

Cronologia del genocidio armeno

1878

During the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1878 the Russian troops gained victories both on the Balkan and the Caucasian fronts. In the Balkans, the Russian troops occupied Bulgaria and advanced to the outskirts of Istanbul, while on the Caucasian war stage, they took Ardahan, Bayazet, Alashkert, Kars and Erzurum, i.e., a considerable segment of Western Armenia, as well as Batumi. The Turks had to terminate the war operations and seek for peace. The Peace Treaty between Russia and the Ottoman Empire was signed on March 3, 1878, in the township of San Stefano in the vicinity of Istanbul. It verified the victories, gained with the Russian weapon. In the Treaty of San Stefano a special Paragraph 16 was added about the application of reforms in Western Armenia. It read, "Taking into account that the withdrawal of the Russian troops from the territories of Armenia, occupied by them and bound to be returned to Turkey, may cause clashes and complications there, which may harm the good relations between the two states, the Sublime Porte undertakes to immediately carry out improvements and reforms in the provinces, inhabited by Armenians, proceeding from the local needs, as well as to ensure the Armenians' security from Kurds and Circassians." The Treaty of San Stefano was the victory of the Russian diplomacy, and it seriously worried its European opponents, who feared that the Ottoman Empire would become totally dependent on Russia, and the strategic balance in the Eastern Question would change in favor of the Russian Empire. This contradicted their interests, and they would never let it happen. England and Austria-Hungary, which enjoyed Germany's and German chancellor Bismarck's support, were particularly active in this matter. These forces managed to achieve an agreement on convening an ad hoc congress to revise the Treaty of San Stefano. The Congress met in Berlin on June 13, 1878, presided over by Bismarck. England and Austria-Hungary, supported by Germany, France and Italy, succeeded in that the decisions of San Stefano were revised, Russia's positions were weakened, while their own positions and influence on the Ottoman Empire, vice versa, was reinforced. By the decision of the Congress, Russia returned Alashkert with the valley and Bayazet (Erzurum had been returned before) to Turkey. Ardahan, Kars, as well as Batumi remained with Russia. The Treaty of Berlin contained a specific Paragraph 61, all dedicated to the Armenian Question. It, however, differed from Paragraph 16 of the Treaty of San Stefano in several very principal aspects, and this not to the benefit of Armenians. If, under the Treaty of San Stefano, the reforms in Western Armenia were to be carried out in the presence of the Russian troops, which presented a certain guarantee of said implementation, now, under the Treaty of Berlin, the Russian troops were withdrawn to leave everything to the discretion of the "bloodthirsty Sultan". He only claimed responsibility to periodically report on his undertakings to the European Powers. The latter acquired supervising functions. In other words, by the Treaty of Berlin, the mechanisms for reforms in Western Armenia, suggested by San Stefano, were destroyed, and no other realistic offers put forward instead. After the Congress of Berlin, the Sultan and the ruling clique got reinforced in their conviction that the best solution for the Armenian Question was extermination of the Armenians. At that point they saw in this an actual means of precluding of the intervention of the European Powers in Empire's internal affairs. In their eyes, The Armenian Question, the reforms question in the Armenian regions was used by those Powers as a pretext to meddle in the internal affairs of Turkey. Therefore it was necessary to eliminate the pretext and deprive the Powers of the the opportunity to extort concessions from the Empire.

1891

Paradoxical was the fact that the powers entrusted the Sultan "to ensure Armenians' security from Kurds and Circassians", whereas the Sultan himself was the principal instigator of all the anti-Armenian deeds of the Kurds and Circassians. A perfect example of this is that, right after the

Congress of Berlin of 1891, by the order of Abdul Hamid II, a cavalry, named "Hamidie" after the Sultan, in which only Kurds were enlisted, was set up and kept at the expense of the Ottoman Empire. It consisted of 30 regiments which were not integrated in the system of the Ottoman army and were kept as a separate military unit, located in the Armenian town of Erzinkan. The foremost goal of the "Hamidie" was to organize carnages of Armenians all throughout the Empire, which they executed perfectly in 1894-1896 and during the ensuing Armenian massacres.

1894-1896

The apex of the Armenian massacres, committed by the Ottoman Empire at the end of the XIX century, were the slaughters of 1894-1896. The first blow struck Sasun, a province in the vilayet of Bitlis, which had long been known for its steadfast will to withstand Turkish tyranny. In August of 1894, the fourth Turkish Army marched on Sasun. The forces were unequal, and the regular Turkish army eventually won. Sasun was demolished, 40 villages were leveled, and 10 thousand people killed. In September 1895 Armenian massacres began in the capital city, and then also in Trabzon, Erzinka, Marash, Sebastia, Erzerum, Diyarbekir, Bayazid, Kharberd and elsewhere. The Sultan's authorities tried unsuccessfully to organize pogroms in Zeytun too, but the local inhabitants had taken prior necessary measures to resist the threatening Turkish troops. Carnages started with new conviction in 1896. Massacres took place in Constantinople, Urfa, Shapin-Garahisar, Amasia, Mush, Marzvan and in other regions, towns and villages of the Empire. During the 1894-1896 massacres, approximately 300,000 Armenians were killed. But the losses of Armenians were sadly not confined to this horror alone. In these unspeakably desperate times, around 100,000 Armenians were forcibly Islamized, while the same number were expelled from their native land.

1908, July 10

Groupings emerged with the aim of unseating the Sultan and his authoritarian regime. Gradually uniting the groupings turned into a movement, receiving the name "Young Turks". Soon the "Young Turks" founded their own party - Ittihad ve Terakki, or "Union and Progress". The idea of overthrowing the bloodthirsty Sultan was growing in popularity; the Young Turks were the ones to effect it. On July 23, 1908, the Committee of Union and Progress organized a coup. Sultan Abdul Hamid II was deprived of power; and in 1909 he was dethroned. The Young Turks came onto the arena under the slogans of the French Revolution: "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity". All the nations in the Empire, Moslem or Christian, vigorously welcomed the overthrow of the "red Sultan". The people believed that a new era in the history of the Ottoman Empire had dawned. Armenians thought so, too. As evidenced by Moussa Prince, "Armenians, Turks, and Greeks were hugging each other in the streets" in euphoria. Yet, shortly after this, it turned out that the Young Turks were well disguised ardent nationalists, who continued the policy of oppressions and slaughters carried out by the preceding Sultans. They were advocates of the idea of assimilation of all the nations of the Empire to create a "pure" Turkish nation, never even stopping at mass slaughters in order to achieve that goal.

April, 1909

Only a year after the Young Turk Revolution, in April 1909, Turkish chauvinist figures in the town of Adana, in Cilicia, incited a crowd/throng to commit wholesale atrocities against the local Armenian population. Only after a few days did the the Turkish army intervene. From Adana the massacre spread on to other Armenian settlements - from Marash to Kesab. In some regions Armenians turned to self-defense and managed to survive. The massacres raged on for a month, resulting in the death of over thirty thousand Armenians. Having initially supported the Young Turk

Revolution with enthusiasm, Armenians for the first time faced serious doubts and fear for this new proto-fascist regime.

1910

Undertaking the construction and use of the railway that traversed the Ottoman Empire in the end of the XIX and in the beginning of XX century, Germany strived to assume control over the Ottoman Empire, in order to contain the position of England in India and Egypt, as well as weaken Russia's position in the Caucasus. Germany connected the construction of the Baghdad railway also with its economic and military-political ambitions in Western Armenia. Within the German political agenda it was thought that in order to establish Turkish homogeneity in North-Eastern Anatolia, it would be necessary to resettle Armenians in the area of the Baghdad railway construction, which then would achieve two important goals: the actual construction of the railway, which would be provided with skilful and qualified manpower, and the attenuation of Russian influence in Western Armenia. Particularly, the well-known German political scientist Paul Raurbach thought that "Native Armenians should be moved from Western Armenia, and in their place be settled Muslims brought from Trachea and Russia. In this case Armenia would be separated from Russia at once." Raurbach suggested relocating Western Armenians to Mesopotamia, which in his mind would contribute to the "economic development of the road". This viewpoint of Germans became a basis for the Young Turkish policy of annihilating the Armenians in their homeland.

1911

The Young Turkish decision to solve the Armenian Question through genocide was finally adopted in the beginning of 1910s at a number of secret sessions and conferences of the Union and Progress Party's Central Committee. In this regards the 1911 Salonika conference stood out, where the leadership explicitly decided to Turkify all the non-Turkish nations of the Empire. This most acutely impacted the Armenians throughout the Empire's territories. The decisions made at the conference became the official strategy of the policy adopted by Young Turks. Secret orders were then signed by Talaat and sent to the Empire's local authorities in order for them to take prior necessary measures for exterminating the Armenians.

1912-1913

The Balkan Wars (the first one from October 1912 through May 1913, and the second one from June 1913 through August 1913), waged between the Balkan Alliance and Turkey, resulted in the aggravation of international relations in the Balkans and in the whole of Europe, thus accelerating the unleashing of the World War. Ottoman Turkey's defeat during the first Balkan War prepared grounds for the revisiting of the Armenian Question, as a result of which the Reforms Question of Western Armenia was once again alive. Thanks to the efficient participation of Armenian public circles and the Russian government, this human rights issue became a discussion point of international diplomacy.

July 1914

The congress of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation was held in Erzerum. One could already feel the spirit of the imminent war in the air, and the Federation had convened to decide on its position in case war broke out. Learning of the congress, the Young Turk authorities sent two representatives- Naji Bey and Shakir Behaeddin, who occupied important positions in their party. At the congress they laid the following demands to Armenians on behalf of the Union and Progress party; first, the congress should declare on behalf of all Armenians that both the Armenians of

Turkey and the Armenians of Russia would stay loyal to Turkey in case of war; second, that they were to form Armenian detachments to fight against Russians, third, they should foment a revolt in the Caucasus and behind the lines of the Russian army. At the same time they declared that “If Armenians were to hold such positions, after the war they would be given the right to establish an independent state on certain territories of Turkey and Russia”. In response to the Young Turk demands, the congress declared that in case of war the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire and the Armenians of Russia would appear in two different camps, as they are the subjects of two different states and are loyal to them. Regarding the issue of raising a revolt in Caucasus, the congress emphasized in its decision that “the congress cannot speak on behalf of the Armenians of Russia, as they are the subjects of another state”. Along with this, the congress explicitly stated in its decision that “in case the Turkish government decides to join the war, Armenians of Turkey would carry out their responsibilities put on them as Turkish subjects – to serve the country in the army, protect the country just like the other subjects of the Empire”. It was not easy to make such a decision for it meant fraternal war for Armenians, as the Armenians of Russia would likewise tend to their duties. However, the Young Turk representatives were dissatisfied with the decisions of the congress, as they had rejected the Young Turk desires of the Armenians of Russia to rise in revolt against Russia. As such, the enraged Shakir Behaeddin, later to be remembered as one of the most active organizers and butchers during the Armenian Genocide, exclaimed at the congress “This is high treason!”.

August - October 1914

On August 1, 1914, World War I broke out. It lasted for four years, and involved 33 states. The principal role-players, however, were two hostile military-political alliances, formed at the turn of the century: The Entente, with England, France and Russia representing the core nations, and the Central Powers – Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy, with Turkey to join later. 1.5 billion people, or 75% of the world population, was drawn into the war, with over 74 million people mobilized. The death toll amounted to 10 million, plus another 20 million injured in the military operations during various episodes of the war. The Ottoman Empire, ruled by the Young Turk triumvirate – Minister of Interior Talat, Minister of War Enver, and Minister of the Navy Jemal--officially joined in the war on October 29, 1914. Months later in an interview given to the American press Enver Pasha gave the following reasons for Turkey’s participation: “It’s beyond doubt that the world has difficulties in perceiving that Turkey is no longer what it used to be. It’s not the Turkish government, but the Turkish nation that is at war today. The newspapers of France, Great Britain and Russia write a lot that Turkey joined the war to help Germany. It is true for the moment, but is not for when we were recruiting our forces. Today Austria-Hungary and Germany help us and we help them. We joined the war, because there was no other way out. ...Russia threatens to seize our territories in the Black Sea and in the Caucasus, while England started military operations against Mesopotamia and has placed a navy at the mouth of the Dardanelles. We waited for another week and then we declared a war. Presently Turkey has a well-prepared and armed army of 2,000,000 soldiers. We have been so much doubted and insinuated, that now we wish to persuade the world by arms that ethnically we are not dead, as some insist”. /Interview given to “Associated Press”, 20 April, 1915.

November 1914

When Turkey joined in the war and mobilization was announced, Western Armenians, like the other peoples of the Empire, were called to the army.

1915

First violent acts committed against Armenians under the guise of the War.

January 2

After the withdrawal of Russian troops most of the Armenian and Assyrian refugees going from Urmia, Salmast and other surrounding settlements to Nor Jugha were attacked and killed by Turkish and Kurdish armed forces. January 12 Slaughter of 107 Armenians took place in the village of Avgharik.

February

For implementing the Armenian Genocide in an organized and merciless manner, the Union and Progress Party's Central Committee formed the "Executive Committee of Three" in February 1914, comprised of Doctor Nazim, Shakir Behaeddin and Midhat Shyukri. The Young Turk Triumvirate – Talaat, Enver and Jemal - operated through this committee, which was responsible for the implementation of the deportation and massacre of all the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire. The committee, which had top-level authorization, had resolved all the technical problems connected with deporting and exterminating Armenians – the deportation dates according to regions, the deportation routes and places, the concentration camps for their ultimate annihilation, etc. Doctor Nazim, one of the most important Young Turk leaders and one of the organizers of the Armenian Genocide, made a speech at a secret session of the party, when the final decision to exterminate Armenians was made, stating, "The Armenian nation should be entirely exterminated, so that no Armenian is left in our country and that their name be completely forgotten. Now we are at war and no other such occasion will ever occur. The intervention of the European Powers and the loud protests of the World Press will remain unnoticed, and if they learn about it, they will face a fait accompli and the question will disappear. This time our operations should be directed at total extermination of the Armenians. It is necessary to annihilate them all, till the very last man...I want the Turk and the Turk only to live and impartially rule over this country. Let all the non-Turkish elements go to hell, no matter what nationality or religion they may belong to". The so-called "Teshkilat mahsuse", or "Special Organization" that was established by the decision of the Young Turk party was put at the disposal of the "Committee of Three" and was responsible for implementing the Armenian Genocide. The leader of the organization was Shakir Behaeddin. "Teshkilat mahsuse" was formed from criminals freed from prisons for this very purpose, chetens – bands of robbers, bandits and other dregs of society that were capable of and called upon to commit the most hideous of crimes.

February 12

The beginning of the dismissal of Armenian officials, imprisonment of Armenian officers of the Ottoman army, and formation of labor detachments comprised of disarmed Armenian soldiers.

February 18

The Regional delegates of the party are informed about the decision and the plan to exterminate Armenians with letters signed by the plenipotentiary of the Young Turk Central Committee, Behaeddin Shakir.

February 19

The slaughtering agents were formed from murderers and criminals let out of prisons, with orders to kill the disarmed soldiers working on the Karin military line.

February

The Young Turk leadership began the practical phase of the plan of the Armenian Genocide by eliminating at first the enlisted Armenian soldiers. By doing that, they intended to deprive the Armenians of their potential armed support. By the decree of Turkey's minister of war Enver, issued in February, 1915, all Armenian soldiers were disarmed, split into groups of 50-100, and killed. As a result, from the very beginning Armenians were deprived of any military force, capable to defend their lives, homes, property and settlements. As a result, only the old and sick, and women and children, were left in the towns where Armenians lived.

April 8

First mass deportations and massacres of the population of Western Armenia, in Zeitun.

April-June

On this day in Constantinople, with no official charge leveled, the selected elite of the Western Armenians were arrested and deported – members of the Turkish Parliament (Mejlis), writers, lawyers, teachers, journalists, physicians, public figures, clergymen, men of art – approximately 800 people. They all were killed on the road to exile, or upon reaching the destination. Armenian party and political figures were arrested and killed as pre-designed. Such was the fate of Nazareth Chaush, the well known leader of Zeytun; Ishkhan, the prominent public figure of Van; the entire leadership of the Armenians of Urfa – close to one hundred people. In June, 1915, in one of the central squares of the capital of the Empire, twenty members of the Henschak Party, led by the prominent party leader Paramaz, were hanged. The orientation, as well as the importance given to this quick strike, were carefully chosen by the Ottoman government. The intention was to behead the Western Armenians, to leave them without military support and political and intellectual leadership, to disorganize and demoralize the general Armenian population, and to preclude every possibility for them to prepare or muster resistance. The slaughter of Armenian soldiers and the decapitation of the intelligentsia proved fatal for Western Armenians, who in fact lost their capacity to organize and resist. This accounts for the relative ease and the devastating scale of the perpetration of the Genocide. Having successfully carried out this first phase, the executioners embarked on a path to arrest, evict and slay Armenians in their ancestral homeland of Western Armenia, Cilicia, and throughout the regions and towns of Western Anatolia. The Armenian massacres and deportations were pervasive across the entire Ottoman Empire from east to west, and north to south.

April 15 – May 16

On April 15, around 500 Armenians were killed by the Turkish authorities in the village of Akants near Van. Massacres took place in 80 villages in the environs of Van resulting in the deaths of 24,000 Armenians over the course of 3 days. On April 20, having swept through the villages in the environs of Van, Turks reached the city and the heroic battle of Van began. It lasted until May 16, 1915.

May – June

Mass Deportations across the entire territory of Turkey.

May 9

Deportations in Tokat.

May 14

Deportations in Baberd

On May 14, 1915, by the Sultan's decree, the Law on Deportation was endorsed, the implementation of which was entrusted to the Minister of War, Enver. The law allowed for the military command to expel and resettle the residents of villages and towns, individually or collectively. As such, the forcible eviction of the Armenians from their ancestral homeland and their deportation to the Arabian deserts was legalized.

May 15 –18

Exile of Karin valley Armenians and the massacre of 25,000 Armenians

May 19

Massacre of Khnus Armenians

May 22-25

In Nur Osmanie Center of Istanbul opened the mixed meeting of the Young Turk "Special Organization", at which Talaat presented the extensive project of the ways and procedures of deporting Armenians, the control of the property left after the Armenians, the resettlement of Armenian villages and families, etc.

May 27

The Young Turk government of the Ottoman Empire legalized the May 22 order of Talaat and charged the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry Defense with its implementation. The very same day Talaat promulgated the decree on the deportation and massacre of Armenians.

June 1

12,000 Armenian soldiers that had been working in labor camps since November 1914 were murdered on the Tigranakert – Kharberd roadway.

June 3

Armenians of Hadjin deported

June 6 – end of July

Deportation and Massacre of Arabkir Armenians. The caravans coming from Arabkir were one by one shot on the bank of the Euphrates, thus leaving no Armenian in Arabkir by the end of July.

June 7

Deportations in Erzinka and Akn

June 10

Armenians of Mardin and Severak deported

June 11

Armenians of Khotorjur deported

June 14 – July 26

Armenians of Karin city deported Armenians of Mardin and Severak deported

June 11

Armenians of Khotorjur deported

June 11

Deportation and massacre of 1700 families from Khnus

June 14 – July 26

Armenians of Karin city deported

June 22 – July 5

Deportation of Sebastia

June 24

Deportation of Shapin Garahisar started

June 26 - 27

Deportations started in Kharberd, Trabzon, Marzvan and Samson

June 25

Massacres in Baghesh

May 1915

The Allied Powers could not remain indifferent to what was going on in Turkey and thus sent a note of protest to the Turkish Cabinet, holding it responsible for the massacres of the Armenians. On May 13, 1915 in London, Paris and Petrograd the joint official declaration of England, France and Russia was issued simultaneously on the responsibility of the Ottoman Empire for the atrocities against the Armenians. In particular it stated: "During this whole month massacres of Armenians are implemented in Armenia by Turks and Kurds, with evident permission of the Ottoman authorities, and sometimes with their immediate help. In mid-April massacres of Armenians took place in Erzerum, Bitlis, Mush, Sasun, Zeitun and Cilicia. In the environs of Van inhabitants of hundreds of villages were annihilated and Kurds have captured the Armenian district of Van. At the same time the Turkish government of Constantinople imprisoned and unspeakably persecuted the peaceful Armenian inhabitants. The joint declaration of England-France-Russia was the first vital

official document adopted in the XX century, which held responsible another government and its leadership taken together and individually for state-sponsored crimes.

July 1

Massacre of the Armenians of Kharbed-Mezire, Trabzon and Bayazet started

July 2

Massacre of the villages surrounding Yozghat started

July 10

Mush massacre started. From an initial population of 15,000 only 500 survived, and from 59,000 inhabitants of the district only 9000 survived.

July 15

Karin's ruler Tahsi in his letter addressed to the central government wrote: "In Karin, barbarism has overstepped all limits. The disgrace and outrage practiced for money and women are extremely shameful and are inhuman. An end should be put to all this and especially to the chetens operating under the name "Teshkilat Makhuse". The ruler of Kharberd writes that all the roads are covered with corpses of children and women and they don't have time to bury them. It would be better if we preserved our nobleness and national image".

Mid July

Deportation and massacre of Tigranakert Armenians began

July 18

Self-defense of Sasun began, as Turkish troops attacked the inhabitants of the city. Realizing that annihilation was threatening them, the residents of the city turned to self-defense and three days later, on July 21, they climbed the mountain Andok.

July 24 – 28

Deportations started in the environs of Ankara and Istanbul

July 24 – 28

Deportations started in the environs of Ankara and Istanbul. Deportations started in Izmit, Partizak, Armash, Kesaria, in the Armenian villages near Ankara. The deportations continued in Cilicia involving new locales – Antioch, Aintap, Pehesni, Kilis, Ateaman, and Garaturan, then also Kesab and the other surrounding settlements.

July 30 – September 14

Commands of deportations in Setio region were given, but the locals met the troops with self-defense. The heroic battle known as the 40 days of Musa Dagh lasted until September 14. After fighting for 40 days, the 4000 Armenians that survived managed to break the Turkish blockade, get

to the beach and board the English and French ships waiting for them there. Some days later they arrived at the city of Port-Said. Years later the Austrian writer Franz Werfel immortalized that tragic yet heroic episode of the Armenian nation in his novel "40 Days of Musa Dagh".

August 3- 11

Deportations started in Afion Garahisar, Kesaria, Sivri, Hisar, Mersin, Adabazar, Marash, and the villages near Eskishehire.

August 13-21

Deportation of the Armenians of Ankara, Brusa, Everik, Adana and the surrounding villages started

August – September

First official eyewitness accounts of mass extermination of Western Armenians

August

US Ambassador Morgenthau recounts the information from meetings and negotiations with Talaat

August 12

Enver reports that to date 200,000 Armenians slain.

August 19

Lord Bryce reports that 500,000 Armenians murdered in Turkey.

August 31

Talaat tells German ambassador, Prince Ernst Hohenlohe-Langenburg, that the Armenian Question no longer exists.

September 14

The New York Times reports the murder of 350,000 Armenians.

September 15

The Law on Abandoned Goods is ratified by the Turkish Senate

1916

March 7

Replying to the March 3 telegram of the Ministry Abdulhat Nuri informed the Ministry that through March 16 of 1916 in Pap and Meske 35,000 Armenians were exterminated; 10,000 in Karlk near Aleppo, 20,000 in Tipsi, Apuharrar and Hamam, and 35,000 in Ral es Ain. In total 100,000.

March 17

Deportation of over 50,000 Armenians gathered in Ras el Ain began. Deportations were followed by massacres that lasted until June, when the massacre of 200,000 Armenians gathered in Der zor took place.

June 22 – July 13

Atrocities started in different locales, as a result of which in Sebastia 10 000 soldiers working in the labor camps were killed, in the West of Karin – 9000, in Zara – 1000, and in a place called Reshatie, in the region of Tokat --1000 Armenians. The massacres ended on July 13 with total of 21000 Armenians murdered.

August 10

By official note, the Young Turk government dissolved the Jerusalem and Istanbul patriarchates, leaving only the Cilicia patriarchate, which adopted jurisdiction over the Istanbul patriarchate.

October

U.S. President Woodrow Wilson, acting on a resolution of the US Congress, proclaims October 8 and 9 as "Armenian Relief Days."

November 26

On the basis of the London treaty signed by the president of the Armenian national delegation Poghos Nubar Pasha, together with Mark Sax (England), and George Picot (France) on November 26, the Armenian Volunteer Detachment – the Eastern Legion within the French troops-- was formed to liberate Armenian lands from Turkish domination.

1917

January

Mr. Goppert, a German Embassy official, visits Enver, Talaat and Halil to convey that forced Islamization under the guise of military necessity or security must be stopped.

October 25

The Bolsheviks led by Lenin carried out a political revolution in Russia, taking control of the authority of the country's temporary government. Coming to power, the Bolsheviks ceased military operations, and in November Russian troops began abandoning their positions on the territories of Western Armenia. Seizing the occasion, the Turkish government set their sights not only on the control of Western Armenia, but also to seize all of Eastern Armenia.

1918

March 3

The Bolshevik leaders of Russia signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with the anti-Entente states - Germany, Turkey, Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria, by which in fact it withdrew from the Entente and joined its former antagonists. By this treaty the parties agreed on ceasing military operations

and Russia guaranteed the withdrawal of its troops from Eastern Anatolia, particularly from the Kars, Ardahan and Batum regions. This treaty was the logical continuation of the decree “on peace” adopted by the Bolsheviks on November 8 of 1917. The Brest-Litovsk treaty put the Armenians living in the Caucasus in an extremely difficult situation. In fact, it invalidated the decision of December 29, 1917 on the right of self-determination of Eastern Armenian lands, instead adopting the decree on returning the same lands to Turkey. Months later, on September 20, the Russian government, by the note signed by the Foreign Affairs Minister Chicherin, invalidated the concession of Caucasus territories to Turkey. Regardless, even with the temporary treaty of Brest Litovsk, the Western Armenian territories, where only a few months before the Russian army presided, were ethnically cleansed and robbed of any near-term future as a part of Armenia. The Brest Treaty presented intriguing opportunities for the Turkish side with its continual expansionist policy. Using the occasion and breaking the Erzinka ceasefire agreement signed December 5, 1917, the Turkish army initiated fresh attacks with vastly superior forces, and one by one captured Erzinka, Karin, Sarighamish, Kars, and on May 15, Alexandropol. The very existence of Armenia was in jeopardy.

May

Turkish troops captured the Sardarapat station. The Armenian army of regular troops and militia men went to a last gasp battle of life and death against the Turkish regular army. General Silikyan was charged with the responsibility of leading the Sardarapat defense. After enduring heavy losses on May 27, the remnants of the Turkish army fled to Alexandropol. The next day, May 28, the Republic of Armenia was proclaimed. The newly-established Armenian state was to exist two and half short years, until the Sovietization of Armenia.

June-September

Ignoring the June 14, 1918 Batum treaty, the Turkish troops attacked Alexandropol on August 15. The 15-hour Armenian resistance gave an opportunity to the Armenian refugees gathered from Karin, Kars, Ardahan and Ardvin to once again flee the city. The Turkish army slaughtered the rest of the inhabitants and attacked the refugees, adding numerous victims. The “Savage detachment” Tatar regiment on September 15 carried out a similar carnage in Baku, where 30,000 Armenians were slain.

September 19

In Arara, in Palestine, the Armenian Legion of the French army clashed against the Turkish army. Thanks to the victory Armenians at this battle, the Armenian Legion greatly contributed to the victory of the Allied countries over the Turks.

October 30

In the city of Mudros an armistice was signed between the Entente states and Turkey. Thus Turkey accepted defeat in World War I. This document makes provisions for the return of the Armenian survivors to their homes. Later the Entente states did not do anything to enforce the implementation of the Mudros armistice, which could have assisted ravaged Armenia. Instead, the Turkish government of Ankara rejected the Mudros armistice, actually invalidating it.

November – December

On November 28 the Eastern Legion, later renamed the Armenian Legion, entered Alexandrette port of Cilicia and managed to capture a number of important military locales from Dec. 17 through Dec. 19.

November

Talaat, Enver and Jemal flee Turkey

1919

February 28

After the consolidation of the Nationalist-Kemalist forces in Turkey, massacres of the Armenians of Aleppo took place on February 28.

July 23

Kyazim Karabekir and colonel Mustafa Kemal as president opened the Turkish Nationalist Congress in Karin, most of the participants of which were former Young Turks. On August 7, finishing its sessions, the congress adopted a decision on the integrity and immunity of Turkey.

1920

January 21 – February 12

The heroic battle Marash began against the Turkish nationalists, lasting until February 12, 1920. On February 11 the French forces withdrew from Marash, leaving the city's Armenian population to the mercy of the Turkish troops. Armenians followed the French army, but were attacked by Turks along the way. The Turks brutalized and slaughtered the Armenians and the French during their withdrawal. While retreating, Armenians endured 3-5000 victims, while the French lost 800-1200, the freezing conditions exacerbating the attacks by the Turks.

January 27

At the session of the Istanbul military Mustafa Kemal stated the following about the Young Turks, "Those pashas committed unprecedented, unspeakable and incomprehensible crimes and for their personal interest they brought the country to its present state. They have committed all kinds of violence, they have organized deportations and massacres, they have burnt infants with petroleum, they have raped women and girls in front of their husbands and parents, they have stolen children from their parents, they have confiscated the real estate and property of Armenians, they have exiled Armenians to Mosul in deplorable conditions, they have drowned thousands of innocent people in the sea, they forced people to change their religion, they made starving old men walk for months and work, and they have forced young women to submit to dreadful brothels never encountered in the history of any other nation".

March 23

The Turkish-Mustafa gang led by Khosrov bek Sultanov butchered over 30,000 Armenians of Shushi, and robbed, destroyed and burnt to the ground the Armenian district of the town.

March 23 - October 15

On March 23 the heroic battle of Hadjin started against the joined forces of Turkish nationalists and Young Turks, and ended on October 15, 1920.

1 April 1920 – 8 February 1921

The heroic battle of Aintap started on April 1 and ended on February 8, 1921.

July 5

The verdict of Young Turk leaders was issued, according to which 4 out of 31 criminals - Talaat, Jemal, Enver and Nazim - were condemned to death, while the remainder of the 27 were condemned to imprisonment for different terms. After World War I the trial of Young Turk leaders began in Turkey, with charges of war crimes. Among the accusations was the organization and implementation of massacres of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. However, several were charged 'in absentia' as they had managed to flee the country.

August 4

On August 4, 1920 the Autonomous Cilician Republic of Armenia, led by Mihran Tamatyan, was proclaimed in Adana under French patronage. However, it was declared a republic in name only, as due to a fallout of Anglo-French relations, the French military authorities became inclined to defend Turkey's position, leading to the dissolution of the newly-formed Armenian government.

August 10

In the Paris suburb of Sevres the victorious states of World War I signed a treaty with Turkey, a document of 13 parts and 433 Articles. Articles 88 and 89 recognized the Republic of Armenia as a free and independent state. The Articles state: "Turkey and Armenia, as well as the higher powers agree on leaving the border determination of Erzerum, Van and Bitlis between Turkey and Armenia to the decision of the US President Woodrow Wilson and accept his decision, as well as all the means he can suggest for Armenia to have sea access and on the mentioned territory any demilitarization of the Ottoman territory... From the moment of adopting this resolution Turkey waives all rights to these territories".

September 14

The French authorities of Adana gave an order to the Armenians refugees in Cilicia to leave for Istanbul, America, Marseille, Beirut, Dort-Yol, Iskenderun or elsewhere. The order initially concerned those 14,000 Armenians that were under French patronage, but later was augmented to include all Armenians.

September 23

Without any declaration of war, the Turkish army attacked Armenia and captured Alexandropol. Around 30 villages in the Alexandropol and Akhalkalak regions were overrun, with the inhabitants being greeted with pillage and slaughter. The Turkish troops were merciless in the degree of their cruelty and horror.

November- December

While Woodrow Wilson expresses his frustrations about implementing the new borders of the Republic of Armenia, Soviet forces regained total control of the Caucasus. At the end of November the Red Army entered Armenia. The ruling government of the short-lived independent Armenia, in an effort to avoid still more bloodshed and fraternal civil war, relinquished authority to the Bolsheviks, and on December 2 Armenia was Sovietized.

1921

March 15 – July 1922

One of the organizers of Armenian Genocide, Talaat, was assassinated in Berlin by an Armenian student, Soghomon Tehlirian. This was the beginning of the “Nemesis” (named after the goddess of revenge in Greek mythology) operation, worked out at the 9th session of the ARF party in autumn, 1919, the aim of which was to execute the death sentence of Young Turk leaders in Turkey. “Nemesis” was a clear, thoroughly worked out operation, which with time was efficiently implemented by the Armenian avengers, pursuing only the aim of justice. A special committee was formed to discover the hiding-places of the criminals living in different corners of the world. In June, Tehlirian’s trial for killing Talaat began in Germany, which in fact became a trial against the organizers of the genocide. Given European acknowledgment of Talaat’s responsibility as chief architect of the genocide, Tehlirian was acquitted. In Rome, on December 6, a bullet from a gun wielded by another Armenian avenger Arshavir Shirakyan killed the leader of the first Young Turk government – Said Halim. In Berlin on April 7, 1922 Armenian avengers Arshavir Shirakyan and Aram Yerkanyan executed the death sentence of the former governor of Trabzon Jemal Azmi and the founder of “Teshkilateshi Makhsuse” criminal organization – Behaeddin Shakir. In Tbilisi on July 25 Armenian avengers Stepan Tsaghikyan, Artashes Gevorgyan and Petros Ter-Poghosyan murdered one of the butchers of the Armenian Genocide – Jemal Pasha.

March 16

In Moscow on March 16 a treaty on Soviet-Turkish friendship and fraternity was signed. It was signed at a time when Soviet Russia supported Kemalist Turkey, disregarding the latter’s expansionist policy towards Armenia. Thus the open questions regarding Armenia were settled without heed to Armenia’s interest or historical justice.

March 20

Turkish-French Treaty of London

October 13

A treaty was signed in Kars between Turkey and the newly-established Armenian Soviet Republic, Georgian Soviet Republic and the Azerbaijani Soviet Republic. This treaty restated the points of the Moscow treaty and regarding territorial matters in Armenia, it was strongly anti-Armenian.

October 20

On October 20 the Turkish-French treaty was signed in Ankara resulting in the French troop pullout from Cilicia, lasting from December of 1921 until January 4 of 1922. The threat of new massacres led to the migration of 160,000 Armenians to Syria, Lebanon and Greece.

1922

August 4

On August 4 during the clash between Soviet and anti-Soviet forces in Central Asia, an Armenian soldier Hakob Melkumov killed the Minister of War of the Ottoman Turkey – Enver.

September 9

The Turkish army entered Izmir and massacred 10,000 Armenians and 100,000 Greeks. Three days later Izmir was set afire.

November

An international conference commenced in Switzerland on the question of the Middle East, lasting until July 24, 1923. The participants of the conference were Great Britain, France, Italy, Greece, Japan, Romania, Yugoslavia, Turkey and the US as an observer country. The delegation of the Armenian Republic was not allowed to take part at the conference, as it no longer represented Armenia, which had been absorbed into the Soviet Union. The Lausanne Conference also discussed the Armenian Question, but the Turkish delegation led by Ismet Pasha and Riza Nur Bey decisively spoke against the idea of founding any Armenian state on the territory of Turkey. In the end Turkey managed to dictate its will to the Entente countries. As a result the treaty included no mention of Armenia or of Armenians whatsoever. Thus by the Lausanne Conference the Armenian Question was temporarily closed and the territories to be delivered to Armenia by the Treaty of Sevres disappeared within the ethnically cleansed newly-determined borders of Republic of Turkey.

March 31

Ankara announced a verdict of "not guilty" concerning all those Turks who had been condemned by military or other courts.

November 30

Deportation of Armenians and Greeks from Pontus

1923

September

According to a new Turkish law the return of Armenians to Turkey was once and for all prohibited

1939

June

Against the will of the local population and disregarding Syria's opposition, the region of Alexandrette was annexed to Turkey, as a consequence of which around 40,000 Armenians were forced to leave their homes and settle in Syria and Lebanon between July 16-23.

September

A week before the invasion of Poland and the start of World War II, Adolph Hitler spoke of his orders "to kill without pity or mercy all men, women, and children of Polish race or language," and concluded his remarks by asking, "Who, after all, speaks today of the extermination of the Armenians?"