fighting human animals, and that is how we behave."⁵⁰ Israel urged 1.1 million residents of the northern part of Gaza to move to the south.

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⁴⁹ Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA): The U.S. Congress and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh): Working for Peace, Standing Up for Democracy; Factsheet. 2020, p. 6. https://anca.org/assets/pdf/Baku_Sumgait_Pogroms_Factsheet_2020.pdf.

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