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**THE ARMENIAN  
GENOCIDE  
ARMENOCIDE**

REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA  
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GENOCIDE**  
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*CAUSES, COMMISSION, CONSEQUENCES*

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**T**his work is the first ever attempt to briefly introduce to a non-Armenian reader the Armenian Genocide, gone down in history as the first genocide of the XX century. Elucidated are the prerequisites and causes, political and national-racial motives, mechanisms and the scope of commission of the Armenian genocide, or Armenocide, as well as the issue of the responsibility of the Young Turks and their felonious leaders, who planned and brutally committed it.

A considerable space is given to the explication of the policy of the European Great Powers in the Armenian Question.

The author also dwelt on the issue of recognition of the Armenian Genocide by the international community and present-day Turkey.

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The term “genocide” first appeared in scientific literature and political lexicon in 1944, with the right of authorship pertaining to Raphael Lemken, a Polish lawyer of Jewish descent.

The appreciative mankind is forever indebted to him for this significant discovery — incontestable and unobjectionable, for it designates the problem clearly and precisely, communicates the idea comprehensively, accurately and laconically.

Lemken’s discovery is chiefly based on the first two tragedies of the XX century: the Genocide of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, and the Holocaust of Jews in Fascist Germany. As Lemken had keenly noticed, those were not an ordinary carnage or slaughter, but, qualitatively, quite a new phenomenon, which required a fundamentally new approach and assessment, and a new scientific definition.

Guided by this idea and having investigated thoroughly the Ottoman and German–fascist leaders’ man–hating political plans and objectives, the methods and mechanisms of their realization, he arrived at a conclusion that what had been done to Armenians and Jews by sultan perpetrators and their German–fascist disciples respectively, was nothing but a policy of destruction of nations, the scientific equivalent, or the term for which would be *gerocide*.

As a term and definition of a crime, *genocide* made its way and was accepted by scholars, statesmen and political scientists quite easily. What is more important — it was accepted by international

organizations, first and foremost — by the United Nations — the most authoritative international body of today.

On December 9, 1948, the General Assembly of UN adopted the *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, which may be with confidence qualified as an international document of historical significance.

Genocide is defined as a policy, aimed to exterminate specific groups of people for racial, national and religious motives either directly, by way of killing, or through inflicting serious bodily and mental harm to members of the mentioned groups. The concept also involves deliberate infliction on the group conditions of life calculated to exterminate the groups in whole or in part; imposing measures which prevent births within the environment, i.e. in that particular group of people; forcible transfer of children from one group to another, etc.

8 This instrument of UN for the first time in history internationally confirmed that genocide is an outrage against humanity, and shall be punished. Such is the political meaning and the legal significance of the resolution of UN.

In 1968, the General Assembly of UN adopted the *Convention on Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity* — another important resolution, which implied non-recognition of statutory limitations to genocide, too.

The mankind was to cover a long way before it got politically mature enough to perceive the destruction of individual peoples or groups of people as a challenge to all of the humankind, a crime against humanity and, based on that, to arrive at a global conclusion: genocide shall be prevented and punished.

Thus, the issue of punishing the authors, organizers and perpetrators of genocide has become a key subject of international law and one of the major concerns of the present-day international policy.

Here's another UN instrument worth mentioning — the *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic*,

*Religious and Linguistic Minorities*, adopted by UN Commission on Human Rights in 1992, by which special status and guarantees are granted to such minorities under international law.

The term genocide in its current understanding laid the foundation for a new trend in science — genocidology. Although relatively new, it already has its concrete domain of research, which is evolving dynamically in the scientific centers throughout the world, in such countries as the USA, England, Germany, Austria, France, Russia, Armenia, Sweden, Lebanon, and others.

A few decades ago, while the Armenian genocide remained the first and the only genocide of the XX century, we could not yet speak of genocidology as of a new trend of science. Later on, when crimes, similar to that, were perpetrated against Jews, Gypsies, Slavs, various Asian and African peoples, it became clear that organization of the physical extermination of one nation by the leaders of another became a painful reality of the ethno-political life of our epoch. That very reality prompted the necessity to investigate the issues, related with the causes, consequences and the typology of genocide, which burden fell on the shoulders of the young scientific trend, genocidology.

Barbara Harff, a renowned American genocidologist, who has dealt with this problem comprehensively for many long years, believes that 48 genocides and bloody slaughters were committed in the world after World War II. They occurred in Cambodia, Sudan, East Timor, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Equatorial Guinea, Bosnia, and other countries<sup>1</sup>.

Genocidologists take interest in such key issues, as the environment, conditions, political and social-economic causes, which originate genocide; the spiritual and cultural level, century-long historically shaped traditions in the country, which perpetrates genocide, and other factors.

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<sup>1</sup> **Barbara Harff**, *Rescuing Endangered Peoples: Missed Opportunities*. Social Research. An International Quarterly of the Social Sciences, N. Y., Spring 1995, p. 24, 28.



As a result of their studies, the bounds and the concept of genocide have been enhanced and specified. We have in mind two aspects in particular.

One aspect is that of a victim, or victimization. American experts Robert Gurr and aforementioned Barbara Harff consider that, usually, ethnic groups serve as targets for torture, discrimination and, eventually, victimization<sup>2</sup>. By their calculations, within the period from 1945 to 1989, 233 ethnic groups throughout the world presented subjects for such discrimination, i.e. they were potential candidates for victimization<sup>3</sup>. B. Harff, analyzing the genocide–victim correlation, writes: “In genocides, victimized groups are defined by regimes primarily in terms of their communal characteristics, that is, ethnicity, religion, or nationality”<sup>4</sup>.

IO About victimization and its relation with genocide, determinately speaks out another American researcher, Michael Banks, in his *Four Conceptions of Peace*, exemplifying the Poles, “victimized by the exigencies of international politics over several centuries; or the alienation of the scattered remnants of the Armenian people left behind after the twentieth century’s first great act of the genocide”<sup>5</sup>.

The correlation between the concepts of the genocide and the victim is quite logical. Victimization is the reverse side of the genocide.

The second aspect is that of politicide, or political murder, which comes to enrich our conception of the genocide. In fact, it is a variety of the genocide. If genocide is perpetrated, based on the ethnic attribute, “in politicides, groups are targeted primarily because of their political opposition to the regime”<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> **Ted Robert Gurr, Barbara Harff**, *Ethnic Conflict in World Politics*, Westview Press, Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> **Barbara Harff**, *Rescuing Endangered Peoples: Missed Opportunities*, p. 24.

<sup>5</sup> **Michael Banks**, *Four Conceptions of Peace*, p. 267.

<sup>6</sup> **Barbara Harff**, *Rescuing Endangered Peoples: Missed Opportunities*, p. 24.

These two important innovations — victimization and politicalicide, introduced into the definition of genocide by genocidology, seem to be quite applicable to the Armenian genocide, since there both the ethnic and the political causes are present.

The thorough investigation and analysis of the Armenian and Jewish genocides, and of the genocides following these, gave the genocidologists grounds to put forth the theory of a 'genocidal state' and 'genocidal society', which, in our opinion, is a most significant and well-founded thesis.

This viewpoint was first substantiated in genocidology by Irving Horowitz<sup>7</sup>, Leo Kuper<sup>8</sup>, Yuri Barsegov<sup>9</sup>, and other researchers. In brief, the thesis concerns as follows: firstly, that genocide is never accidental; and, secondly, not in every state is genocide possible and not every society is prepared for it. Commission of a genocide is feasible in the societies with a specific design, anchored on the misanthropic concepts of excellence of the ruling nation, expulsion of 'foreign' bodies through the policy of their forcible assimilation or extermination, formation of an ethnically uniform and 'pure' society.

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When we apply the thesis of a 'genocidal state' to the Armenian Genocide and Jewish Holocaust, we see that it perfectly suits to the Ottoman Empire and Fascist Germany. With all the parameters present — the ideology of excellence of the ruling Turkish or German nationalities; the official policy of clearing the Ottoman Empire and Nazi Germany from 'foreign' nations by way of force; the high 'culture' and broad experience in violence, torture and mass executions; the phenomenon of, in essence, apprehension of such policy by the society — they may be characterized as 'genocidal states' and 'genocidal societies'.

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<sup>7</sup> Irving Horowitz, *State Power and Mass Murder*, New Brunswick, 1976.

<sup>8</sup> Leo Kuper, *Genocide: Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century*.

<sup>9</sup> Yu. Barsegov, *Armenian Genocide: Crime under International Law*, Moscow, "XXI Century — Accord", 2000 (in Russian).

The XX century was highly controversial by nature. On the one hand, it was an era of greatest inventions, colossal achievements, social–economic progress, unprecedented flight of fancy, and an era of big tragedies — on the other. Suffice it to mention the two World Wars.

The XX century may be said also to have gone down in history as an era of genocides. In the history of mankind, it had never been so that during one century so many peoples be exposed to physical extermination or the risk of it. This, however, is not the only question at issue. History evidences multiple episodes of wars, massacres and carnages. In the given circumstance, though, it goes about elevating the policy of destruction of a nation, or of genocide, to the level of a state policy; about meticulous beforehand preparation to it; about finding an appropriate ‘theory’ to substantiate and ‘explain its commitment. All of this makes it still more dangerous and criminal.

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It happened so that the first genocide in the XX century was the Armenian Genocide, committed in 1915 in the Ottoman Empire.

Presently, all the outstanding and world–famous scholars, who keep to the principles of scientific approach and do not give in to any political wavering and mindset, unreservedly acknowledge that the first genocide of the XX century was the Armenian Genocide, which was perpetrated by the Ottoman authorities and the ruling Union and Progress Party, or, as is customary to call them, the Young Turks in 1915.

This, of course, is not the case when being the first is a privilege and a reason to pride oneself. It is but a historical fact, an irrefutable tragedy, which relates not only to the Armenians, but to all of the humanity, and the study of which is essential both for us to restore the historical truth, and to learn lessons from it, to be vigilant and prevent any further attempts of genocides.

The issue of the Armenian Genocide being the first genocide of the XX century has been addressed to with specific emphasis by many prominent scholars throughout the world.

We have already above the opinion of the American political scientist Michael Banks. An advocate of the method of comparative analysis of this particular problem and of conflicts as such, he juxtaposes ‘the condition of the black peoples of southern Africa today or the Kurds in the Middle East; or population of Poland, victimized by the exigencies of international politics over several centuries; or the alienation of the scattered remnants of the Armenian people left behind after the twentieth century’s first great act of the genocide’<sup>10</sup>.

Professor Franklin Littell of Hebrew University in Jerusalem considers the Armenian Genocide a beginning of a new era. “After the genocidal acts of the governments of Cambodia, Sudan, Burundi, Rwanda and Bosnia, we may speak of the XX century, which began with the genocide of Armenians, as of the Era of Genocide”<sup>11</sup>.

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Professor Irving Horowitz of the US Rutgers University, defining ‘the massacre unleashed against the Armenian people as large-scale’, and referring to the barbaric acts of the Nazi against Poles, accentuates that ‘in cases of both the Armenians and the Poles we deal with tremendous tragedies’<sup>12</sup>. An authority in the field of genocidology, such as Executive Director of the US Institute of Genocide, Helen Fein is, on reminding that the concept of genocide was first introduced by Raphael Lemken in 1944, points out that, back in ‘1933, he had proposed to ban such acts, including the one known as ‘Armenian slaughters’, as a barbaric outrage’<sup>13</sup>. We would like to take note of the fact that Lemken had proposed to

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<sup>10</sup> Michael Banks, *Four Conceptions of Peace*, p. 267.

<sup>11</sup> Franklin Littell, in *Problems of Genocide*, Canada, 1997, p. 29.

<sup>12</sup> Irving Horowitz, *Ibid.*, p. 140.

<sup>13</sup> Helen Fein, *Ibid.*, p. 181.

‘ban such acts’, meaning the genocide, in 1933, when the Jewish Holocaust was not committed yet, and at that time the only, hence the first barbaric act was the Armenian genocide of 1915.

Viewing the Ottoman Empire as a genocidal state per se, Victor Nadein–Raevski, a researcher for the Institute of World Economy and International Relations of Russia Academy of Sciences, writes, “The XX century is the eyewitness of several events, which are qualified as genocide. The first and the biggest crime of the kind was the slaughter of the Armenians and other, mainly Christian minorities in the Ottoman Empire. The most active period of extermination started in 1915; the slaughters in Western Armenia continued all through World War I and further even after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, until 1922”<sup>14</sup>.

Identical viewpoints are expressed by English historian Christopher Walker<sup>15</sup>, French physician Yve Ternon<sup>16</sup>, who studies the medical–psychological aspect of the genocide, and by other researchers.

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Beginning from the 60s–70s of the last century, contemporary Arab historians show exceptional interest towards the Armenian Genocide. Egyptian, Syrian, Lebanese, Iraqi and other Arab researchers dedicated to this issue numerous valuable monographic studies, scientific papers, etc., which present a serious contribution to genocidology, in general, and to the investigation of the history of the Armenian Genocide, in particular.

We single out this group of authors, having in mind four factors, which we consider important for the issue under review.

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<sup>14</sup> **Victor Nadein–Raevski**, *Ibid.*, pp. 201–202.

<sup>15</sup> **Christopher Walker**, *Ibid.*, p. 413.

<sup>16</sup> **Yve Ternon**, *Ibid.*, p. 342–343.

First, Arabs had been under the Ottoman yoke for four hundred years, in 1516–1918, and know very well what the sultan regime presents. They designated it ‘zulum’, which stands for despotism, tyranny, horror. This judgment of the sultan regime, the term ‘zulum’, made by the Arabs, is recognized by the scientific world as the most accurate and complete characterization of a whole historical period and the Ottoman regime.

Consequently, the evaluations by the Arab researchers of the Ottoman Empire, of the internal policy — by this meaning also the policy towards the non-Turkish communities — are not a result of hypothetical speculations, but rest on profound historical cognition, and are well substantiated.

Second, from the XVII century, when the western segment of Armenians fell under the Ottoman domination, the Arabs and the Armenians shared the same lot. Owing to that, the Arabs are well aware of the problems of the Armenians, and the policy, pursued towards them by the Ottoman sultans and the Young Turks. The Arabs are, perhaps, the only nation who did not only hear, but witnessed the genocide of the Armenians and their forcible banishment in 1915, when caravans of evicted Armenian migrants were crossing their lands, deserts and villages. The landmarks of the Armenian Calvary were the terrains of Deyr az-Zor, Ras ul-Ayn, Mesqene, Aleppo, Mosul, Baaquba, Baghdad, Nahr al-Umar, and Shatt al-Arab. This has produced a deep impression in the historical memory of the Arabs, which is being reflected today in the scientific works of the Arab researchers, dedicated to the Armenian Genocide.

Third, in Arabic historiography (Amin Said, Fuad Hasan Hafiz, Marvan al-Muddawar, etc.) dominating is the viewpoint, according to which during World War I the leaders of the Young Turks had planned, along with the Armenians, to exterminate the Arabs, too. By studying the Armenian Genocide, the Arab historians and political scientists seek to shed light upon those dark pages in their history, to deeper and more comprehensively understand the Young

Turks' policy of genocide, which, in their opinion, was pursued as a state policy, and the mechanisms of its commission.

After all this, it is no surprise at all that the Arab historians, such as Fuad Hasan Hafiz<sup>17</sup>, Marvan al-Muddawar<sup>18</sup>, Samir Arbash<sup>19</sup>, Saleh Zahr ad-Din<sup>20</sup>, Naim al-Yaffi<sup>21</sup>, Jihad Saleh<sup>22</sup>, Osman at-Turq<sup>23</sup>, and many others think that what happened to Armenians in 1915 was a genocide, and the first genocide in the XX century, which, although committed against the Armenians in the most barbaric way, was, they accentuate, an outrage against humanity as a whole.

Fourth, as is known, Arabs are Moslems; they are the founders of one of the world religions, Islam. Arabic is the language of the sacred book of Moslems, al-Koran. Hence, when the Arabs condemn the Moslem Ottoman rulers, their brutal policy towards all the non-Turkish peoples, inhabiting the Empire, i.e. towards Armenians, too; when they claim that what those had done to Armenians during World War I was a genocide — the religious factor is no longer there.

By saying this, we have in mind that in Turkey, frequent are concealed or unveiled allusions that the position of those European and American researchers, who recognize the Armenian Genocide, is dictated by their Christian religion. So the Christian historians, quite naturally, support the Christian Armenians.

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<sup>17</sup> **Fuad Hasan Hafiz**, *History of the Armenian People from the Beginning Up Today*, 1986 (in Arabic).

<sup>18</sup> **Marvan al-Muddawar**, *The Armenians Throughout History*, Beirut, 1982 (in Arabic).

<sup>19</sup> **Samir Arbash**, *Armenia. Earth and People*, Beirut, 1991 (in Arabic).

<sup>20</sup> **Saleh Zahr ad-Din**, *The Armenians. People and Problems*, Lebanon, 1988 (in Arabic); *Policy of the Ottoman Government in Western Armenia and the Position of the Great Powers Towards It*, Beirut, 1992 (in Arabic).

<sup>21</sup> **Naim al-Yaffi**, *Genocide of the Armenians and the Position of the Arabic Public Opinion*, Al-Lataqiya, 1992 (in Arabic).

<sup>22</sup> **Jihad Saleh**, *The Turkish Turanism Between Fundamentalism and Fascism*, Beirut, 1987 (in Arabic).

<sup>23</sup> **Osman at-Turk**, *Pages from the History of the Armenian Nation*, Haleb, 1960 (in Arabic).

Such accusations against world-famous scholars are, certainly, groundless. In the circumstance of the Arab-Moslem experts that 'accusation' does not and cannot work.

As a matter of fact, the opinions of experts as to the Armenian Genocide, with a rare exception, coincide — no matter what their confession is — Christianity, or Judaism, or Islam. We, certainly, do not mean the Turkish experts, the overwhelming majority of which repudiates the very fact of the Armenian Genocide. For justice' sake, however, we should state that a number of Turkish authors have already come forth, whose opinion does not coincide with the official Turkish opinion.

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Beginning from 1960s, in parallel with the definition 'Armenian Genocide', the term 'Armenocide' came into use.

The inventor of the term is a Lebanese Arab historian Moussa Prince. Quite obviously, it was derived by analogy with Lemken's 'genocide'.

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Moussa Prince has devotedly and consistently studied these gloomiest pages in the history of the Armenian people for many long years. In connection with the *Second International Congress On Prevention of Crimes*, held in Paris on July 10–14, 1967, he issued his successive valuable treatise in the French language, titled *Un genocide impuni. L'Armenocide* ("An Unpunished Genocide: Armenocide"). Moussa Prince, who has profoundly studied the issue of the genocide, applying the comparative method, arrives at the conclusion that the crime, committed by the Ottomans against the Armenians may be and shall be designated 'Armenocide', accentuating, that Armenocide is the most genocidal genocide<sup>24</sup>.

No doubt, Armenocide fits in the frame of the notion 'genocide' perfectly. Nevertheless, as the most genocidal genocide, it has its unique, original, one may say, distinguishing features. This can

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<sup>24</sup> **Moussa Prince**, *Un genocide impuni. L'Armenocide*, Heidelberg Press-Lebanon, 1967, p. 26–27.



be exemplified, applying the comparative method, comparing Armenocide with the Jewish Holocaust. In our opinion, the typical features of Armenocide are as follows:

First, the Genocide of the Armenians was committed in their native land — Western Armenia, while the genocide of the Jews was executed in Germany, i.e. in a country, which was not their native land. This factor imparts an exceptionally tragic shade to the Armenian Genocide.

Second, the Genocide of the Armenians was committed by the ruling clique of newcomers, the Turks. As is known, Turks first appeared in the terrain of the Middle East and Transcaucasia beginning from the XI century, when they left the Altai and Central Asia and, spreading by tides, conquered and destroyed on their way almost every existing state structure, formed by the indigenes. Armenians suffered the same fate. The newly fledged arrivals first seized Western Armenia to perpetrate the physical extirpation of the indigenous population afterwards.

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The situation was different with the Jews. In essence, they were arrivals in Germany. In this event, the holocaust was committed by the indigenes — the Germans.

Third, as a consequence of the Genocide, Armenians lost their homeland — Western Armenia. The Jews did not lose their historical motherland after the Holocaust. On the contrary, after the Holocaust, the idea and striving of the Jews to have their own, national motherland grew even stronger, and, eventually, was crowned with success, when the State of Israel was declared in 1948.

Fourth, after the Genocide, the fragments of Armenian survivors found themselves spread almost over all the continents of our planet; thereby the Armenian Diaspora was formed. The Jewish Diaspora existed prior to Holocaust, and, after the State of Israel was formed, thousands of Jews from the Jewish Diaspora rushed to settle down in their newly formed state.

In our opinion, we have pointed out the most essential distinctive features, which lay foundation for us to regard the Armenian Genocide as ‘Armenocide’, and to view it as the most genocidal genocide.

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When undertaking to write this treatise, we never meant to cover and comprehensively elucidate all the issues related with Armenocide. It is not achievable within the bounds of one treatise, especially constrained ones. To do it, dozens of massive volumes would be required.

Our task is more modest: to present to the alien, non-Armenian reader the brief outline of Armenocide — the first genocide of the XX century; its causes, political and ethno-national motives, plans and goals, forms and methods of commission, consequences, as well as the position and the responsibility of the Great Powers.

To what extent we succeeded in accomplishing this, is trusted to our esteemed reader’s impartial judgment.