

NIKOLAY HOVHANNISYAN

ARAB HISTORIOGRAPHY
ON THE ARMENIAN
GENOCIDE

YEREVAN 2005

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Translated from Armenian by Svetlana Mardanyan

Nikolay Hovhannisyan

ARAB HISTORIOGRAPHY ON THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

This work is dedicated to the discussion of the issues of the Armenian Genocide of 1915 in Arab historiography. Motivations for Arab historiography to turn to the Armenian Genocide are elucidated; classification of Arab historiographic literature on that problem is brought.

The author dwells upon such crucial issues in Arab historiography as the causes and nature of the Armenian Genocide, the methods and mechanisms of its commitment. Especially underlined is the fact that the term Armenocide was used widely by Arab historians, who qualified it as the "most genocidal genocide". It is also noted that Arab historiography regards the Ottoman Empire as a country of carnages and massacres, not only practiced towards Armenians, but also towards Arabs, Greeks, Assyrians, Slavs and other non-Turkish peoples of the empire. In fact, the Ottoman Empire was a cradle of genocide.

A stress is made on the philanthropic attitude of Arabs towards Armenian refugees during the nightmarish times of the Genocide.

The monograph is addressed to specialists in Armenian history, Arabists, Turkologists and specialists of Oriental studies in general, international affairs experts, genocidologists, students and all those interested in historical issues.

Dedicated to the memory of all the martyrs of the Armenian Genocide of 1915, all the chaste Armenian girls, who were bereft of the chance to become brides, all the Armenian boys, who left this world beardless.

Dedicated to all the honest Arabs, who in the nightmarish days of 1915 had the honesty and courage to reach their helping hand to the Armenian refugees on their road to Calvary, predestined to them.

Author

**THE PROBLEM OF STUDYING THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE
BEHIND THE BARBED WIRE**

INSTEAD OF PREFACE

Until 1965, the Armenian Genocide was thematically one of the problems, which study was strictly banned and tabooed in the Soviet Union. Figuratively speaking, it was in the zone of ideological blockade, enclosed with barbed wire. And such zones in the former Soviet Union were plenty.

The study of the Armenian Genocide was not included in the research programs of the Academy Institutes and higher educational institutions of Soviet Armenia, it was not encouraged and did not receive adequate funding. Hence, this subject of crucial importance moved from the field of scientific study to that of talks and private cautious discussions in the Armenian families. It was not too little either, at least in that through this specific way the topic of the Armenian Genocide persisted, maintaining its importance in the Armenian reality, and was handed down by Armenians from generation to generation. In this matter, exclusive was the mission of the survivors of the Armenian Genocide, who kept alive the spirit of that tremendous tragedy, did not let it subside or turn into an ordinary event.

Naturally, a question arises as to the reasons for the Soviet authorities to impose interdictions on the study of the Armenian Genocide. They were several. We, however, will only dwell on two of them, which, in our opinion, are of pivotal significance.

The first reason should be sought in the nature of the Turkish-Soviet relations, which we would call strange, unnatural, unprincipled and even immoral.

Coming to power in October of 1917, the Bolshevik leadership in Russia, headed by Lenin, Trotski, Stalin, Zinovyev and others, adopted a queer policy towards Turkey, which perplexed the political scientists and

the tempered in diplomacy political figures. They established friendly relations with the headed by Mustafa Kemal new leaders of Turkey, who succeeded the bloodthirsty sultans and no less brutal Young Turks. Kemal, too, had been a member of the Young Turk "Ittehad ve Terakki" party, a general in the Ottoman sultan army, in the ranks of which he served through the end of World War I and the fall of the Ottoman Empire.

Seemingly, this circumstance should have held back the Bolshevik leadership, who acted under the banner of justice, or, at least, should have made them act prudently with the Kemalists, these once activists of the Young Turks and the sultan, who were up to the elbows drenched in the blood of the non-Turkish peoples of the Ottoman Empire – Assyrians, Arabs, Greeks and Slavs. They had their own roleplay in organizing and perpetrating the Genocide of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire.

But the Bolsheviks chose another path. Carried away by the unrealistic ideas of the world revolution, the Russian Bolshevik leadership, in pursue of the policy of exporting the socialist revolution, gave an important place to Kemalist Turkey, considering it as an outpost for carrying out the revolution in the east. This totally groundless viewpoint became the reason for the new Russian leadership to give preference to Turkey in the matters of Transcaucasia, Central Asia and the Near East, or at least to seriously consider the political interests of Turkey and reckon with its political, territorial and ethnic claims. The Armenian Question and the Armenian Genocide, getting into its mincer, fell one of the first victims of that policy with all the severe consequences.

The point here is not the friendly inter-state relations between Soviet Russia and Kemalist Turkey – it is the sovereign right of any nation – but that such relations should not affect the elucidation of the tragic pages of other peoples' history and serve a starting point for blocking the access to said tragic history. The so-called "friendly" relations should not be obtained and maintained at the expense of other nations. The Bolshevik leadership made exactly that mistake by adopting such position towards the Armenian Question and the Armenian Genocide. Considering Kemalist Turkey a revolutionary factor, which allegedly helped inflame the fire of the world revolution and spread it in the east, the leaders of Soviet Russia, for the love of the Turkish "revolutionary" factor, not only discouraged, but in every way hindered the very mentioning of the

Armenian Genocide, the attempts to present it as a political issue and make it a subject for official scientific study. They knew perfectly well that the raising of the issue of the Armenian Genocide, or even the allusion to it, would damage Turkey's authority and would strip off its false mask of a "revolutionary outpost" and "factor".

Subsequently, after V. Lenin's death, Moscow threw onto the arena just as false, yet even more dangerous thesis about "Lenin and Kemal's brotherly friendship". For thirty years, 1924-1954, it had become the dominating official standpoint in the external policy of the Soviet Union towards Turkey. At studying the Turkish history, its internal situation or external policy in the scientific centers of the USSR, only allowed was what did not contradict that thesis, same as banned was every word, or article, or monograph, if not complying with this Soviet "concept". The Soviet censorship, embodied in almighty Glavlit, was extremely vigilant and uncompromising on that issue, and would not allow a single lapse.

This time, the Armenian Genocide or, more comprehensively, the Armenian Question fell victim to "Lenin-Kemal" friendship. The viewpoint was promulgated and obtruded upon Armenian historiography that "the Armenian Question has already been solved", and "solved" it was by the Soviet power. The queerest and most unnatural version of "solution" was realized: not only the entire West Armenia with the vilayets of Erzurum, Svaz, Kharberd, Bitlis, Van and Diarbakir were left under the domination of Kemalist Turkey, but the East Armenian province of Kars and the Surmalu region were ceded to Kemalist Turkey, too, while Karabakh and Nakhijevan were surrendered to Azerbaijan – the second Turkish state, which only made its first appearance on the political arena in 1918. After that, the issue of the Armenian Genocide could never again be raised, as the Armenian Question and the Armenian Genocide are two sides of a coin: one is the homeland of Armenians, or the Armenian territories, while the other is the extermination, or the Genocide of Armenians in their own cradle.

Paradoxical is that even after J. Stalin's death, the Soviet leadership did not revise their attitude towards the problem. The Soviet despot, the architect of the Soviet-Turkish relations, died in March, 1953, and in May of that same year V. Molotov – who had been J. Stalin's right hand for decades, and had just resumed the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs, did not hesitate to officially declare and reassure Turkey, that Armenia had no territorial claims to Turkey, within which borders West Armenia

and part of East Armenia lay. It was an unprecedented present to Turkey, a signal, sent by the Soviet leadership to notify that, even after Stalin's death, there was nothing for Turkey to worry about, since no territorial claims were to be expected on behalf of the Soviets.

This meant that the taboo on the Armenian Genocide would persist, and for the researchers that topic would remain beyond the barbed wire.

The second major reason for tabooing the Armenian Genocide was that the Soviet power regarded the Genocide as an inexhaustible dangerous source, nourishing "Armenian nationalism", the origins of which ought to be kept shut. For the Soviet "theoreticians", to allow to study the Armenian Genocide meant to encourage Armenian nationalism and create a fertile environment for its being and flourishing. This contradicted the official Soviet ideology, despite the fact that the study of the history of the Armenian Genocide had nothing in common with nationalism, nor with instigating the latter.

The Armenian Genocide makes integral part of the centuries-old history of the nation that had suffered that tremendous tragedy, and its research is quite logical, as not a single case for any nation to voluntarily renounce its history has been recorded in world history by now. But the Soviet leadership, the "genial" leaders seated in Moscow, in whose policy the fundamentals were "not allowed", persecutions, bans and compulsions, were far from comprehending such delicate points. They found that talking about the Armenian Genocide, the more so – advocating it, meant a manifestation of the specific Armenian nationalism, which might damage the "friendly" Soviet-Turkish relations.

As a result of such approach, the legal study of the Armenian Genocide appeared on the list of the forbidden subjects. Therefore, in Armenian historiography, the years from 1920 to 1950 can be designated as "years of compelled silence" in studying the Armenian Genocide.

The subject in point is Soviet historiography, as the ban, imposed on the study of the Genocide, did not and could not apply to historiography in Armenian Diaspora, neither to foreign – English, French, American, as well as Arab historiography. In the second half of the XX century, related with the newly formed scientific branch – Genocidology, the interest towards the problem of the Armenian Genocide increased. A valuable contribution to it was made by Arab historians.

Despite the taboo, imposed by the Soviet regime during the entire Soviet era, the Armenian Genocide preserved its significance and the

leading place in the historical self-consciousness and national originality of the Armenian people, in the system of national rights and legal claims – waiting for opportune conditions to break out and compel that this problem of Armenian history be scientifically developed – publicly and without restrictions.



Year 1965 proved a turning point for the public recognition and study of the Armenian Genocide in the Soviet Union and in Armenia. The taboo, imposed on it, was removed, and it returned to the legal field. It happened due to the changes, which were taking place in the political and public life and in the ideological sphere in the 1950-1960s in the Soviet Union, Soviet Armenia including. We mean J. Stalin's death, the criticism of the personality cult, the uncrowning of the cruel internal and aggressive foreign policy of Stalin's, the liberalization policy during the so-called Khrushchev thaw, and other positive shifts, enthusiastically accepted by all the peoples in the Soviet Union. A new, relatively tolerant moral and political atmosphere had set in the country; people were able to breathe freely, to speak without fear and out loud about the problems that worried them, the political and national problems including.

The formation of the new moral-political atmosphere had its immediate wholesome effect on raising the problems that troubled the Armenian nation – the problem of the Armenian Genocide in the first place. The Armenian intelligentsia, the students and the young spoke publicly about the Armenian Genocide, for which a great incentive was the upcoming in 1965 50th Anniversary of perpetration of that horrendous crime.

At this point, it is worth to remember the patriotic stand of the leadership of Soviet Armenia, particularly, of the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Armenia Ya. N. Zarobyan. He was bold enough to submit the matter to the Communist leadership of the Soviet Union, and got to the point that the Politbiuro of CPSU passed a special decision on commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. It was a great victory. Indeed, the 50th Anniversary of the Great Genocide was officially commemorated in Armenia on April 24, 1965. On that day, the people – the old and the young, the intelligentsia, workers and farmers poured out into the streets, and the columns, like a river at full

ties flooded the squares, parks and thoroughfares of the capital city of Yerevan. The demonstrators, which rows consisted of Armenia's outstanding intellectuals – scientists, writers, artists, musicians, workers, etc., demanded that the Armenian Genocide be recognized and denounced, the responsible for it be punished and requited, and the confiscated Armenian lands be returned. They chanted: "Punishment of Guilty", "Requital", and "The Lands, the Lands".

Those were blessed historic days and unforgettable moments of all-Armenian rejoicement, the greatest political achievement of which was that the ice of silence around the Armenian Genocide broke. No barbed wires any longer. After that, in the Soviet Union no forces ever had tried, or would ever be able to once again impose a ban on the Armenian Genocide.

The immediate effect of all said was that the doors flung open for the scientific study of the Armenian Genocide. From that day on, the Armenian Genocide has become one of the priority trends for Armenistics and Oriental studies in Armenia. A large-scale scientific investigation of the Armenian Genocide commenced.

The Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Armenia turned into a major center for the study of the Genocide, where, along with Turkologists, serious research work was also conducted by Arabists. Unlike the representatives of other specialties, who mainly focused on the study of Russian, English, French, German, American and other sources, which, certainly, was very important and essential, the Arabists made their subject of research Arab sources and Arab historiography. This produced unexpected results. It opened an entirely new and undiscovered world for us, scholars, expanded our ideas of the Armenian Genocide, revealed all new strata of the mechanisms, scale and consequences of its planning, realizing and perpetrating.

In those years, the author of these lines headed the Department of Arab Countries at the Institute of Oriental Studies of Armenia National Academy of Sciences, and the position of historians, political and public figures, parties, associations and companies in Arab countries became and have remained to date one of the leading spheres of research at the Department.

The first not very big article on the attitude of Arabs towards the Armenian Genocide was written by the author of these lines. It was published in the March issue of the "Sovetakan Hayastan" monthly in

1965, entitled "The Hospitality of the Arab People"¹. In it, the Young Turk policy in organizing and perpetrating the Armenian Genocide is analyzed, and the noble stand towards the Armenian refugees of the Arabs is shown, who reached their helping hand to the passing through their country Armenian exiles.

The article evoked extensive response in Diaspora, and was shortly after published in the "Pages of Literature And Art" monthly in Beirut, which editor and publisher was the Armenian Diaspora's famous intellectual and writer Armen Darian²:

In those stormy and exciting days, our next article was also published in the "Sovetakan Hayastan" monthly, which had become a mouthpiece for the Armenian intelligentsia. The article was devoted to Fayez al-Ghossain's book "The Massacres in Armenia", published back in 1916; it was one of the first very few works on the Armenian Genocide, thanks to which wider circles of the world community became aware of the crime, committed by the Young Turks against Armenians³.

Thus, the study of Arab historiography on the Armenian Genocide had been started in Armenia.

The above articles were followed by a series of other works, written by us and published also in the Arabic language in Arab countries⁴.

In view of the problem under discussion, two works proved of particular significance.

First, in 1999 the researchers of the Institute of Oriental Studies NAS Armenia prepared a collective monograph, which had had no precedence. For the group of authors, the subject of investigation was Turkish, French, English, American, German and Arab historiography about the Armenian Genocide. The work was published in Russian in 1993 under the title "Modern Armenian History in the Works of Contemporary Foreign Authors". For the first time ever, an attempt had been made to

¹ N. Hovhannisyan, *The Hospitality of the Arab People*, "Sovetakan Hayastan", Yerevan, 1965, No. 3.

² "Pages of Literature and Art", Beirut, 1965, No. 5.

³ N. Hovhannisyan, *The Evidences of a Witness*, (about Fayez el Ghossain 's book "Massacres In Armenia"), "Sovetakan Hayastan", Yerevan, 1965, No. 4.

⁴ See N. Hovhannisyan, *The April 24th Slaughters and the Humaneness of Arabs*, "As-Safir", Beirut,

24.04.1980. Same, *The Armenian-Arabic Friendship Ties*, "Ad-Dad", Aleppo, 1986, No. 11-12. Same, *The 1915 Genocide in Arabic History*, "Sada Ararat", Beirut, 1992, No. 6, etc.

sum up the approaches of foreign authors and their assessment of the Armenian Genocide. In that collective monograph, the related with Arab historiography chapter, entitled "Arab Historiography on Modern Armenian History", was written by us⁵. In a sense, it was the summation of the work, performed on the subject by us during the preceding years.

The second work, also of pivotal significance as a summation of our research, was the monograph "The Armenian Genocide: Armenocide"⁶, published in English in 2002, which individual chapters are devoted to the problems of Arab historiography relating with the Armenian Genocide. A separate chapter is devoted to the elucidation of these problems in the second volume of our "History of the Arab Countries"⁷.

Thus, for forty long years, the study of the approaches of Arab historiography to the Armenian Genocide of 1915 has been the focus of our attention. The investigating approach of the Arab authors to the problems of the Armenian Genocide, their efforts to go deep into the causes and nature of that biggest crime of the XX century, which they studied in the context of the racist policy of the sultans and the Young Turks towards the non-Turkish nations in the Ottoman Empire, the elucidation of these extremely important issues have been a scientific trend of top importance for us.

The works accomplished and accumulated during the past years enabled us to come to the point of realizing our long-cherished plan – to put on the reader's table a monographic study, all devoted to the Arab scholars' rich and unique scientific legacy on the Armenian Genocide of 1915, to the disclosure of its importance and significance.

We are grateful to our fortune for this remarkable opportunity to do it by the 90th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

⁵ N. Hovhannisyan, Arab Historiography On the New History Of Armenia – The New History Of Armenia In the Works Of the Contemporary Foreign Authors, (Chapter 5), Yerevan, 1993 (Russian).

⁶ N. Hovhannisyan, The Armenian Genocide. Armenocide", Yerevan, 2002.

⁷ N. Hovhannisyan, History of the Arab Countries, vol. 2, Period of Ottoman Domination, 1516 – 1918, Yerevan, 2004.

**THE MOTIVATION FOR ARAB HISTORIOGRAPHY
TO ADDRESS THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE**

The Armenian Genocide of 1915 was committed in the Ottoman Empire; the initiator and perpetrator of it was the "İttihad ve Terakki" ("Union and Progress") party that came to power in 1908, and is more known as the "Young Turks". This party proved the legal successor of the cruel policy, practiced by the Ottoman sultans throughout centuries, the aim of which was to keep in subjection the Armenian and all the other non-Turkish peoples of the empire, knowing no barriers to maintain the territorial integrity of the empire. The genetic bond between the policy of the sultans and the Young Turks towards the non-Turkish peoples of the country is obvious, with the only difference that the latter employed more atrocious methods in implementing that hideous policy. The Young Turks and their leading felonious group, with Talat, Enver and Cemal at the head, became the executors of the thesis "To solve the Armenian Question through physical extermination of Armenians", formulated by grand vizier, prime-minister of the Ottoman Empire Sayid Kyuchuk pasha back in 1884, then used by sultan Abd al-Hamid II as foundation for his policy. During the 33 years of his rule (1876-1909), this bloodthirsty sultan tried to rigorously carry out that concept, and step by step, through periodic massacres and carnages of Armenians, strived to achieve his ultimate goal, yet did not manage. The continuators of that unfinished work of his were the Young Turks, who raised the policy of physical extermination of Armenians to the level of state policy, by that providing all the grounds to typologically classify the Ottoman Empire as a genocidal state.

This and other related issues made the subject of investigation in Arab historiography.

Naturally, a question arises, why the Arab authors – historians, political scientists, international affairs experts, economists, even as journalists have turned to the problems of the Armenian Genocide, giving

it so much space in their work? In other words, what is the motivation, the incentive, or the driving force for it?

1. THE NOVEL CONTINUATION OF TRADITIONS OF CLASSIC ARAB HISTORIOGRAPHY

The traditions of studying the problems of various historical periods of Armenia and the Armenian nation are rich in Arab historiography, hence it is by far not the first case and not fortuitous at all that it addresses the Armenian Genocide. It is conditioned by the secular historical ties between the two nations and a number of historical-geographic and political factors.

Arabs and Armenians belong to the same geographical area – the Middle East; they are if not immediate neighbors, then close neighboring nations. Over centuries, various contacts had been established between them – political, commercial-economic and cultural – which at times were rather intensive, particularly when their political fates got intertwined, like, for instance, during the historical periods, when the independent Armenian and Arab states existed, or when they appeared within the same state formations. This happened in the I century B.C., when a number of Arab countries – Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Mesopotamia and other areas as far as Egypt, became part of the Armenian Empire under Tigran the Great⁸. This fact is stated in Arab historiography, particularly in Usman at-Turk's "Pages from the Armenian History", in subsections "King Tigran the Great in Damascus" and "King Tigran the Great in Aleppo"⁹. He underscores that Armenia reached the peak of its glory in the reign of Tigran the Great, when other countries were annexed to its territory and "his possessions reached as far as Bahr Ghazvin (the Caspian Sea – N. H.) in the north, Cappadocia in the west, the Iraqi borders in the east, while in the south his domain reached as far as the country of Jews, after he had conquered Phoenicia and Syria"¹⁰.

⁸ H. Manandyan, *Analytical Review of Armenian History*, vol. I, Yerevan, 1944.

⁹ Usman at-Turk, *Safahat min tarikh al-umma al-armaniya* -Pages from the History of Armenian Nation, Aleppo, 1960, p.p. 56-57.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

Fuad Hasan Hafiz, Marwan al-Moudawar and other Arab authors have written about it, too.

In the VII – IX centuries Armenia constituted part of the Arab Caliphate¹¹.

The political fates of Arabs and Armenians interlaced again, when Arabs in the XVI century, more precisely, in 1516, and Armenians of West Armenia in the XVII century, in 1639, appeared within the Ottoman Empire, fell under the yoke of the Turkish sultans.

The rich history of Arab-Armenian relations has been reflected in Arab classic historiography since its formation i.e., since the IX century. The Arab historians – Balazuri, Tabari, Masudi, Maqrizi, Ibn Asir, Ibn Shaddad, Abul Fida and many others, as well as geographers – Istakhri, Ibn Hawqal, Yakut al-Hamavi, Ibn Batuta and others in their manuscripts and traveling notes always turned to the Armenian theme, the history of medieval Armenia. Noteworthy is that some of them, such as Yakut al-Hamavi and Ibn Batuta had been to Armenia and committed to paper all they had seen and heard.

These are very important sources that come to enrich the basis of source-study of Armenology and contribute to the sphere of study of Armenian history.

This, however, was not a one-way phenomenon. Prior to that, beginning from the VII century, i.e., from the origination of Islam and formation of the Arab state, Armenian chroniclers Sebeos, Ghevond, Tovma Artzruni, Hovhannes Draskhanakertsi, Mkhitar Anetsi, Vardan Areveltsi and others turned to the Arab theme and left valuable information about Arabs, their religion, history, lifestyle, policy and the Arab-Armenian relations.

The traditions of Arab historiography, which originators had been the founding fathers of classic Arab historiography, last up to the present. We can state with confidence that the interest of Arab chroniclers and historians towards Armenia, Armenians, their history and culture, i.e. to the Armenian theme has not weakened for over eleven centuries; on the contrary, in the XX century, particularly since its second half through the beginning of the XXI century said interest has noticeably increased.

¹¹ N. Hovhannissyan, *History of the Arab Countries*, vol. I. From VII Century to 1516. Yerevan, 2003.

In fact, we can say that today, before our eyes, Arab Armenology is being shaped, taking its deserving and rightful place among the ranks of world Armenology.

The Arab historians, preserving the traditions of Arab historiography, in the course of time introduce an essential innovation into studying Armenian history. Classic Arab historiography used to refer to Armenia as an entirety for the simple reason that such was the Armenian Land *per se*. Contemporary Arab historians, when studying modern history of Armenia and Armenian people, put more emphasis on one sector of it – West Armenia, which can be explained by two factors. Firstly, from 1639 Armenia stopped being united and broke into East Armenia, later integrated into Persia, and West Armenia, which made part of the Ottoman Empire. Secondly, under the existing conditions, the Arab scholars give preference to West Armenia, conquered by the Ottoman Empire, which part made also the Arab countries, conquered by Turkey even earlier, in 1516. Consequently, the problems of West Armenia being closer to them, more understandable was its history, too.

So when the study of the Armenian Genocide by Arab historiography is viewed from the positions of the latter's centuries-old traditions, or analyzed within the scopes of said traditions, the motivation of contemporary Arab historiography appears quite rightful.

2. THE INTERNAL, OR ARAB MOTIVATION

Addressing the Armenian Question and the Genocide by Arab authors has yet another motivation, which we would call internal, or Arab motivation.

The Arab nations, having regained independence and established their sovereign national states, form their national historiography with novel approaches to the study of the national historical problems and elucidation of the key questions of the past. Reassessment of the values of various phases and problems of Arab history is taking place; the national concept of Arab history is being formed, based on new approaches. It is a natural process, observed almost in all the nations, having gained their independence after the years of colonial yoke.

Arabs try to apprehend the obscure folds of their history, where of primary importance is to find the answer to the question *Why Arabs*, since

creators of a high and original civilization, known as Arab-Islamic civilization, found themselves in the labyrinth of stagnation and backwardness; what the causes of Arabs' political, social-economic and cultural backwardness were. Bringing up these crucial for all Arabs issues for discussion, Arab scholars arrived at the conclusion that the causes for lagging behind the historical progress should be sought in the 400 years of the Ottoman domination, which, they believe, proved disastrous for Arabs.

In the opinion of Arab historians, economists and sociologists, particularly disastrous

were the years of Abd al-Hamid II's reign, characterized by them as years of *zulum*, and thereafter, the period of the Young Turks' rule, 1908-1918, when Arabs were facing the danger of physical extermination.

Nonetheless, according to Arab authors, they will never find exhaustive and persuasive answers to these questions, should they confine strictly within the Arab circles and build their concept solely on the Arab materials. They manifest prudence, broad-mindedness and, let us say, even wisdom in that matter. They realize that the study of the key issues of Arab national history will be incomparably more efficient and convincing, if carried out in the all-Ottoman context, proceeding from the irrefutable baseline thesis that all the non-Turkish peoples in the Ottoman Empire, Muslim or Christian, were in the same severe political and social-economic conditions, were subjected to the same brutal ruling regime and fell victims of violence and tyranny. They were looked upon by the Turkish ruling elite as "raya" – a herd.

Thus, the Arab researchers are convinced, that every step, taken towards studying the state of any nation, subjected to Turkish sultans, in this case – Armenians, is a step towards studying Arab history, too. The study of the policy of the Ottoman government towards the non-Turkish peoples, the Armenian Question in the first place, will help Arabs to deeper and more comprehensively study their own history, the more so as during World War I, they are convinced, the Young Turks were planning to exterminate Arabs as an *ethnos* together with Armenians.

This makes the peculiarity of studying by Arabs of the history of Armenians and other nations of the empire – Assyrians and Greeks – in the period of Abd al-Hamid and the Young Turks, and the distinction from the approaches of previous periods.

If classic, or medieval Arab historiography involved all the aspects of Armenian history – politics, culture, economy, religion, lifestyle, etc., contemporary Arab historiography does not keep to that principle, being more interested in the political and legal state of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire; in the national policy of the Ottoman sultans and the Young Turks towards Armenians and other non-Turkish nations; in the causes of Armenian massacres, and the like. Such approach should most likely be explained by the fact, that the aforementioned issues equally concerned Arabs, who suffered from persecution and violence of the Ottoman rulers like Armenians, Greeks, Assyrians, Bulgarians, Serbians and other peoples. Despite being Muslim, they were as deprived of any rights as any of the mentioned peoples.

The study of the internal and national policy of the Ottoman rulers by the example of the Armenian reality, according to Arab historians and political scientists, should help them make a better substantiated analysis of the pan-Turkist and racist essence of said policy.

Thus, the study of the Armenian Genocide and of the history of the last quarter of the

XIX – the first two decades of the XX century is supposed to help Arabs to more profoundly understand their own history of that same period.

Arab historiography seeks answers to its own questions in the history of the Armenian Genocide, its preceding and succeeding periods.

In our opinion, that is a methodologically correct choice.

3. IN THE FOLDS OF ARAB NATIONAL MEMORY

Arabs are probably the only people, who had nationally eye-witnessed the tremendous tragedy, occurred to Armenians during World War I. It has been impressed in their memories. They have not forgotten it. Therefore, among the motivations for Arab historiography to elucidate the Armenian Genocide, the historical memory of Arabs has its particular place. The historical memory of Arabs about the Armenian Genocide is an incentive signal for studying the first crime of the XX century, and attaches a special shade to Arab historiography, increasing its value, due to which Arab historiography stands out and takes a special place among

the other nations' and peoples' works, devoted to the Armenian Genocide, not duplicating any of them.

One can object that, besides Arabs, the Armenian Genocide was also eye-witnessed by Turks, Kurds and Circassians. Yes, true it is, yet with a "slight" difference. They "eye-witnessed" the Armenian massacres as performers. By casting, Turks were starring, while Kurds and Circassians were their foremost assistants. This, however, does not diminish their own share of felony and guilt.

Arabs proved involuntary eye-witnesses: up to the Young Turks' plans, one part of Armenians was to be murdered in their own residences, while the other part was to be forcibly exiled towards the Arab countries in the hope that the Syrian and Iraqi deserts and Muslim Arabs would carry on with their bloody work. And so they acted – in compliance with their elaborated and adopted plan.

The caravans of exiled Armenians did appear in the Arab countries, crossing the Arab territories, deserts, towns and villages before the eyes of horrified Arab Bedouins and fellahs. The inhabitants of Deir az-Zor, Ras ul-Ain, Meskene, Aleppo, Mosul, Baquba, Baghdad, Nahr al-Umar, of the settlements along the banks of the Shatt al-Arab became eye-witnesses of the Armenian Calvary. For Armenians, these are not mere geographic names, but speaking witnesses of their tragedy.

Arabs, however, were not indifferent and unsympathetic eye-witnesses and observers. A great many of them, having neglected the strict Turkish orders, by which any aid shown to the Armenian caravans crossing the Arab territories was forbidden under pain of death, courageously offered their help to the exhausted, starving and sick Armenians, thereby saving many-many lives, especially of children. For that, many honest Arabs paid the Turk executioners with their own lives.

All of these – the horrifying scenes, the doomed to death defenseless Armenians, the dreadful atrocities of the fanatical Turkish mob, had left their imprint in the historical memory of Arabs – the common people and officials, intellectuals and Bedouins. The impact was so deep and hard to forget, that all the accumulated and impressed in the memory of Arabs is being returned to us, Armenians, through the studies of the historians of that kind and noble people, dedicated to the elucidation of the Armenian Genocide and of the Ottoman rulers' racist and misanthropic national policy.

This motivation for contemporary Arab historiography to address the Great Armenian Massacre is most convincing.

4. THE QUESTION OF APPEARING OF ARMENIAN MASSES IN ARAB COUNTRIES

Among the reasons for Arab historiography to advert on the Armenian Genocide, its own place has the question, that worries the new generations of Arabs: why and how have thousands of Armenians, numbering close half a million in the 50-90s of the XX century, appeared and settled down in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates and other Arab states?

For the generation of Arabs, that had eye-witnessed the Genocide of Armenians of 1915 and the appearance of Armenian refugees in the Arab territories, there was no such question. For them, everything was fairly clear and understandable. Further, after they had abandoned this world and in came a new generation, especially after World War II, the latter have posed a number of questions, such as: who are Armenians; where is their homeland; what was the reason for them to appear in their own homelands?

These questions sound natural also because Armenians are not a passive nation, who would choose to remain unnoticed in the shade. On the contrary, they play active part in the state, political, social, economic, cultural and intellectual life in the hospitable Arab countries. Suffice it to remark that they hold six parliamentary seats in the Lebanese, and one in the Syrian parliaments, ministerial offices in the Lebanese government; they have their own solid educational and cultural institutions, their church, compatriotic unions, and so on and so forth. All this is quite impressive and arouses the interest and even bewilderment among those Arabs, who have no adequate knowledge about history.

Many Arab authors, aware of this reality, thought it appropriate to satisfy the curiosity of the new generation of Arabs and their inquiring minds concerning the issue, which is not of a secondary importance for them.

This fact, too, has encouraged the Arab scholars to turn to the Armenian massacres and the Armenian Genocide. They are getting to the roots of the problem, since otherwise no exhaustive answers can be given.

Hence, they believe that the first tide of West Armenians fled to the Arab countries in 1894-1896, when sultan Abd al-Hamid II unleashed the Armenian massacres in Constantinople, Sasun and other areas of West Armenia.

But the major reason for the overwhelming part of Armenians to settle down in the Arab countries, as stated by Arab authors, was the Genocide of 1915 and the policy of forcible deportation of Armenians, employed by the Ottoman executioners during that period. So, the Arab historians conclude, Armenians did not leave their homeland and settle down in the Arab states voluntarily, but as a result of the Ottoman government's policy of persecution, violence and massacre, consistently applied against Armenians, which they also practiced against Arabs. This is what they have been trying to explain to the younger generations of Arabs. And that is the reason why Armenians were welcomed, helped and supported in the Arab states both by the Arab population and the Arab governments.

These questions were explicated in detail in the works by such Arab authors as Fuad Hasan Hafiz, Marwan al-Moudawar, Masud Dahir, Adnan al-Sayed Husayn and others. In his work on national minorities in the Arab states, A. Hourani dedicated a separate section to the Armenian communities¹².

Thus, we may say that the fact of addressing the Armenian Genocide by Arab historiography is quite reasoned and necessitated. It is not a single action of an individual author at an amateurish level, but a thoroughly developed and well-considered scientific trend, which first of all proceeds from the historical necessity of a more profound, comprehensive and convincing study and elucidation of the questions of Arab history proper.

Quite an unique and remarkable phenomenon is being observed: addressing the Armenian Genocide furthers the more substantial study of Arab history, which in its turn furthers the more profound analysis of the Armenian Genocide.

¹² A. Hourani. *The National Minorities in the Arab World*, London, 1947.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE WORKS BY ARAB AUTHORS ON THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Having familiarized with Arab historiography and the works by Arab authors on the Armenian Genocide, we may assert that they differ by their nature, by the issues discussed, and by their scope. Said difference, however, does not concern the overall assessment of the Armenian Genocide. In terms of assessing the Armenian Genocide, its reasons, nature, perpetrators, offenders and the responsible for it, they are on the whole unanimous, and, in our view, the problems are elucidated from quite a correct standpoint.

So that difference only and solely refers to the place, given to the Armenian Genocide in the works by Arab scholars, the scopes and frames of the questions analyzed, the sources and literature referred to, the depth of elucidation, and the like.

In this respect, their works can be divided into three groups.

1. WORKS WHOLLY AND DIRECTLY DEVOTED TO THE INVESTIGATION OF THE PROBLEMS OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

The first group of works is not the biggest in number, but in terms of the questions discussed, the depth and the audacity of the viewpoints suggested, it is unmistakably the most valuable one. These works are mostly in Arabic, some of them – also in French and English, and were published in Cairo, Damascus, Beirut, Baghdad, Aleppo, Latakia, Saida and elsewhere.

Among the works in this group of classification, chronologically, the palm bears the Syrian author Fayez al-Ghossein and his work entitled "The Massacres in Armenia", published in 1916. This work is not only the first in Arab historiography, but one of the first ever in European,

American, Russian, and even Armenian historiography, written and published during the hot days of the Genocide.

The author Fayez al-Ghossein was an Arab Bedouin, coming from the influential Salut ashirat, or tribe, in Hauran region in Syria. For his time, he was rather well-educated, went to special school for the children of tribal chieftains in Istanbul. For three and a half years he held the position of a kaimakam, or governor of the Armenian vilayet of Mamurat Aziziya, or Kharberd. This gave him an exceptional opportunity to familiarize with the Armenian Question and the policy of the Ottoman authorities towards Armenians. Later, he works as lawyer in Damascus, then becomes a member of Hauran Board of Lawyers. In the days of World War I, in 1915, Fayez al-Ghossein receives an order to leave for Erzurum. When he gets to Diarbakir, it appears, that the Russian troops are deployed near Erzurum, which makes him stay in Diarbakir. Here, as he relates in his book, he is arrested for no reason, spends a month in prison, then is set free. Yet, he is forced to stay in Diarbakir for six months and a half. Apparently, we owe exactly to this incident that some time later Fayez al-Ghossein committed to paper all he had, as he put it, "seen and heard", and became the author of his well-known book, which presents an exceptional source for studying the Armenian Genocide. "I have seen and heard from reliable sources", he writes, 'all what was happening to Armenians'¹³.

While in Diarbakir, he sees the miserable caravans of the Armenian refugees, coming from Erzurum, Kharberd, Bitlis, Van and other places, attended by bloodthirsty Turkish soldiers. To what he has seen, he adds trustworthy facts, obtained from the ashirat leaders, who were very well aware of the Young Turks' policy, their plans, and knew what horrid atrocities were committed against Armenians in vilayets, provinces and on the roads. Based on that reliable information, he writes, "whoever reads this book, should know that what is written here is true; it is only a very small part of the barbarities, exercised by Turks against the rights of the Armenian people"¹⁴.

¹³ Fayez al-Ghossein, *Mazabih fi Arminiya- 'Al-Masadir al-arabiya havla jarima ibadat al- arman'* - The Massacres in Armenia "Sources on the Crime of the Armenian Genocide", Beirut, 1988, p. 49.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

The author manages to leave Diarbakir for Basra, then Bombay, India, where he accomplishes his work on July, 21, 1916, and issues that same year. Supposedly, the interest towards the book was quite intense, as in 1917-1918 it was already translated and published in French and English.

The work came out under different titles. As we have already mentioned, in Arabic it was entitled "The Massacres in Armenia". The book was translated into Armenian and published under the same title, with the words "Evidences of an Eyewitness" added¹⁵. In French, it came out under the title "The Evidence of an Arab Muslim on Innocence and Massacres of Armenians"¹⁶.

One of the secrets of the success of this book is that, presenting evidences of an eye-witness, it acquired the value of a prime source.

Typologically, to this group of classification also belong three works by a famous Arab historian Moussa Prince, which by their content and the elucidation of the Armenian Genocide supplement each other. The first is the French edition of his voluminous work (about 600 pages) "An Unpunished Genocide: The Armenocide"¹⁷, which he wrote in 1967-1973. It is noteworthy that, as he remarks, he started working on these works on April, 24, 1967, which is the day when all Armenians around the world commemorate as the beginning of the Armenian Genocide.

There is a concise version of that work, too, which the author especially prepared and presented at the II International Congress on Prevention of Crime, held in Paris on July, 10-14, 1967¹⁸.

And, finally, the basic content and the principal questions of these two works in the French language have found their reflection in the work "The Massacres of Armenians: Crime against Humanity"¹⁹, issued in Arabic.

These works of Moussa Prince are of great significance for the study of the Armenian Genocide. Here examined are such key issues as the

¹⁵ Faayz el-Ghosein. *Massacres in Armenia (Evidence of an Eyewitness)*, Cairo, 1960.

¹⁶ F. el- Ghosein. *Temoignage d'un Arabe musulman sur l'innocence et le massacre des Armeniens*, Bombay, 1917.

¹⁷ Moussa Prince. *Un genocide impuni: L' Armenocide*, 1975.

¹⁸ Moussa Prince. *Un genocide impuni. L' Armenocide. Introduction. Avec la collaboration de Marie-Ange M. Prince*, 1967, Heidelberg Press, Lebanon.

¹⁹ Moussa Prince. *Majazar al-arman: Jaraim dida al-insaniya - Massacres of Armenians: Crime against Humanity*, Aleppo, 1996. (In Arabic the word "majazar" means "massacre", "slaughter", but is also used in the meaning of "genocide" - N.H.).

Armenocide during the Hamid regime, the Young Turks and the Armenocide, the responsibility of Turks, Germans, Austrians and the Entente states, the consequences of the Armenocide, etc.

In our view, Moussa Prince's greatest and the most valuable contribution to the field of study of the Armenian Genocide is that he was the first to put into circulation the term "Armenocide" by analogy with "Genocide", which fully, comprehensively and precisely reflects the essence, nature, distinctive features and peculiarities of the Armenian Genocide.

To the analysis of the problems of the Armenian Genocide devoted are a series of works by the Lebanese historian and political figure Salih Zahr ad-Din. He examines that matter first of all in the context of Turanism, forcible Turkization of Armenians and Arabs into Turks and the pan-Turkist policy of the Ottoman authorities. This is the general content of his work "Armenians and Arabs between Turanism and Zionism"²⁰, where he has devoted separate chapters to the relations of the Young Turks and Arabs, Armenians and the Young Turks. Another work by this author touches upon this problem, too, where he analyzes the Armenian-Arab relations considering the likeness of their fates, for both had been long under the Ottoman domination²¹. In these studies the scholar conducts concurrent examination of the key problems of the history of Arabs and Armenians in the late XIX – early XX centuries, which certainly increases their scientific significance.

Among Salih Zahr ad-Din's works, prominent is his voluminous study, devoted to the policy of the Ottoman authorities in West Armenia and the position of the Great Powers, which embraces quite a long period – from the last quarter of the XIX through the first quarter of the XX century²². Here, he analyzes the Armenian Question and the Armenian Genocide in their integrity, and examines these two phenomena in their interrelation. The author's speculations are worth attention for their solid

²⁰ Salih Zahr ad-Din, *Al-arman va al-arab bayna turania va sihyuniya- Armenians and Arabs between Turanism and Zionism*, Beirut, 1994.

²¹ Salih Zahr ad-Din, *As-sadaka al-arabiya al-armaniya va al-masir al-mushtarak - Arab-Armenian Friendship and Common Fate*, Beirut, 1994.

²² Salih Zahr ad-Din, *Siyasa al-huqumat al-usmaniya fi Arminiya al-gharbiya va mavkif al-kuva al-duvaliya minha- The Policy of the Ottoman Empire in West Armenia and the Position of International Forces Towards It*, Beirut, 1996. This work is his doctoral thesis, which he defended at the Scientific Council of the Institute of Oriental Studies of NAS RA, and was awarded the requested scientific degree.

logic, based on the efficient application and analysis of the facts and sources.

The abstract of this work, which was the author's doctoral thesis, was issued in Armenian²³. The author worded his approach towards the question under discussion as follows, "The Ottoman government had proved unable to assimilate the Armenian and Arab peoples in a civilized way and by policy of culture, because Turks lack civilization, while Arabs and Armenians had had outstanding culture, their own statehood and high civilization. For that very reason, Turks first of all wanted to Turkify and assimilate the nations at a higher cultural level – Armenians, Arabs, Greeks, etc."²⁴.

This is an extremely important observation of a conceptual value.

The work by a Syrian author Naim al-Yaffi is also worth attention²⁵. It presents not only the author's own position towards the Armenian Genocide, but also the Arab public opinion. Besides, when discussing the causes of the Armenian Question and, related with it, the possibility of commitment of the Armenian Genocide, al-Yaffi presents his own view, which in many ways differs from those accepted in Arab historiography. We will address it in the relevant section of this work.

A contemporary Egyptian historian Muhammad Rifat al-Imam is the author of several works devoted to the history of Egyptian Armenians, the Armenian Question and the Armenian Genocide. He lectures at Egyptian University, is the editor-in-chief of the "New Egypt" magazine, editor-in-chief of the "Arev" ("Sun") magazine in Arabic, on the pages of which outstanding Egyptian historians, political and cultural figures publish interesting articles on various aspects of Armenian history, science and culture and the Armenian-Arab historical-cultural relations.

In 2002, his new work came out, where he analyzes the Armenian Question, its developments and transformations beginning from the Congress of Berlin of 1878 up to the Conference of Lausanne of 1923²⁶.

²³ Salih Fares Zahr ad-Din. *The Policy of the Ottoman Government in West Armenia And the Position of the Great Powers towards the Armenian Question (end of the XIX-first quarter of the XX century)*, Yerevan, 1994.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²⁵ Naim al-Yaffi, *Majazar al-arman va mavkif ar-ray al am al-arabi minha - The Armenian Genocide and the Position of Arab Public Opinion on It*, Al-Lataqiya, 1992.

²⁶ Muhammad Rifat al-Imam, *Al-kadiya al-armaniya fi duvlati al-usmaniya. 1878-1923 - The Armenian Question in the Ottoman Empire. 1878-1923*, Cairo, 2002.

This interesting study consists of three chapters: "Hamidists and Armenians: 1878-1909", "Ittehadists and Armenians: 1909-1918" and "Kemalists and Armenians: 1919-1923". The titles of the chapters suggest the scope of the analyzed questions and their chronological coverage. In view of the question under discussion, particularly significant are the first two chapters, where the detailed analysis of the origination of the Armenian Question and the way the international powers exploited it is given, as well as the Armenian massacres of 1894-1896, the emergence and evolution of Turanism, the Armenian Genocide as tragedy, etc. The study is grounded on the irrefutable idea, worded by the author himself: the genocide against the Armenian people, committed by the Ottoman leaders in the times of Abd al-Hamid, the Young Turks and Kemal, was to establish a Turanian state, basing on the principle "one nation - one religion"²⁷.

Thematically, a unique place is occupied by Adnan al-Sayed Husayn's "The Right of Self-Determination: The Armenian Question as an Example"²⁸. The author chose to study the Armenian Question and the Armenian Genocide from the standpoint of international law, first of all - from the standpoint of the right of self-determination of nations. He analyzes and assesses such problems as the Armenian Question and the interests of the Great Powers, the Treaty of San Stefano, the Congress of Berlin, the stand of international law towards massacres, the retreat of the Great Powers from their commitments, exemplified by the Treaties of Sevres and Lausanne, etc.

Noteworthy is that, as a most typical example of meeting the terms of one of the fundamental principles of international law - the right of self-determination, Adnan al-Sayed Husayn brought the Armenian Question. Consequently, the Armenian Genocide was the most brutal violation of that principal international law, committed by the Ottoman authorities in the years of their rule.

By nature, Adnan Husayn's work is a novelty among the works of Arab authors devoted to the Armenian Genocide, which fact increases its scientific significance.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 9

²⁸ Adnan al-Sayed Husayn, Hak takrir al-masira. Al-kadiya al-armaniya numuzajan - The Right of Self-Determination. The Armenian Question as an Example, Beirut, 1998.

And, finally, wholly dedicated to the Armenian Genocide are the published in Jerusalem Ilyas Zananiri's work²⁹ and the works of other Arab authors, by which each of them contributed to the study of the Armenian Genocide, enriched the investigation of that problem with new aspects, revealed new phenomena, put into circulation new sources and facts, thanks to which the cornerstone of the scientific theory on the Armenian Genocide has become stronger and steadier.

We would like to turn to one more publication, that is, the III volume of "Armenians in the Islamic Encyclopedia", which contains numerous encyclopedic articles on Armenians, Armenia, its history, geographic regions, population, culture and other issues, as any encyclopedia does. From that viewpoint, this volume does not present anything new, especially that most of the articles are translated from English, French and German³⁰.

Yet, it has a rather interesting Preface, entitled "Arabs and Armenians", which belongs to the pen of an Arab historian Umar al-Dakak. He devotes an ample space to the historiographic problems, and notes that the interest of Arabs towards Armenians and their history grew during World War I. He points out the works by Arab authors, among them Fayez al-Ghossein, Asad Dagher, Marwan al-Moudawar, Fuad Hasan Hafiz and others, who have addressed modern and recent Armenian history, and makes valuable comments³¹.

Reviewing the interconnected Armenian-Arab relations, Umar al-Dakak also adverts on the works of Armenian historians, devoted to Arab history, and grades them highly. He especially singles out the works by "Nikolay Hovhannisyán, Aram Ter-Ghevondyan, Yervand Qasuni" and others³², with the intention to show the Arab reader that not only Arabs write about Armenian history, but Armenians, too, devote whole works to the elucidation of the problems that Arabs face.

²⁹ Ilyas Zananiri. *The Tragedy of the Nation*. Al-Kuds al-Arabi, 1985.

³⁰ *Al-arman fi dairati al-maarif al-islamiya*. Mujalad as-salis - Armenians in the Islamic Encyclopedia, volume 3. Cairo, 1992.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 21-28

³² *Armenians in the Islamic Encyclopedia*, page 25.

2. ANALYSIS OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE IN THE WORKS BY ARAB AUTHORS ON ARMENIAN HISTORY

The second in the classification of the works by Arab historians on the Armenian Genocide are the works by Arab authors, devoted to the study of Armenian history in general, within which scope they also discuss the problem of the Armenian Genocide.

As a rule, these works are rather comprehensive in terms of the discussed material and chronology. They usually cover Armenian history from the ancient times until the present.

In compliance with this principle is written the voluminous work "Armenians in the Course of History" by the Syrian author Marwan al-Moudawar, which consists of seven sections, each containing several chapters (it totals 716 pages)³³.

Marwan al-Moudawar is a real intellectual. He studied law at the University of Damascus, continued his education in Budapest, Hungary, thereafter in the USA, graduating from Colorado University.

In the author's "Dedication" it says that the book is written "with empathy for the peoples of the world, deprived of civil rights, the Armenian people in particular", in belief that it will serve its primary goal - "to give the Arabs and all other free and unprejudiced peoples, no matter where they are, a clear notion of Armenian history"³⁴. At the same time, the author is sure that his book will contribute to the fraternal ties of Arabs and Armenians, "furthering their mutual cognition"³⁵.

Marwan al-Moudawar gave a clear definition of his objectives in the "Author's Word". He purposed to write the complete history of Armenia and the Armenian people, which by that time had not been done in Arabic and, by doing this, "to fill up the gap in Arab literature"³⁶. In this way, he tried to give the Arab reader the requisite knowledge and information about Armenians as a nation, their country and state, stressing that, in

³³ Marwan al-Moudawar, *Al-arman abra al-tarikh - Armenians Throughout History*, Beirut, 1982.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 5

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 7

reaching that goal, his approach was "historically absolute and objective"³⁷.

Having noted all this, Marwan al-Moudawar notes that "he found it important to give a large space to the Armenian Question"³⁸. The author also says that he analyzes that question by two levels. The first is the local level, which in his assessment is the period, when Armenians were within the Ottoman Empire, in the XIX and the beginning of the XX centuries, and were subjected to the violence and torture by the Ottoman government. The second is the international level, the period, when the Armenian Question is discussed in accordance with international law.

The author of that valuable book points out another important fact of principal significance. He analyzes the Armenian-Arab relations, emphasizing the unanimity of their attitude towards the policy of the Ottoman Empire, applied to them, i.e. the "policy of Turanism towards Armenians and the policy of Turkization towards Arabs"³⁹.

These conceptual viewpoints constitute the grounds of those sections of Marwan al-Moudawar's work, where the point at issue is the Armenian Question and the Armenian Genocide.

In terms of structure and choice of material for study, on the same principles is anchored the work by Egyptian author Fuad Hasan Hafiz, lawyer by profession, who had worked in Cairo as prosecutor for many years, a qualified international law expert⁴⁰. The author study embraces quite a long historical period – from the ancient times through the Soviet period, making history, economy, science and culture of Soviet Armenia a subject for consideration (the book totals 576 pages).

Out of five sections of this work, two are about conquering West Armenia by the Ottoman Empire, the history of origination of the Armenian Question, the policy of sultans and the Young Turks towards Armenians, explication of the nature of pan-Turkism and of the danger it presented for the Armenian people, the Armenian Genocide, which he considers crime not only against Armenians, but against humanity per se, and other problems.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.10

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 12

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *Terikh ash-shaabi al-armani munzu al-badayati hatta al-yaum – The History of Armenian People from Beginning to Present*, Cairo, 1986.

Fuad Hasan Hafiz, like Marwan al-Moudawar and other Arab historians, when saying Armenian Genocide do not mean the events of 1915, but also the slaughters and massacres, committed by sultan Abd al-Hamid II. He underlines that in this work, "one of the primary goals is the study of the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman state in the period of Abd al-Hamid II, starting from the last quarter of the XIX century, dwelling particularly on the Genocide of 1915"⁴¹. He believes that not only the Armenians of the six Armenian vilayets in East Anatolia, but almost all Armenians in the empire underwent the Genocide. The interesting point is that, within the scope of the policy of the Genocide, the Egyptian scholar also regards the fact that "the new Turkish state (Kemalist – N. H.) annexed part of East Armenia, having ratified the Treaty of Aleksandropol, signed with the Yerevan Republic in 1920"⁴².

Fuad Hasan Hafiz elucidates these issues against the general background of the Ottoman government's internal and national policy, closely correlating the Armenian Question with the national issues of the other non-Turkish peoples of the empire, Arabs in particular.

The Armenian-Arab friendly relations were also duly elucidated in the work of the Egyptian author.

The sources this work is based on are rather extensive. It is because the author knows Russian and, apart from the sources in Arabic, English and French, he also made use of Russian sources, as well as works by some Armenian historians, published in Russian⁴³.

The work of Fuad Hasan Hafiz, written in keeping to scientific principles and from impartiality standpoint, is a serious contribution to general Armenian history, particularly – to the study of the problems of the Armenian Genocide.

Worth attention is the study "Pages from the History of Armenian Nation" by the Syrian Arab historian Usman at-Turq⁴⁴. This is the first voluminous work by the Arab author. Though by the frames of the analyzed questions and, sometimes, by the depth of elucidation it yields

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 5

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ In 2002 we met with Fuad Hasan Hafiz in Cairo, where during a detailed talk he noted that he admired Armenian history with its heroic pages about preserving the national identity and authenticity, the high cultural values.

⁴⁴ Usman at-Turq, *Safahat min tarikh al-umma al armaniya – Pages from the History of Armenian Nation*, Aleppo, 1960.

to the other two works mentioned by us, nonetheless, its significance and usefulness for the study of the Armenian Genocide is beyond doubt.

Analyzing this issue, Usman at-Turq especially dwelt on the German sources, giving them a particular place, because during World War I, when the Armenian Genocide was committed, Germany was Turkey's ally and had a great influence on it. He devoted a separate sub-section to the Germany's position towards the Armenian Genocide. He examines one by one the positions of the other Great Powers towards the first Genocide of the XX century.

Usman at-Turq's work comes to enrich our notion about the Great Armenian Massacre.

Let us turn to two more works.

The first is the already mentioned work by Salih Zahr ad-Din: "Armenians: People and Problem"⁴⁵, in which, along with the historical path passed by Armenians, the author also reflects upon the condition of Armenians during Abd al-Hamid's years of zulum and the rule of the Young Turks; explicates the causes of the Armenian Genocide, the issues of complicity of the perpetrators, etc. He particularly evolves the idea that Armenians had given no reasons to the Ottoman rulers to be treated that barbarically. "Armenians, as well as Arabs," Salih Zahr ad-Din writes, "resolutely resisted Turkization in order to maintain their language, culture, customs and traditions"⁴⁶. Armenians, the author puts it, "demanded a life free of persecutions"⁴⁷.

Such was their "fault".

The second work, which will conclude this sub-section of the studies on the Armenian Genocide by Arab authors, is Samir Arbash' valuable study "Armenia: Land and People"⁴⁸. Here, ample space is given to the geography of Armenia, the ethnogenesis of Armenians, issues of old and medieval Armenian history, Armenian-Arab relations, etc. In view of the problem that interests us, most valuable are the sections which discuss such key issues as the conquest of West Armenia by the Ottoman Empire and the state of Armenians in it; Armenians and Abd al-Hamid II; the

⁴⁵Salih Zahr ad-Din, *Al-Arman: shaab va kadiya – Armenians: Nation and Problem*, Beirut, 1988.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, page 95.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸Samir Arbash, *Arminiya: ard va shaab – Armenia: Land and Nation*, Beirut, 1991.

Young Turk revolt of 1908, the Great Massacre, or the Genocide (the author uses the term *al-mazabih al-qubra* – the Great Massacre).

This work contains a number of interesting observations. We will dwell on two of them. The first refers to the position of Armenians towards the so-called revolution of the Young Turks. "In the beginning", the author writes, "Armenians welcomed the revolution as they thought it would put an end to their persecutions, and they would be granted freedom"⁴⁹. This political naivety of Armenians cost them dear.

Here is the second noteworthy observation by Samir Arbash. It concerns the secret decision of the Young Turk leadership to massacre Armenians. He notes that "in 1910 in Salonika, the congress of the "Ittehad ve Terakki" party was convened, which passed a secret decision to massacre the Armenians in the Ottoman state, this decision being the first step on the way to the Great Armenian Massacre"⁵⁰.

The works by Arab authors on Armenian history in the second classification group, the issues brought up, the analysis and viewpoints of Arab historians and lawyers constitute a considerable contribution to the study of the Armenian Genocide.

3. THE PROBLEMS OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE IN THE WORKS OF ARAB AUTHORS ABOUT ARAB COUNTRIES

This group of works, by classification, makes the third group of researches of Arab authors on the Armenian Genocide. The peculiarity of this group is that the works, belonging here, contain details from both the first and the second subgroups, on the one hand, and they are very closely connected with the problems of Arab history of the late XIX – first two decades of the XX centuries, on the other. At times, the history of these two nations under the Ottoman domination is presented literally intertwined. This becomes most evident when they analyze such questions as Abd al-Hamid's *zulum*, pan-Turkism, forcible assimilation of the non-Turkish nations of the empire, deportation of Armenians and Arabs by the Young Turks during World War I, physical annihilation of the Armenian and Arab national and political figures, etc.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

In this subgroup of classification, in the first place the prominent Egyptian Arab historian Amin Sayid's works should be mentioned, well known not only to Arabs, but also to foreign specialists and readers, the more so as some of his works have been translated into foreign languages. In this series, his "The Great Arab Revolt" three-volume study stands out, particularly the III volume⁵¹. Here, an utterly genuine description is given of the nightmarish reality that reigned in the Ottoman Empire during the rule of the Young Turks, including the period of World War I; shown is the man-hating policy of the Ottoman rulers towards Arabs, Armenians and other non-Turkish peoples, which helps a lot to understand the motivations of the Armenian Genocide.

The other work by Amin Sayid is also of great interest and has been translated and published in Russian⁵². The author, who had an easy access to numerous Turkish sources and was very well aware of the secrets of the Young Turk policy, notes that during World War I the Istanbul rulers "decided that the time is ripe to put an end to two powerful national movements – the movements of Arabs in Syria, Iraq and Hijaz, and the Armenian movement in East Anatolia"⁵³. In the extirpation of Armenians he directly accuses Talat, who, as Amin Sayid stresses, "headed the campaign for annihilating Armenians"⁵⁴.

Among these works its unique place has Asad Muflih Daghir's study "The Revolt of Arabs". It was first published in 1916 in Egypt, then in 1989 in Aleppo⁵⁵. The author had been an active participant of the Arab liberation movement against the Ottoman domination. In his work, the author dwells extensively upon the Armenian Question, so extensively that doctor Umar al-Dakak considered it "a work devoted to the Arab and Armenian problems"⁵⁶. The author analyzes the Armenian, Arab, as well as the Balkan problems as components of the Eastern Question, showing

⁵¹ Amin Sayid, *As-saura al-arabiya al-qubra*, j. 3 – The Great Arab Revolt, vol. 3, Cairo, 1934. The word 'saura' has two meanings in Arabic, 'revolution' and 'revolt'. Though some authors translate the title of Amin Said's book as 'revolution', we still prefer the word 'revolt', as semantically it is more correct, the more so as Arabs really revolted against the Ottoman domination during World War I.

⁵² Amin Sayid, *The Revolt of Arabs in the XX century*. Translated from Arabic, Moscow, 1964 (Russian).

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Asad Muflih Daghir, *Saura al-arab - The Revolt of Arabs*, Aleppo, 1989.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

the negative consequences of that factor for the fates of the Arab and Armenian Questions. Asad Daghir goes as far as he considers the Eastern Question to be the cause of World War I, saying that "the war in Europe was declared because of the East"⁵⁷.

In the book, a special subsection, entitled "The Armenian Question", is devoted to Armenians, where he dwells upon the policy of the Young Turks towards Armenians, the position of the Great Powers, and the like⁵⁸.

By the questions raised and the bold inferences made, worth attention is Jihad Salih's work, in which a whole chapter is devoted to the Armenian Question, the persecutions of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and the Armenian Genocide. The author examines these questions within the scopes of pan-Turkism and the policy of forcible Turkization. That these scopes are quite clear for Jihad Salih, is seen in the very title of his work "Turkish Turanism between Fundamentalism and Fascism"⁵⁹. By ideological orientation and the *modus operandi*, he typologically qualifies pan-Turkism as a fascist ideology. It is a novel approach to the assessment of pan-Turkism.

To this group of historiographic literature also belong the works by Zein Nureddin Zein⁶⁰, Emil Tuma⁶¹, Iraqi authors Shaqir Khasbaq, Muhammad Ahmad al-Maani, Feisal Najim al-Din al-Atraji⁶² and others, where discussed are some basic issues of the Near-Eastern geopolitics, the policy of Ittehadists, the activity of some Armenian deputies at the Ottoman parliament, and as a result of all this – some key issues, related with the Armenian Genocide.

In this brief review of Arab historiographic literature, devoted to the investigation of the Armenian Genocide, we only examined the monographic studies. As regards the articles, quite a few of them, we will

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 27-31

⁵⁹ Jihad Salih, *Al-Turaniya al-Turkiya beyna al-asuliya va al-fashiya – Turkish Turanism between Fundamentalism and Fascism*. Beirut, 1987.

⁶⁰ Zein N. Zein, *The Emergence of Arab Nationalism*, New York, 1973.

⁶¹ Emil Tuma, *National-Liberation Movement and Problem of Arab Unity*, Translated from Arabic, Moscow, 1974 (Russian).

⁶² Shaqir Khasbaq, Muhammad Ahmad al-Maana, Feisal Najim al-Din al-Atraji, *Jughrafiya al-Iraq - Geography of Iraq*, Baghdad, 1959.

turn to them out of necessity, at discussing concrete issues, in the relevant sections of the work.

We would like to note that the division of Arab historiographic literature into three groups or categories is but conditional. In reality, said literature should be viewed in entirety. Only in that case it will be possible to form a comprehensive notion about Arab historiography, devoted to the Armenian Genocide, and the contribution it has made to the investigation of the Genocide.

TWO PRINCIPAL PECULIARITIES OF ARAB HISTORIOGRAPHIC STUDIES DEVOTED TO THE ANALYSIS OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

The literature about the Armenian Genocide, written in many languages around the world, is abundant. First of all, the works by American, English, Austrian, German, Russian and French authors should be mentioned, which are an important contribution to the study of genocide in general, and to the examination of the Armenian Genocide, or the Armenocide, in particular. They are written, based on scarce prime sources, documents, archive and other official material, in strict keeping to all the scientific norms and loyalty to the scientific impartiality. The greatest service they render is that they confirm the truth that the Armenian Genocide was previously planned and thoroughly prepared, and that it was the official policy of the Ottoman state, its political, military and other structures. They recognize the government of the Ottoman Empire and the leadership of the Young Turk party as offenders for that criminal act against Armenians and humanity.

By the same principles of keeping to scientific norms are guided the Arab historians, whose studies typologically are identical to the works of western authors, who truthfully elucidate the problems of the Armenian Genocide.

An important peculiarity is observed here. The works by some Arab authors were written at the time when the Armenian Genocide was under way (Fayez al-Ghossein, Asad Dagher and others), while others were written right in the aftermath of those events, under their fresh impression (Amin Said and others). Hence, in a sense, they are evidences of eye-witnesses, and carry the significance of a prime source.

Arab historiography, devoted to the Armenian Genocide, is also characterized by the following peculiarity. For the Arab authors, the Ottoman Empire with its internal and national policy, the political atmosphere and the depraved morals are not a terra incognita – an

unknown world. They know it as their own history, not from books. For near four hundred years, 1516-1918, the Arab countries had made part of the Ottoman Empire, had been under the Ottoman domination, and had experienced on themselves all the "delights" of the Ottoman brutal yoke, which has left an indelible trace in their historical memory. By their own historical experience they have learnt known the essence of the sultanic regime, Abd al-Hamid horrors, Young Turk's racist ideology, forcible Turkization of the non-Turkish peoples of the Empire, pan-Turanism, massacres and carnages, etc. The information about all this they gather not from other scholars, studies or archives, but derive from their own history.

Beyond any doubt, this circumstance attaches a specific sense and significance to the works by Arab authors, devoted to the study of the issues of the Armenian Genocide of 1915 – a matter that, for understandable reasons, lacks in European, Russian and American historiography. Arab historiography has a certain advantage in this aspect.

Having said this, we by no means have in mind any personal advantage of the Arab authors as professionals over their European or American colleagues. The secret of the "advantage" lies in that Arabs had historically been connected with the Ottoman Empire, and they can view it not as Ottoman, but their own history, or at least part of it, which component make also the history of West Armenians and the Armenian Genocide.

This circumstance has to be underscored not merely for fairness sake, but because the Turkish historians, guided by the instructions of present-day Turkey's government, attempt to negate the Armenian Genocide. With Arab historiography they cannot employ the factor of the researchers' alleged "unawareness" or "falsification" of history, as the Arab authors reproduce what they, or their not-so-remote ancestors had seen themselves.

Under the circumstances, the convulsions of Turkish historiography evidence the latter's complete feebleness.

This is the first and foremost peculiarity of Arab historiography, which importance in proving that modern Turkish historiography has no grounds to refute the fact of the Armenian Genocide, can hardly be overestimated.

The second peculiarity of Arab historiography is that the Arab authors are Muslims.

The Turkish authors, trying by all means to refute the fact of the Armenian Genocide, while debating with the European, Russian and American scholars, those who recognize the Armenian Genocide, very often, at times explicitly, at times implicitly allude to the religious affiliation of these historians, suggesting that they, being Christians, would quite naturally support Christian Armenians, attributing to Muslim Turks crimes, such as, for instance, the Armenian Genocide, which as if they have never committed.

This is but a lame move on their part. Attributing religious implications to western historiography on the Armenian Genocide, what the Turkish historians do, is a totally unsubstantiated accusation against the western scholars-historians, who in their research work are guided by irrefutable and veracious facts. It is a desperate attempt to distort the reality, which makes a part of the Turkish historiographic strategy of falsification and misrepresentation of the real history of the Armenian Genocide.

The groundless and short-sighted approach of Turkish historiography, based on the tendency of misinterpreting the reality, becomes even more obvious, when we try to juxtapose it with Arab historiography.

As is known, Arabs are Muslims. They are the founders of Islam; within the Arab community has this world religion taken shape; the sacred book Koran has been written in Arabic. Arab historiography on the Armenian Genocide by the principles and elucidation of the problems does not differ from western historiography, which representatives are "accused" by Turkish historiography of their religious partiality and absence of scientific objectivity. If that is the case, then what shall be done with the Muslim Arab historians, who denounce the Ottoman Empire's Muslim leaders' policy of forcible Turkization of all the non-Turkish nations of the Empire, including Arabs and Armenians, who stress that what those had done to Armenians during World War I, was a Genocide?

Obviously, with Arab historiography, the reference to the religious factor is irrelevant. With Arab-Muslim authors the religious attribute, be it Christianity or Islam, does not and will not work. It is appropriate to

quote here the great Chinese philosopher Confucius, saying, "No use to look in the dark room for a black cat which is not there".

Thus, the second important peculiarity of Arab historiography on the Armenian Genocide is that it straightforwardly refutes and rejects the attempts of the Turkish historians to introduce the factor of religion and of Islamic-Christian relations into the scientific interpretation of the Armenian Genocide. By this approach of Arab historiography, the issue of the Armenian Genocide remains in the political field, rather than moves to the religious sphere.

Essentially, the opinions, with rare exceptions, coincide in explicating and recognizing the nature and causes of the Armenian Genocide by the overwhelming majority of genocidologists, who are guided exclusively by scientific principles and do not give in to the political influence, irrespective of their religious affiliation, of their being Christian, Muslim or Judaic.

For fairness sake, we should admit with satisfaction that even Turkish authors have already appeared, whose opinion does no longer comply with the governing in Turkey official viewpoint, who demand from Turkey to acknowledge its guilt.

**ARAB HISTORIOGRAPHY ABOUT THE ESSENCE OF THE
OTTOMAN EMPIRE: THE PREREQUISITES OF THE
ARMENIAN GENOCIDE**

1. STATEMENT

The question of the prerequisites and causes of the Genocide is without exaggeration the most important in the system of genocidology. It also holds a pivotal place in the elucidation of the problems of the Armenocide, or extermination of Armenians. The political, social, ethnical and religious roots of the Armenian Genocide should be sought right here. The rest is derivative: the scope of the Genocide, its mechanisms, strategy and other related issues.

Pleasingly surprising is that the Arab authors and Arab historiography in general have noticed this, and it has been appropriately reflected in the studies of Arab historians, devoted to the Armenian Genocide. They have not only noticed, but they see a certain difference between the prerequisites and the causes or the motives. Said difference, however, is not radical, hence it would be wrong to oppose these notions. The Arab historians and political scientists succeeded in avoiding that danger, convinced that they are logically interrelated and supplement each other.

In terms of elucidating the roots and prerequisites, as well as the causes of the genocide in the Ottoman Empire, of principal significance is the explication of the essence of the Ottoman Empire, its state-political, social-economic, ethnic-religious aspects. This matter has received extensive coverage in Arab historiography. Naturally, when discussing it, the Arab authors give preference to the Arab material, i.e. to the study of the Arabs' legal, political, social-economic and linguistic-cultural questions. But they also very well realize that, confining only within the Arab frames, or based only on the Arab material, it would be impossible to give the realistic and veracious picture of the Ottoman Empire. For that

reason, they expand the frames of the study of the issue and supplement the Arab material with materials concerning the state of the other nations of the empire – of Armenians, Greeks, Syrians, Slavs, as well as Kurds, Circassians, Albanians, determining their place in the social structure of the Ottoman Empire and their condition. In that way only it is possible to describe the anatomy of the Ottoman Empire as a state-political body.

The description of the anatomy, or of the nature of the Ottoman Empire enables us to understand the policy of sultans and the ruling elite of the empire towards the non-Turkish peoples, to find the mainspring of the committed massacres and the clue to the genocides.

2. THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AS A SYSTEM BASED ON VIOLENCE AND WARS. DOORS SHUT FOR NEW IDEAS

Numerous Arab authors – historians, economists, philosophers, international affairs experts, political scientists and others, have addressed the problem of the nature and essence of the Ottoman Empire, and given their own estimation. Among them, especially noteworthy are the approaches and estimations of Shakik Gharbal, Fuad Hasan Hafiz, Marwan al-Moudawar, Philip Hitti, Amin Said, Samir Arbash, Salih Zahr ad-Din, Emil Turna and other authors. Despite some differences, they are unanimous on the most important aspect – the Ottoman Empire was an authoritarian state, which did not present the interests of the non-Turkish nations of the empire, and as a result of its policy, based on racist principles, it was suffering crisis and appeared in a deadlock.

The characteristic of the Ottoman Empire is given profoundly and comprehensively by the Egyptian philosopher, sociologist and political scientist Shakik Gharbal. Based on his serious analysis, he infers that "The Ottoman Empire... was not grounded on any new religious, political or social ideas, on the contrary, it was based on wars and expansion, and did not open the doors for its numerous raya of various religious and national background in order to coordinate their interrelations, basing on popular ideas and principles. The Ottomans were a taking, not a giving nation, as evidence their plans and projects"⁶³. We think the anatomy of the Ottoman state and society is outlined perfectly

⁶³See: Fuad Hasan Hafiz; History of the Armenian People, p. 180.

well, revealed are the principles, on which that state was anchored, which did not offer any conditions not only for the development, but for the mere existence of raya – the non-Turkish peoples. Profound is the author's thought, that "the Ottomans are a taking, not a giving nation", which means that they were used to taking everything out of their raya, squeezing all the juices out of them, giving nothing in return in the political, legal, national, religious and human aspect, considering them second-rate and defective nations and peoples.

Such mentality of the Turk rulers and the society, based on wars and violence, offered all the favorable preconditions for making the existence of raya questionable. And not only that. They created apt prerequisites and atmosphere for the physical extermination of the non-Turkish peoples, that is, for genocide. In this tendency sees Shakik Gharbal the causes for the fall of the Ottoman Empire, underlining, that its stagnation, corruption and destruction were conditioned by the above circumstances⁶⁴.

Quite attractive is Usman at-Turq's assessment of the Ottoman Empire, which clearly shows what blameworthy principles towards the non-Turkish nations the policy of the Ottomans was anchored on. "The Ottomans", he writes, 'did not exercise the policy of peaceful coexistence with their subjects, did not build their policy on law and justice. Policy of racism and nationalism – these were the priorities in the minds of the then rulers'⁶⁵.

The same viewpoint is shared by Fuad Hasan Hafiz, in whose opinion, in the Ottoman Empire there were no laws, protecting or ensuring the national security of the non-Turkish peoples. Not only there were no such laws in the empire, but they, the Turks, the Turkish society, their dominating psychology, traditions and customs were not ready for it, and would not accept the very idea of equality of rights between them and the non-Turkish nations⁶⁶.

In the assessment of Arab historiography, the Ottoman Empire was a military-feudal, regressive, dictatorial state. This is exactly how Philip Hitti characterized this empire, noting that "The Ottoman Empire by its

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Usman at-Turq. Pages from the History of Armenian Nation, p. 191.

⁶⁶ Fuad Hasan Hafiz. History of the Armenian People, p. 182-216.

nature and structure was a military and dynastic empire⁶⁷. To him, one of the peculiar features of the Ottoman Empire was the military fanaticism: everything was subjected to it. In this connection he stresses that the Ottoman Empire, "as a state, was first of all established for wars, rather than for the welfare of its own people"⁶⁸.

Having given this quite genuine picture of the Ottoman Empire, Ph. Hitti then turns to the legal state of the non-Turk nations. To his mind, the welfare of the subject nations was not a priority for the Ottoman Empire, and one of the reasons for it was that the empire's "subjects were a conglomeration of various nations – Arabs, Assyrians, Iraqis, Egyptians, Berbers, Kurds, Armenians, Slavs, Greeks, Albanians – with their faiths, languages and lifestyle, who were kept together by Osman's sword"⁶⁹. In other words, what kept the Arabs, Armenians, Greeks, Slavs and other peoples within the empire were not fair laws, equality of the nations, economic factors and common political goals, but violence, which symbol was the sword of Osman's, the founder of the Turkish state. That sword had always been suspended over the non-Turkish nations. Not only was it suspended, but every now and then it fell down on their heads.

Such was the anatomy of the Ottoman Empire according to the authoritative Arab historian Ph. Hitti, whose viewpoints are in their depth consonant with those of Shakik Gharbal.

Their viewpoints coincide also on the matter of the *raya*. The Arabic word "raya" means both "herd" (of cattle) and "to graze". Not only Christians – Armenians, Greeks, Assyrians, Slavs were considered *raya*, but also Muslims – Arabs, Kurds, etc. When addressing that point, Ph. Hitti underscores that in the Ottoman Empire, "the subjects were *raya* – herds to be shepherded, fleeced and milked"⁷⁰.

This extremely precise figurative expression perfectly characterizes the Ottoman Empire and wisely reveals its racist essence. We emphasize the racist aspect not without reason: in the Ottoman Empire the one and only shepherd was the Turk, the shearer and milker was the Turk, too, as he was considered the only dominating nation, which, according to the

⁶⁷ Hitti Phillip, *History of the Arabs. From the Earliest Times to the Present*, London, 1951, p. 715.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 17-18.

governing ideology in Turkey, stood above the other Christian and Muslim nations and peoples of the empire.

3. TURKS – THE “SUPERIOR” NATION OF THE EMPIRE

One of the most important services, offered by Arab historiography in revealing the essence of the Ottoman Empire, is that it turned to the Ottoman rulers' and ideologists' concept of the Turks being the “superior” nation, and uncovered the basically racist official ideology, by which Turks were put above all the other peoples in the Empire. The Arab authors do this, based on the high values, that had been created by Arabs, Greeks, Armenians and the other nations, which were considered *raya*. In their studies, they give extensive coverage of Armenian culture, the classical values, created by Armenians.

Turning to the issue of “superiority” of the Turkish ethnos, Naim al-Yaffi notes that in the Ottoman Empire, “the Turkish nation was considered higher than all the other nations”⁷¹. The Egyptian historian Muhammad Rifat al-Imam focuses on the fact that in the Ottoman Empire, the difference between the Turks and non-Turks was “officially binding”⁷², i.e. legalized. He confirms this, exemplifying Armenians, noting that “Armenians were second-rate citizens”⁷³. To support his viewpoint, he states that the evidence in the court, brought by Armenians, was not accepted; they had no right to carry arms; in rural areas they were under the domination of the Ottoman military and feudal lords, etc.⁷⁴. The situation was alike for Greeks, Assyrians, Bulgarians, Serbs and other non-Turkish peoples.

The concept of the Turkish ethnos' being “superior” and “select”, and the non-Turkish peoples – “inferior”, second-rate and *raya*, was very dangerous, as it constituted an ideological basis and moral justification for getting even with the *raya*, threatening their physical existence.

⁷¹ Naim al-Yaffi, *The Armenian Genocide and the Position of the Arab Public Opinion*, p. 25.

⁷² Muhammad Rifat al-Imam, *The Armenian Question in the Ottoman Empire, 1878–1923*, p. 17.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p.17-18.

Naim al-Yaffi is decisively against that racist theory, underlining that the Turkish ethnos had never had any accomplishments in the sphere of culture or science, nor did it excel by anything the other nations of the empire; vice versa, the Arab authors adduce the destructions the Turks brought about on their way of conquests, the demolished cultural monuments, temples, towns and settlements.

The Arab scholars disclaim the Turk nationalists' racist theory, exemplifying among others also the cultural achievements of the Armenian people. Having studied the centuries-old Armenian history and culture, Fuad Hasan Hafiz emphasizes the great contribution of the Armenian nation into the world civilization⁷⁵. Samir Arbash considers that "the Armenian nation is the nation that became famous for its intellect, genius and courage"⁷⁶. Salih Zahr ad-Din, too, in his work "Armenians: People and Problem", has devoted a special section to the culture and civilization, created by Armenians, classifying it among the world's greatest achievements⁷⁷. In a word, ungrounded was the concept of progressiveness and superiority of Turks and inferiority of Armenians and the other non-Turkish nations.

Salih Zahr ad-Din addressed this same issue in his other work – "Armenians and Arabs between Turanism and Zionism". He examines the matter, basing on the Arab and Armenian materials and proceeding from the fact that although "Arabs and Armenians are not offsprings of the same country and the same nation, but they appeared to be the offsprings of the same morals, same problem and same fate"⁷⁸. The author has in mind the Ottoman period, when both these peoples – Armenians and Arabs – were under the Ottoman domination. To continue his idea, Salih Zahr ad-Din underlines that "they had the same enemy"⁷⁹. The Ottoman despotic yoke is implied here. He straightforwardly states that "from the very beginning, the Turkish Ottoman regime attempted to Turkify Arabs and Armenians, to Turanify them"⁸⁰.

Yet, as the Lebanese author remarks, that was not an easy task, since such nations as Arabs, Armenians, Greeks and others, being under the

⁷⁵ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of the Armenian People*, p. 3.

⁷⁶ Samir Arbash, *Armenia: Land and People*, p. 7.

⁷⁷ Salih Zahr ad-Din, *Armenians: People and Problem*, p. 25-35.

⁷⁸ Salih Zahr ad-Din, *Armenians and Arabs between Turanism and Zionism*, p. 4.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

Ottoman domination, were at a higher developmental level, than Turks. "Arabs", he says, "were more civilized than Turks"⁸¹, adding, "so were Armenians"⁸².

Summing up his views, Salih Zahr ad-Din writes, "Arabs and Armenians have language, history and civilization, while Turks have neither language, nor history or civilization; Arabs and Armenians have nationality, while Turks have no nationality; Arabs and Armenians have territory, while Turks have no territory"⁸³.

By saying that Turks have no territory, Salih Zahr ad-Din alludes to the fact that Turks are incomers. Having left Altai and the Central Asian steppes, they intruded the Near East and Transcaucasia, occupied the Arab and Armenian territories, settled down in the lands of other peoples and established their domination over them.

Against the concept of Turks' "superiority" as an ethnos speak out many other Arab authors. Among them, worth citing is Najib Azuri, one of the prominent figures of the Arab liberation movement, founder of the "League of Arab Homeland" and author of a series of remarkable works. We should also note that in Arab reality, he was one of the first who in the beginning of the XX century brought up and founded the concept of sameness of the political interests of Armenians and Arabs in the struggle against the regime of *zulum*, meaning that both of these nations suffered under the same Ottoman yoke and were subjected to the policy of forcible Turkization.

Najib Azuri analyzes the issue of the so-called superiority of Turks' versus Arabs, Armenians, Greeks and other nationalities, in his book "Awakening of the Arab Nation", published in French in Paris. Here he underlines the idea that the reason for the social-economic and intellectual backwardness of Arabs – once a nation of great civilization – was the Ottoman domination, the Turkish obscurantism and the regime of *zulum*. "Turks", he writes, 'destroyed Arabs. But for them, Arabs could have been among the most civilized nations in the world'⁸⁴. Furthering

⁸¹ *Ibid.*s

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ N. Hovhannisyana, *History of the Arab Countries* vol. II, *Period of Ottoman Domination: 1516-1918*, Yerevan, 2004, p. 448.

his viewpoints, Najib Azuri concludes, "Arabs are better than Turks in every aspect."⁸⁵

Thus, we can say that the Arab historians and political scientists, putting under the fire of criticism the racist concept of the Turks' "superiority" and the Arabs', Armenians', Greeks' and other nations' "inferiority", which had become the official ideology of the Ottoman Empire, razed that concept to the ground, and justly qualified it as a racist theory, which was and is being rejected today by the civilized world.

Along with the said, we are bound to state that the above concept, nonetheless, effected enormous destructions and formed the ideological foundation for planning, organizing and committing of massacres and genocides, first of all the Armenian Genocide, in the Ottoman Empire.

4. THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE – A COUNTRY OF MASSACRES AND CARNAGES

Adverting on the Ottoman Empire's policy of massacres as the major tool for solving the national question, occupies a significant place in Arab historiography in terms of revealing the regressive essence of the Ottoman military-feudal empire. We may say that in Arab historiography, it is considered a matter of primary importance, which, as a rule, is addressed by almost all the scholars. According to them, massacres were permanent companions of the Turkish sultans in their internal policy. Massacres of the non-Turkish peoples are one of the most, if not the most characteristic features of the Ottoman Empire. In elucidating this question, the Arab authors give no preference to any nation or people. They apply a complex approach, i.e., they turn without exception to all the nations of the Ottoman Empire, which periodically fell victim of the Turkish yataghan. Due to it, the Ottoman Empire's national policy becomes more understandable and salient, and the conclusions of the Arab historians – better grounded and more convincing. Owing to such approach, the history of the XIX – early XX century of the Ottoman Empire is seen as an endless succession of massacres and persecutions, violations of the national dignity of the non-Turkish nations – Arabs, Armenians, Greeks, Bulgarians, Assyrians and others.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

That is how the modern period of the Ottoman Empire's history is perceived by such Arab historians as Fuad Hasan Hafiz, Marwan al-Moudawar, Usman at-Turq and others, who have examined the problem in all details, having devoted to it long years. Some of them have even compiled the list of the massacres, perpetrated in the Ottoman Empire. Worth mentioning among them is the list, put together by Usman at-Turq, which is fairly complete, as it includes almost all the major massacres of the XIX century, such as: the Greek massacres of 1821 in Istanbul; the inter-Arab clashes, instigated by the Turkish authorities in 1845, which recurred in Syria and Lebanon in 1858-1860; the bloody events of the 1860-1870s in Armenian Zeytun; the massacres of Bulgarians and other Balkan nations of 1875-1876; the Armenian massacres of 1894-1896 in Istanbul and in the Armenian provinces, etc.⁸⁶.

The massacres are not exhausted by this. Worth mentioning are the massacres of Greeks on the island of Crete in 1896, the mass carnages of Macedonians in Macedonia, the bloody suppression of the liberation movements of Arabs in the province of Jebel Druz in Syria in 1886 and 1896, in Aleppo in 1895, etc.

Thus, the non-Turkish nations of the Empire saw the XX century in under massacres and carnages. In 1903 the marches of Arabs were savagely suppressed in Beirut; in 1903-1904 the Turkish authorities again organized massacres of Armenians in Sasun and Mush⁸⁷. And, finally, there comes the massacre of Armenians of 1909 in Adana, which deserves special attention. It really does, as it happened to be the first mass slaughter after the Young Turks had come to power in the Ottoman Empire. It came to prove that, after the so-called Young Turk revolution of 1908 under the slogans of the French Revolution – Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, nothing changed in the empire, and the Young Turks were the worthy successors of the sultans also in the matter of the "brotherly" slaughter of the non-Turkish nations. The Armenian massacres of 1909 showed that the so-called "new regime" of the Young Turks was not any different from the old one. Moussa Prince notices that in between the "old" and "new" barbarous regimes, the "Cilician Armenians fell the first victims"⁸⁸. In his turn, Marwan al-Moudawar writes that, the Armenian

⁸⁶ Usman at-Turq, Pages from the History of Armenian Nation, p. 186-187.

⁸⁷ Muhammad Rifat al-Imam, The Armenian Question in the Ottoman State 1878-1923, p. 22.

⁸⁸ Moussa Prince, L'Armenocide. Introduction, p.30.

massacres of 1909 in the town of Adana in Cilicia give all the basis to state that the Ottoman Empire was returning to the "regime of massacres"⁸⁹. A remark from us: in reality, that policy had never been given up.

5. THE ERA OF ZULUM: "THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE – ABD AL-HAMID'S PRISON": THE FORMULA "TO SOLVE THE ARMENIAN QUESTION BY WAY OF PHYSICAL EXTERMINATION OF ARMENIANS "

All the negative aspects inherent in the Ottoman Empire – its slaughterous nature, the dominating ideology based on racism, etc., may serve a most demonstrative description of the period, known as the period of zulum. It is inseparable from sultan Abd al-Hamid II's name, who ruled with his iron hand from 1876, when he ascended Osman's throne, up until 1909, when he was dethroned. For the numerous blood-sheds, murders and carnages he was nicknamed "red sultan", or a bloodsucker, a bloodthirsty and deadly sultan, while the period of his rule was designated as a "period of zulum". The Arabic word "zulum" means "dictatorship", "despotism", "tyranny", bearing shades of tragedy, disaster and misfortune.

Abd al-Hamid II and his period were given said definition by Arabs back in his times; nowadays it has become a widely accepted scientific concept in Arab historiography. Fuad Hasan Hafiz writes that "having started with murdering of all his brothers and their families, he made mass carnages and murders an everyday occurrence in the empire, ultimately becoming the executioner of the Armenian people"⁹⁰. Moussa Prince nicknamed him "red sultan"⁹¹. The same name is given to him in the Lebanese encyclopedia⁹². Characterizing Abd al-Hamid II and his period, Marwan al-Moudawar writes, "That sultan, who had also been justly named as-sultan al-ahmar ("red sultan" – N. H.), reigned over the Ottoman Empire with his iron hand for 33 years"⁹³. Let us return to Fuad

⁸⁹ Marwan al-Moudawar, *Armenians Throughout History*, p 401.

⁹⁰ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of the Armenian People*, p 201.

⁹¹ Moussa Prince. *L'Armenocide*, p. 28.

⁹² Dairat al-Maarif, vol. X, Beirut, 1973, p. 309.

⁹³ Marwan al-Moudawar, *Armenians Throughout History*, p 395.

Hasan Hafiz, who notes that "his (Abd al-Hamid II's - N. H.) name was as-sultan al-ahmar, because he was "the organizer of the bloody carnages"⁹⁴. Abd al-Hamid II gave so much room to violence, persecution and carnages in his internal and national policy, that some people were even convinced he was insane.

The period of *zulum* is clearly specified and its essence is comprehensively disclosed in Arab historiography, which helps a lot to shape a more generalized understanding of the Ottoman Empire. In Arab historiography said period is perceived as that of mass slaughters, overt or covert murders, violence, treachery and espionage, persecution of the citizens for their nationalist, religious and political views, as period of arrests and incarcerations. It was the era when darkness dominated, when everyone was out of breath.

At this period, the policy of the Ottoman leaders towards the non-Turkish nations, their political and national figures, organizations and unions became even more uncontrollable and brutal. In our view, the period is best characterized by Arab author Yusuf Yazbek. He calls the Ottoman Empire "Abd al-Hamid prison"⁹⁵. This concept is dominating in contemporary Arab historiography. Not only no positive changes were being noticed in the policy of *zulum*, but, on the contrary, it grew more and more atrocious. This viewpoint has been verbalized by the prominent Lebanese historian Zein N. Zein, who said that the policy of *zulum* year by year grew increasingly brutal⁹⁶, which means that there was no hope for the prison doors to open, vice versa, everything was done to lock them even faster. Incidentally, the red sultan did have all the reasons to keep the doors of his prison shut, because, as Emil Tuma notes, "The various anti-absolutist groups and movements of the empire gradually came to realize the necessity to unite, and eventually, a block of basic forces against the regime of *zulum* was founded"⁹⁷.

According to the Arab researchers, one of the most distinctive traits of *zulum* was the barbaric policy of violence and persecution towards the non-Turkish population. At that, they are far from the idea that by Abd al-

⁹⁴ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 201.

⁹⁵ Yusuf Ibrahim Yazbek, *About May 1 in the World and in Lebanon*, Beirut, 1974, p. 48.

⁹⁶ Zein N. Zein, *The Emergence of Arab Nationalism*, p. 47.

⁹⁷ Emil Tuma, *National-Liberation Movement and the Problem of Arab Unity*, translated from Arabic, Moscow, 1977, p. 84 (Russian).

Hamid pursued this policy exceptionally or mostly towards Arabs. The all-Ottoman practice is meant, that is – the red sultan's tyrannical policy towards Armenians, Greeks, the Balkan and other peoples. This viewpoint is clearly verbalized by Marwan al-Moudawar, who notes that Abd al-Hamid's violence and persecution policy "applied to all the peoples of the empire, namely, the Arab peoples, the Balkan peoples, and the Armenian people"⁹⁸.

Carnages became the most typical feature of the Ottoman Empire's administrative culture at the period of *zulum*.

Armenians fell the first victims of the slaughterous policy in the period of *zulum*. Although we have cursorily addressed this issue, nonetheless we should return to certain aspects of the Armenian massacres of 1894-1896, during which period around 300 thousand people perished. We have been encouraged to get back to this issue by Fuad Hasan Hafiz' intriguing thought that "in the internal policy, sultan Abd al-Hamid II feared the people"⁹⁹. That was not an inborn fear, or birth defect, but a result of a definite policy, which in its turn ensued from the atmosphere of fear, conspiracy, murders and intrigues, that traditionally dominated in the Ottoman court, in which environment Abd al-Hamid II was brought up and grew. Yet, he had driven all that to absurdity.

Abd al-Hamid II tried to overcome his fear of the empire's nations by way of mass carnages, especially that their discontent with the policy of *zulum* was gaining momentum, at times taking the form of anti-sultan protest marches. Unable to settle the national issue by political means, the bloodthirsty sultan relied on violence and *yataghan*.

Such was the atmosphere in the Ottoman Empire, when the concept of settling the Armenian Question through the physical extermination of Armenians began to shape. Later it became the only acceptable option. The author of that "thesis" was Abd al-Hamid's grand vizier Kuchuk Said, who had repeatedly voiced it in the 1880s, which afterwards Abd al-Hamid II made the cornerstone for his policy.

The Armenian massacres of 1894-1896 in West Armenia and in Istanbul should be regarded as the first attempt of exercising that thesis. All the Arab historians without exception, who have studied the history

⁹⁸ Marwan al-Moudawar, *Armenians Throughout History*, p. 395.

⁹⁹ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 202.

of the Ottoman Empire of the XIX century, addressed those massacres. They find that the massacres were not accidental. This idea was adhered to by Fuad Hasan Hafiz, who said that "at all events, the Armenian policy or, in other words, the policy of massacres, employed by Abd al-Hamid II, made constituent part of his internal policy"¹⁰⁰. Usman at-Turq thinks that the Armenian massacres of 1894-1896 were thoroughly prepared.¹⁰¹ He gives detailed enumeration of the Armenian massacres in Erzurum, Yeznka, Trabzon, Baiburt, Bitlis, Arabkir, Diarbakir, Kharberd, Svaz, Marash, Kesariya and in other towns and villages of the Ottoman Empire, inhabited by Armenians. The Syrian historian Khayri Hama qualifies those massacres of Armenians as savage¹⁰². A similar assessment gives to the Armenian massacres the Lebanese historian, Dr. Jamil Khabr in his work "Armenians and Lebanon". Analyzing the emigration of Armenians to Lebanon and other Arab countries, he notes that "it was an outcome of the persecutions, the Armenian nation was subjected to under the Ottoman yoke, and it began during Abd al-Hamid's reign, when in 1894-1896 the barbarous Armenian massacres were committed, and thousands of the persecuted rushed towards the neighboring countries, and Lebanon was one of them"¹⁰³.

Addressing these issues, Marwan al-Moudawar found it necessary to quote Sultan Abd al-Hamid II's words, "To put an end to the Armenian Question, one should put an end to Armenians"¹⁰⁴. Moussa Prince considers the Armenian massacres of 1894-1896 as genocide, the beginning of the policy of the Armenocide, which foundation was laid by Abd al-Hamid II, whom the renowned Arab scholar calls "big offender"¹⁰⁵.

Sultan Abd al-Hamid failed to bring about this man-hating idea of his, yet it served a cornerstone for his successors' – Young Turks' policy, who proved able to realize the bloodthirsty sultan's felonious plan.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 203

¹⁰¹ Usman at-Turk, Pages from the History of the Armenian Nation, p 200.

¹⁰² Khayri Hama, Elucidation of Some Aspects of the Armenian Question, "Munafid", Damascus, 1983, No. 163-164, p 22, (Arabic).

¹⁰³ Jamil Khabr, Armenians and Lebanon, "Al-Madina", Beirut, 1974, No. 24, p. 17 (Arabic).

¹⁰⁴ Marwan al-Moudawar, Armenians Throughout History, p. 367.

¹⁰⁵ Moussa Prince, L'Armenocide, p. 29.

Thus, thanks to Arab historiographic explication of the despotic, racist and murderous essence of the Ottoman Empire, the of the Armenian Genocide have been disclosed and made clear. These prerequisites originated in the depths of the political, economic and social administrative system of the empire, taken as a whole structure, anchored on the regressive, typical for the medieval obscurantism political, social and national-ethnic ideas, which had expired their life span since long. It was an empire, which, as results from the analysis by Arab historical sciences, appears a classical example of a state with Turks as a dominating and "superior" nation and the remaining non-Turkish peoples – as subject raya. It was a state, where the policy of slaughtering of all the non-Turkish nations, including Armenians, was adopted as state policy. The barbaric culture of massacres was the organic component of the internal and national policy of the Ottoman state. That specific Ottoman structure in itself carried a powerful potential for genocide, which might prove feasible, should the opportune internal and external conditions come up.

The revelations of the Arab historical science give grounds to conclude that the policy of slaughters is only one step away from that of genocide, just as it was only one step for the Ottoman state of zulüm to transform into a genocidal state.

The Armenian Genocide of 1915 in the Ottoman Empire proved the veracity of this viewpoint.

**ARAB HISTORIOGRAPHY
ON THE CAUSES OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE**

After explicating the prerequisites of the Armenian Genocide, the political, social and ethnic factors that gave birth to the Genocide, it is relevant to elucidate the causes of the Armenian Genocide in the way it has been done in Arab historiography.

The study of the works by Arab scholars on the Armenian Genocide shows that there is no Great Chinese Wall, separating the prerequisites of the Armenian Genocide of 1915 from its causes. They are closely interconnected, as the causes directly proceed from the prerequisites, or are conditioned by them. Sometimes, it is even hard to differentiate a prerequisite from a cause, especially when a prerequisite smoothly transforms into a cause. Not only logical connection exists between them, but there is also succession of actions. Causes are the reflection and realization of the prerequisites. Therefore, they should be regarded in integrity.

Given that, we think it necessary to discuss the distinctly outlined causes of the Genocide one by one, which is dictated by the complexity of the issue of the Armenian Genocide, by the importance of perceiving the policy and the long-term goals of the Young Turks, who had perpetrated the Genocide, as well as understanding the ways the Armenocide transformed from a plan into a practical action.

**1. FAILURE OF THE POLICY OF FORCIBLE TURKIZATION
OF ARMENIANS – ONE OF THE MAIN CAUSES OF THE
ARMENIAN GENOCIDE**

The Armenian Genocide as a phenomenon and crime is impossible to be adequately perceived without elucidation of the Young Turk policy of forcible Turkization, the policy of establishing an ethnically "pure"

Turkish state, which became the cornerstone of the Young Turk policy. In essence, it was a policy of assimilation of Armenians and all the other non-Turkish peoples of the empire, which the Young Turks pursued by severest methods and acts.

Principally, not as a spontaneous act, but as a state policy, it was not alien to the Ottoman Empire and its rulers; such attempts had been made even before the Young Turks came to power.

The new Ottomans were advocates of assimilation of all the nations in the Ottoman Empire, the first advocates of the specific Turkish nationalism, who made their appearance back in the 1860-1870s, under whose pressure sultan Abd al-Hamid II put into effect the first constitution in the history of the Ottoman Empire in 1876. One of the core provisions of the ideology of the new Ottomans was "the concept of the Ottoman nation". According to that concept, all the peoples in the Ottoman Empire – Turks, Arabs, Armenians, Greeks, Assyrians, Kurds, Circassians, Albanians, Serbs, Bulgarians, Bosnians – all the peoples and ethnic groups were considered one "Ottoman nation". In reality, it meant assimilating all the above-mentioned peoples with Turks, although that artificial and newly created by force "nation" would not be called "Turkish nation", but rather be designated as "Ottoman nation". Only through assimilation with Turks would it be possible to create the "Ottoman nation". Article 8 in the Ottoman Constitution of 1876 states, "All the subjects of the empire are called Ottomans without religious discrimination". There was a special paragraph in the constitution proclaiming Islam the state religion, and Turkish – the official language of the Ottoman Empire¹⁰⁶. It was officially stated that in the Ottoman Empire, holding a post or being elected a member of the parliament was stipulated by knowledge of Turkish. Speaking Turkish was mandatory. In the Turkish majlis, the sessions were to be held solely in the Turkish language, although together with the Turk deputies, there also sat deputies of Arab, Armenian, Greek, Albanian and other backgrounds.

Thus, in the Ottoman Empire, the concept of the "Ottoman nation" was officially adopted, fixed in the constitution, thereby acquired the force of law.

Yet, all the attempts to create said Ottoman nation by decree and by relevant constitutional law and paragraph failed.

¹⁰⁶See: N. Hovhannisyan, *History of Arab Countries*, vol. II, p. 431 – 432.

Two circumstances contributed to that mostly.

First, the regime of zulum was only capable of destructive and despotic actions. It had been established for that purpose and was unable to create anything, not any new structure. Abd al-Hamid II's regime did not manage to crush down the opposition of the non-Turkish nations and make them comply with the assimilation policy and turn into an Ottoman nation, as had been planned by the bloodthirsty sultan and his Ottoman idea-mongers.

Second comes the assimilation policy. Even the most violent and severe methods of assimilation require a certain historical period. It cannot be done right now right there. Neither did the developments grant any such possibility whatsoever. Sultan Abd al-Hamid II had had his portion of "guilt" in it.

As has been mentioned, the Young Turks, who came to power as a result of the coup d'état in July of 1908, did not dethrone Abd al-Hamid II. The sultan took advantage of the situation to organize coup d'état and regain the power on April 13, 1909. The Young Turks fled from Istanbul to Macedonia.

Within that period, Abd al-Hamid II hurried to commit new crimes. But he did not reign long. The Young Turks, supported by their dedicated troops, stationed in Salonika, started for Istanbul and entered the capital city. On April 24, 1909 they managed to suppress the sultan's revolt, dethroned Abd al-Hamid II to replace him by Muhammad (Mehmed) Rashad V.

It had had its political consequences.

The Young Turks formed their own government, which became the principal instrument for implementing their ideas and plans. They started their activity reckoning with no power or public figure beyond their camp. One of their first steps was that they threw away the mask of liberalism and the veil of advocates of equal rights of all the nations of the Empire, and presented to the world their real face – that of fanatic nationalists, chauvinists, racists and despots. This, as Emil Tuma puts it, "repulsed Arab, Albanian and Armenian nationalists from "Ittehad ve Terakki"¹⁰⁷.

In 1909, the Young Turks passed a law, banning all unions, companies and organizations of the Arab, Armenian, Greek, Albanian

¹⁰⁷Emil Tuma, *National-Liberation Movement and the Problem of Arab Unity*, p. 102.

and other nationalities. In this connection, Emil Tuma brings up the speech of Vardges, Armenian deputy to the Turkish majlis, considering it most complete and accurate for apprehending the essence of the matter in question. "When discussing the law at the parliament of deputies", the Arab author writes, 'deputies of different nationalities came up with severe criticism. The Armenian deputy Vartages (Vardges - N. H.) expressed the opinion of the opposition by stating that "the imposed on the Ottoman peoples ban to preserve their nationality, racial (i.e. ethnic - N. H.) affiliation and language, is intended to involve them into a union far from being just and free... No nation will survive without maintaining its racial affiliation and will ever allow to take it away"¹⁰⁸:

Here, the Young Turks' new national policy is meant - that of forcible Turkization of all, without exception, non-Turkish nations, peoples and ethnic groups in the Empire, and formation of an ethnically "pure" Turkish state and community. Having rejected the concept of the Ottoman nation, that had been refused and compromised by the peoples of the empire, the Young Turks adopted the concept of forcible Turkization, which they had been carrying out consistently in the entire territory of the empire.

Turning to that issue in his work "Arab Thought in the Liberal Age: 1798-1939", A. Hourani brings forward an interesting idea, saying that the Young Turks realized the infeasibility of their ambitions to preserve the Ottoman Empire and establish a centralized governmental system with Turkish domination by the doctrine of Ottomanism. And, as A. Hourani puts it, the reason of it was that Ottomanism was "a feeling too fragile and artificial"¹⁰⁹.

According to Arab researchers, Ottomanism, this fragile and artificial structure, could not serve a mortar and promote the unification of all the empire's nations and consolidation of the empire as such. The problem, they remark, to the Young Turks' opinion, could only be solved by another national feeling, a more efficient nationalism, as they defined it, that would be based on the language or racial commonality, and even better - on both. So, as A. Hourani notes, "the Ottoman nationalism gradually transformed into the Turkish nationalism"¹¹⁰. In that connection, A. Hourani, one of the best experts on the matter, focuses on

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 114.

¹⁰⁹ A. Hourani. *Arab Thought in the Liberal Age: 1798-1939*, London, 1970.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

a fact, which is essential for revealing the roots of the policy of Turkization. He believes that, according to the Young Turks, "the basis of the Empire should have been the national unity, shared by all those who spoke Turkish or were of Turkish background"¹¹¹.

The Young Turks found only one way to reach national unity – forcible Turkization, converting into Turks all the non-Turkish peoples of the empire and imposing the Turkish language upon them.

When it goes about Turkization, the factor of violence should always be borne in mind, as we deal here with a forcible act, rather than with evolution. In other words, Turkization of all the non-Turkish peoples of the Empire was not to happen by way of evolution – during centuries and in natural way, which would be hard to prevent, but through force, intensively, in the shortest possible historical period, overnight – ignoring the opinion, will and wishes of Arabs, Armenians, Bulgarians, Greeks, Assyrians, Albanians or Kurds and other peoples. Only in that way the Young Turks hoped to achieve their national unity – false racial concept, on the basis of commonality of the Turkish ethnos and language.

The issue of forcible Turkization is given ample elucidation in Arab historiography. They advert to the matter both from the viewpoint of the national existence of Arabs and maintenance of the national identity, as well as at analyzing the problems of the other nations of the Empire, of Armenians in the first place.

Naim al-Yaffi finds that, after the overturn of 1908, "with the emergence of the Turkish Turanism and its application for Islamic fanaticism, the "Ittehad ve Terakki" party decided to remove all things (i.e. – hindrances) and to convert to Turks the raya of the Ottoman Empire – Arabs, Armenians, Kurds and other peoples"¹¹².

One of the author's most important inferences is that "Armenians and Arabs have the same enemy", that is – the Young Turks and their policy of Turkization¹¹³.

The Arab authors blame the Young Turks for the existing gap between them and the other non-Turkish nations of the Ottoman Empire, which later turned into hostility. To Emil Tuma, the reason why Armenians, Arabs and the other nations estranged from the Young Turks

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Naim al-Yaffi, *The Armenian Genocide and the Position of the Arab Public Opinion*, p. 14.

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 17.

was the "chauvinist policy of "Ittehad ve Terakki" and its leaders, and their course to Turkization of all the non-Turkish nations"¹¹⁴. We find an identical viewpoint in the Lebanese encyclopedia, where in this connection it reads, "Mutual understanding between "Ittehad ve Terakki" and the Armenian parties did not last long, because its ("Ittehad ve Terakki's" - N. H.) principal policy was Turkization of the entire Ottoman Empire"¹¹⁵.

The issue is thoroughly dwelled upon by the Lebanese historian Jihad Salih in his original work "Turkish Turanism between Fundamentalism and Fascism", where he devoted to Armenians a separate chapter, entitled "The Armenian Question". As for him, the basis of the Turkish national policy is the "fanatic nationalism", anchored on the principles of subjugation and Turkization¹¹⁶.

Some Arab authors, adverting on the Turkization policy of the Young Turks, noticed that for that purpose, the Young Turk leadership also employed the religious factor - Islam. In Naim al-Yaffi's work there is a direct mention of it, saying, that "Turanism was used for Islamic fanaticism"¹¹⁷. In the Young Turks' policy Emil Tuma sees manifestation of the ideas of pan-Islamism. "The policy of Turkish chauvinism", he writes, 'was manifested in the use of religious intolerance and dissemination of Abd al-Hamid's pan-Islamic ideas by the activists of "Ittehad ve Terakki"¹¹⁸.

The Arab authors noticed that fanaticism, the blind zeal, knowing no limits and growing into hatred against those who were not Turks, was the devoted companion of the policy of forcible Turkization.

Discussing the Young Turks' policy of Turkization towards Armenians, the Arab authors, in order to reveal the racist essence of it, often refer to the issue of Turkization of Arabs and the other Muslim nations of the empire. As was underlined, the policy of Turkization was of total nature and equally applied to the Muslim nations. Naim al-Yaffi underscores that the sultans and Young Turks "tortured Arabs, despite the

¹¹⁴ Emil Tuma, *National-Liberation Movement and the Problem of Arab Unity*, p. 97.

¹¹⁵ *Dairat al-Maarif*, vol. X, p. 310.

¹¹⁶ Jihad Salih, *Turkish Turanism between Fundamentalism and Fascism*, p. 5.

¹¹⁷ Naim al-Yaffi, *The Armenian Genocide and the Position of the Arabic Public Opinion*, p. 14.

¹¹⁸ Emil Tuma, *National-Liberation Movement and the Problem of Arab Unity*, p. 103.

religious ties"¹¹⁹. Usman at-Turk in his turn noticed that the Young Turk policy of Turkization knew no limits and involved "even the non-Turkish Muslim peoples – Arabs, Persians, Egyptians, Indians (Muslims – N. H.), whom they were not treating as equals"¹²⁰.

The issue of Turkization of all the nations of the Ottoman Empire without exception is also touched upon in the works of Zein Zein, Fuad Hasan Hafiz, Marwan al-Moudawar, Moussa Prince, Muhammad Rifat al-Imam and other Arab authors.

The Young Turks had not managed to carry out the policy of Turkization of Armenians and the other non-Turkish nations in the Ottoman Empire. In that, they failed completely. First, Armenians did their utmost to withstand the policy of forcible Turkization, and were fully determined to maintain their national identity, language, customs and traditions, religion and culture. Then, let us not forget that the historical period before World War I was too short for effecting such an enormous plan as Turkization of Armenians, Arabs, Greeks, Assyrians, Bulgarians, Kurds, Circassians, Albanians, Bosnians and the other nations, even through force and violence. Things were getting even more intricate by that Turks constituted the minority in the Ottoman Empire, and it was quite a challenge for them to force the peoples who constituted the majority, Armenians among them, to repudiate their national affiliation, language and culture, and assume the image of a totally alien nation.

Forcible Turkization implied voluntary repudiation of their nationality by the non-Turkish nations, or else – they were in for physical extermination, all to a man.

Inasmuch as Armenians refused to convert, the Young Turk leadership endorsed the second version of remodeling of the Ottoman state into an ethnically pure Turkish state – that of physical extermination, the first victim of which fell Western Armenians. This view is clearly stated in Salih Zahr ad-Din's work. He underlines that Ittehadists came up with a plan "to expel Armenians from their native places and exterminate them all around the Ottoman Empire"¹²¹. Worth attention is that the Arab author believes the Young Turks wanted to

¹¹⁹ Naim al-Yaffi, *The Armenian Genocide and the Position of the Arabic Public Opinion*, p. 16.

¹²⁰ Usman at-Turk, *Pages from History of Armenian Nation*, p. 236.

¹²¹ Salih Zahr ad-Din, *Armenians: Nation and Problem*, p. 95.

exterminate Armenians not only in the six traditionally Armenian vilayets – Erzurum, Bitlis, Kharberd, Svaz, Van and Diarbakir, but all around the Ottoman Empire.

We find the same viewpoints in the works by other Arab scholars – Ilyas Zananiri, Fuad Hasan Hafiz, Samir Arbash, Moussa Prince and others.

Digressing a little from the matter, we would like to notice that the connection between the failure of the Young Turk policy of Turkization and adoption by them of the policy of massacres was delicately touched upon in Churchill's work "The World Crisis", some pages in which are devoted to the elucidation of the Armenian Question. He notes that "After the Balkan wars (1912-1913 – N. H.) the adherents of pan-Turkism gave up the idea of revival of the state with the help of "Ottomanization" and "Turkization". They predominantly attributed the misfortunes of the Turkish Empire to the reaction of the non-Turkish races residing in Turkey. They were openly and directly declaring that those races "are worth no attention, only present hindrances and may go to hell"¹²².

Here, certainly, reflected was the fact that the policy of Ottomanism and Turkization had experienced failure and could no longer serve as a consolidating and sustaining factor for the Turkish state, which Churchill calls "revival" of the Turkish State. Hence, the only way out was to send all the non-Turkish races, i.e. peoples, to hell, the scientific equivalent for which would be to eradicate them. And the Young Turks accomplished it in the times of World War I.

The topic of the Balkan wars and their negative influence on the Armenian Question has been developed in the works by such Arab authors, as Moussa Prince and Usman at-Turq. They focus on that the Balkan wars brought in a new negative factor into the Armenian reality, making even tougher the already tough condition of Western Armenians. The case in point is the resettling on the Armenian lands of the Turk refugees from the Balkans. They appeared after Turkey's defeat in the Balkan war, following which refugees surged the Asian regions of the Ottoman Empire. Usman at-Turq notes that the best solution for the refugee problem, found by the Young Turks, was settling them in the Armenian regions. "It was decided", Usman at-Turq writes, "to locate the refugees in the houses of Armenians leaving the latter's entire property

¹²² Winston Churchill. *The World Crisis*. 1918-1925, Moscow, 1932, p. 276.

and possessions at their disposal"¹²³. Moussa Prince approaches the problem from another side. He is very true to remark that the main purpose for housing the Turkish refugees in the Armenian settlements was "to change the ethnic picture in the occupied territories"¹²⁴.

In fact, by placing Turk refugees in Armenian homes, the Young Turks had formed additional reserve forces for the implementation of their policy and monstrous plan of annihilation of Armenians.

Thus, the failure of the policy of forcible assimilation of Armenians became one of the causes of the Armenian Genocide. We may say that in both events – forcible Turkization or physical annihilation, the issue of top priority for the Ottoman Empire remained the same – to exterminate Armenians as an *ethnos*.

2. PAN-TURKISM AND REMOVAL OF THE ARMENIAN BARRIER

Speaking about the causes of the Armenian Genocide, one should give a special place to the policy of pan-Turkism.

Pan-Turkism, along with the policy of Turkization of all the non-Turkish nations of the Ottoman Empire, became the other most important cornerstone for the Young Turk national policy. Both of these phenomena – formation of an ethnically pure Turkish state through Turkization, and pan-Turkism are organically interrelated and present two sides of the same coin. If the policy of Turkization had its face turned inward, i.e. was aimed at forcible Turkization of the non-Turkish nations in the Ottoman Empire, pan-Turkism faced the entire Turkish world, the Turks beyond the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish-speaking nations, purposing to unite them within one big empire under Istanbul's warden.

Said reality is equally acceptable both by Arabists and prudent Turkologists. The view of the Russian Turkologist D. Yermeev, expressed in his valuable work "The Ethnogenesis of Turks", is quite noteworthy. He was one of the first Soviet Turkologists, who back in the Soviet era tried to go beyond the stereotypes in the sphere of Turkology, imposed by the Soviet ideology, and to realistically elucidate the

¹²³ Usman at-Turk, Pages from Armenian History, p. 237.

¹²⁴ Moussa Prince. L'Armenocide, p. 31.

numerous disputable problems of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic. He notes that "inside the empire, pan-Turkism called to physically exterminate or once and for all Turkify the national minorities. The pan-Turkist ideology evolved upon the foundation of the Young Turk nationalism, which at first took the name "tyurqchyulyuq" or "tyurqizm"¹²⁵.

Discussing the causes of the Armenian Genocide, almost all the Arab scholars referred to the issue of pan-Turkism. The Arabic for pan-Turkism is "at-Turaniya at-Turkiya", which literal translation is "Turkish Turanism". At first sight it may be taken for tautology, while in reality it has a rather deep meaning. Firstly, by that the Arab authors want to even more emphasize that it is a Turkish phenomenon; secondly, they draw our attention to its Ottoman origin. What we mean here is that Turan is normally located in Central Asia, where the overwhelming majority of the population are Turkish-speaking peoples, and from where in the Middle Ages Oghuz-Ottoman Turks moved off to settle in Asia Minor. By designating pan-Turkism "Turkish Turanism", the Arab historians tried to underline that pan-Turkism is not of Turanian or Central Asian origin, i.e. it was not formed in the proper homeland of Turks and left the place to spread in other areas – vice versa, it was formed beyond the proper homeland of Turks, in Asia Minor, and now an attempt is made to import it to Turan from there, as the Ottoman Turks' movement in the opposite direction, a political attempt to spread the Ottoman Turks' domination all over the Turkish world. That is why they consider it "as-siyasa at-Turaniya at-Turkiya" – the "Policy of Turkish Turanism".

A most complete definition of pan-Turkism in Arab historiography is given by Jihad Salih in his research "Turkish Turanism between Fundamentalism and Fascism", one chapter of which, as has been mentioned, is devoted to the study of the Armenian Question viewed from the positions of pan-Turkism. Jihad Salih believes that "Turkish Turanism (pan-Turkism – N. H.) is a racist, chauvinist, regressive, fascist movement"¹²⁶. It pursued imperialistic purposes and sought to establish a new expanded state formation, based on the ideology of racism and domination of the Turkish nation. Turning to that issue, Marwan al-Moudawar notes that the "Young Turks started implementing as-siyasa

¹²⁵Yeremeev D. E., *The Ethnogenesis of Turks*. Yerevan, 1975.

¹²⁶Jihad Salih, *Turkish Turanism between Fundamentalism and Fascism*, p. 5.

at-turkiya (policy of Turanism – N. H.) and advocated for it in the attempt to establish a new empire, composed of Turkish peoples, inhabiting the terrain from the Caucasus mountain range to the Turkestani borders¹²⁷. Speaking of the borders of the Turanian Empire, the Arab scholars sometimes note that it was to reach as far as Mongolia and China.

Arab authors think that pan-Turkism and the establishment of the new Turanian Empire was a serious threat to all the non-Turkish peoples of the empire, but they separate Armenians and Arabs. According to Marwan al-Moudawar, should the Young Turks establish the new Turanian Empire, "there would be no room left in it for other peoples, such as Arabs and Armenians"¹²⁸.

Both these nations stood on the way of the implementation of the plans of pan-Turkism, therefore they were exposed to extermination. This viewpoint is most distinctly worded by Salih Zahr ad-Din. "Armenians and Arabs", he says, "were the two peoples, mostly exposed to the racist policy of extermination"¹²⁹.

In this respect, Arab scholars very often recall in their works the statement of Ali Ihsan pasha, one of the Young Turk leaders, saying, "Had it not been for Armenians, we would have long conquered the Caucasus"¹³⁰. Said clearly and distinctly. The logical inference is that Armenians, the Land of Armenia, albeit not an independent state, were a barrier on the way of pan-Turkism, and a serious hindrance on the way to implementing the plans of the Ottoman Turks and their Young Turk leadership to expand to the east and establish a new empire. Pan-Turkism required to destroy the Armenian barrier, which was only possible by way of extermination of Armenians as an ethnos.

Usman at-Turq, Jihad Salih, Marwan al-Moudawar, Muhammad Rifat al-Imam, Fuad Hasan Hafiz and other Arab authors have addressed the issue of pan-Turkism in the same spirit. But, unlike Jihad Salih or Marwan al-Moudawar, Fuad Hasan Hafiz emphasizes that the pan-Turkist policy was not only pointed against Armenians and Arabs, presenting a serious threat for them, but also against Russia¹³¹. This is a quite correct and clear observation, as the Caucasus and Central Asia, let

¹²⁷ Marwan al-Moudawar, *Armenians Throughout History*, p. 403.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ Salih Zahr ad-Din, *Armenians: Nation and Problem*, p. 95.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 214.

alone the Ural and the Volga regions, inhabited by Turkish-speaking peoples, were integrated into the Russian Empire. Without severing those territories from Russia, it would be senseless to speak about realization of pan-Turkism and formation of the new Turanian Empire, supposed to reach from Asia Minor and the Balkans over the Caucasus as far as Central Asia, Mongolia and East China.

Thus, let us repeat that the Young Turks, having put the plan of creating the Turanian Empire, which some consider crazy, ended up with the necessity to destroy the Armenian barrier on their way to pan-Turkism. And because their policy of Turkization of Armenians had failed, which would remove the Armenian barrier naturally, only one way out was left – the physical extermination of Armenians, repeatedly mentioned by Arab authors.

The problem of Turkization of Armenians and the other non-Turkish peoples of the Ottoman Empire for establishing an ethnically pure Turkish state merged with the pan-Turkism policy. At that, in both cases the extermination of Armenians was regarded as the pledge of the implementation of the plan, which proceeded from its ethno-political purposes and orientation. The merger of these two aspects – Turkization and pan-Turkism – was wisely noticed by Fuad Hasan Hafiz, who had thoroughly studied the centuries-old Armenian history. "These two problems", the Arab historian writes, "required final eradication of the Ottoman Armenians, as they were an important Christian and ethnic non-Muslim and non-Turkish minority, disobedient and oppositional, hindering the expansion of the Turkish domination and unwilling to serve the Ottoman state. They, the Ottoman Armenians, resided in the east of Anatolia, in which west Turks constituted the majority, and in the Caucasus, in the Russian domains, where there were also discontented Turks. They (Armenians – N. H.) were an obstacle, that had to be removed, as it hindered the connection between the Turks residing in those two territories (Anatolia and the Caucasus – N. H.)"¹³².

We need to take into account the following essential matter. The Young Turks came to the idea of extermination of Armenians after their policy of forcible Turkization had failed, when they got convinced that Armenians would never assimilate and would never become Turks voluntarily. It means that they arrived at the idea of perpetrating the

¹³² *Ibid.*, p.302.

genocide of Armenians, so to speak, at the end, at the final phase of the policy of Turkization. While in case of pan-Turkism, they adhered to the standpoint of exterminating Armenians from the very adoption of that policy, at the initial phase, as they were more than convinced that the anti-Turkish Armenian barrier was only possible to do away with through the physical extermination of Armenians as an ethnos.

Thus, the pan-Turkist political, ethnical-racist and chauvinist policy became one of the major causes of the Armenian Genocide of 1915.

3. THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE AS A MEANS TO PREVENT THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE FROM THE FINAL BREAK-UP

The Arab authors have noticed that among the causes of the Armenian Genocide there is a paradoxical fact, related with the territorial losses of the empire, and with the liberation of some nations from the Ottoman yoke. As a result, a new situation was formed, which alarmed the Ottoman rulers.

The point here is that the Ottomans lost their domination over several Arab and Balkan countries during the XIX and in the early XX century. The Arab scholars, such as Samir Arbash and Fuad Hasan Hafiz, who have particularly focused on said issue, bring the example of Greece, Egypt, Tunisia, Romania, Serbia and Bulgaria, which had either become totally independent, like Greece, or were close to it, like Bulgaria, Serbia and Romania, or were out of the Ottoman control, like Egypt and Tunisia, although the first fell under the English, and the second – under the French domination.

To all said, Samir Arbash adds the territorial losses of the Ottoman Empire as a consequence of military defeat in the wars of 1912-1913. He underlines the occupation of Libya in Africa by Italy, and, a year later, in 1913, the loss of Macedonia and Thrace, experienced by Turkey following the military defeat in the war against Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia¹³³.

In other words, it goes about the split of the Ottoman Empire, the gradual loss of the territories, inhabited by non-Turkish peoples.

¹³³ Samir Arbash, *Armenia: Land and Nation*, p. 137.

The Arab authors believe that this circumstance served a reason for the Young Turk leadership to take a tougher, more aggressive and brutal stand towards the Armenian Question, in order to prevent a similar process in West Armenia.

But there is a delicate point here, brought up by Arab historiography. The separation of the above-mentioned countries – Greece, Egypt, Tunisia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, thereafter – Libya, Macedonia and Thrace from the Ottoman Empire, hard as it might be, still did not imply the fall of the empire. Those were outlying areas of the Ottoman Empire. The Turkish domination still continued all over West Armenia and the countries of Arab East – Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, to some extent – over some regions of Yemen, formally also over Saudi Arabia. All of these made an immense territory with huge human and natural resources. The Ottoman Empire would last as long as the Turkish domination over these territories would.

But the fear had already crept in the Ottoman rulers. Their concern was that should the process also involve West Armenia, its separation would be a mortal blow to the empire, and its existence would be questioned.

Why do some Arab scholars, having analyzed the issue, arrive at such an abrupt conclusion? The answer to this question we find first of all in the works by Fuad Hasan Hafiz and Samir Arbash. They bring up and substantiate the viewpoint that West Armenia is the heart of the Ottoman Empire, which we cannot but agree with. As they note, the Turkish leaders would never allow Armenia to separate, because, as Fuad Hasan Hafiz underlines, "losing part of the Ottoman Empire to the benefit of Armenians would mean losing its heart and decay"¹³⁴. That West Armenia was the heart of the Ottoman Empire, is also stressed by Samir Arbash¹³⁵.

West Armenia is considered the heart of the Ottoman Empire because of its central position inside the empire, on the one hand, and its geographic location in the Near Eastern territory, on the other. In the event that West Armenia separated from the Ottoman Empire, the latter would split right in the centre, in Asia Minor, not at the periphery. This is for one. The other aspect is that it would inevitably bring to the loss of

¹³⁴ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 207.

¹³⁵ See: Samir Arbash, *Armenia: Land and People*, p. 166.

the Arab countries, too. We think, Fuad Hasan Hafiz and the other Arab scholars had in mind exactly these factors, when they spoke about the decay of the Ottoman Empire, should the Turkish domination over West Armenia cease.

Based on this, several Arab authors got to the conviction that among the Turkish leadership the idea was getting ripe to exterminate Armenians all to a man, in order to get rid of Armenians and not to lose West Armenia the way they had lost Greece, Romania, Serbia, Bulgaria, Thrace, Macedonia, Egypt and Tunisia, the loss of the entire Arab world to follow.

Marwan al-Moudawar noticed that this idea, before the Young Turks, had occurred to sultan Abd al-Hamid II, too. By that he explains the origination of the bloodthirsty sultan's catch-phrase, "To put an end to the Armenian Question, we should put an end to Armenians"¹³⁶.

It is logical to ask, based on what the Young Turk leadership thought that Armenians, too, wanted to separate from the Ottoman Empire. We will return to this question in the appropriate section of this work, so now we will just remark that at the given historical phase, Armenians did not lay any claims to separate from the Ottoman Empire and establish their own independent state. Mostly, claims of reforms to be introduced in the Ottoman Empire were brought forward, and this viewpoint is clearly expressed in Arab historiography.

If that is the case, then whence did the Young Turks' fear of Armenians come? Samir Arbash has conducted a most detailed study of the question. He believes that the clue should be sought first of all within the folds of the general policy of the Young Turks, underscoring the suspiciousness and mistrust towards all the nations but Turks, adopted once they had come to power. "The policy of the new government of the Ottoman Empire", Samir Arbash writes, "was based on the mistrust towards all the non-Turkish peoples, living in that state"¹³⁷. He infers a very important conclusion: as a consequence of the policy of mistrust towards any nation but Turks, the Ottoman "state's government became a government only for Turks"¹³⁸. That made the gap between the Turks and the non-Turkish nations still deeper. Right here should one of the causes

¹³⁶ Marwan al-Moudawar, *Armenians Throughout History*, p. 367.

¹³⁷ Samir Arbash: *Armenia; Land and People*, p. 166.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

of the Ottoman Empire's misfortune be sought, a factor, which later turned out to be one of the causes for the fall of the empire.

The mistrust towards Armenians grew even stronger after the Balkan nations had won their independence. When Greeks, Serbs, Bulgarians and other Balkan nations shook off the Ottoman yoke and liberated themselves, it automatically aggravated the state of Armenians in the empire, placing them in the first rank of the nations under suspicion. That made the Young Turk leadership be more watchful and resort to preventive measures.

Along with this, Samir Arbash underlines the Young Turks' ingratitude to Armenians. He points out that Armenians and the Young Turks cooperated against sultan Abd al-Hamid II, and that Armenians welcomed the Young Turk revolution of 1908, that they "cooperated with the new government, comprised of the members of the "Ittehad ve Terakki" party. Despite that, the new rulers suspected the sincerity of Armenians"¹³⁹. Samir Arbash, Marwan al-Moudawar, Moussa Prince, Usman at-Turq and others have noticed that the Young Turks' mistrust towards Armenians in the matter of separation from the empire had especially deepened after their representatives at the meeting with the Young Turk leadership spoke against Turkey's entering the war - World War I. The Young Turks went as far as to accuse Armenians of high treason¹⁴⁰.

Thus, the supposed separatism of Armenians, which was but a result of the Young Turks' ill imagination, suspiciousness and mistrust, became one of the causes of the Armenian Genocide.

This question, however, should be viewed in conjunction with the policy of Turkization and pan-Turkism of the Young Turks, touched upon in the previous chapters, otherwise no valid inferences will be made.

Summing up, we may say, that the main causes of the Armenian Genocide were: a) the policy of forcible Turkization of the Young Turks and its failure, b) the racist concept to establish an ethnically pure Turkish state, c) the necessity to remove the Armenian barrier on the way of pan-Turkism, d) the necessity to decrease the danger of the fall of the Ottoman Empire and to retain what was left, e) the problem of banning

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 168.

the European states from interfering into the internal affairs of the empire.

4. A UNIQUE VIEWPOINT AT THE CAUSES OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

In Arab historiography, among the causes of the Armenian Genocide, there is a viewpoint, which, by the questions posed and their interpretations, differs from all the others, so that we cannot but call it unique or specific. It belongs to the already mentioned Syrian historian Naim al-Yaffi. The scholar does not oppose to the causes brought in the previous chapter, vice versa, his views very often coincide with those of his Arab colleagues. Given that, he presents an integral viewpoint, which differs from the others in many ways, hence we cannot leave it out of the frames of this study. We should also mention that Naim al-Yaffi has expressed his unique viewpoint in his not very big work "The Armenian Genocide and the Attitude of the Arab Public Opinion".

Naim al-Yaffi divides the Armenian Genocide into three phases:

1. Sultan Abd al-Hamid II period (the Ottoman Empire) – 1894-1909;
2. The Young Turk period (Jamiyati "Ittehad ve Terakki"), starting with the Great Massacre of April 24, 1915;
3. Kemalist Turkey period, from 1919 to 1923.¹⁴¹

In this work, brief characteristics of each of the periods are given, the changes that took place during the historic development of the Ottoman Empire are pointed out, from which new problems and phenomena ensued, with the policy of Turkization and pan-Turkism moving to the foreground¹⁴².

Naim al-Yaffi divides the causes of the Armenian Genocide into three groups: "(1) external, or international causes; (2) local regional causes, (3) internal causes"¹⁴³. The author draws distinction between them, prioritizing the external and internal ones.

Analyzing the external causes, he makes a detailed analysis of the grown interest the Great Powers towards the Near East, their policy

¹⁴¹ Naim al-Yaffi, *Armenian Genocide and the Position of Arab Public Opinion*, p. 21.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 35-36.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

towards the Ottoman Empire, their exploiting of the Armenian Question for interfering in the internal affairs of the empire, etc. He points out the various proposals and agreements on the Armenian Question, submitted by the European countries, starting with the terms of the Treaty of San Stefano of 1878 and the Congress of Berlin, ending with the Russo-Turkish Treaty of 1914 on the reforms in Armenia. The author's principal position is that the European states were not consistent in solving the Armenian Question, instead, they aggravated it to pursue their own political goals.

Yet, the most interesting part of this chapter is the author's attitude towards the new situation, formed after World War I, when the European states split up and appeared in hostile camps, no longer able to act jointly and put pressure on the Ottoman leadership. It was advantageous for Turkey. In this connection Naim al-Yaffi writes, "World War I threw the Armenian Question into the hands of the Turks, who took advantage of the opportunities, provided by the war, and committed the Armenian Genocide in secrecy and obscurity"¹⁴⁴:

Naim al-Yaffi draws two very important and principal conclusions. First, he stresses that the war handed the solution of the Armenian Question over to Turks, giving them an opportunity to manage it individually, up to their plans and discretion. Before, they had been deprived of such chance because of the interference and prevention by the European states. However hard we may criticize the European states and blame them for their inconsistency, nonetheless, their presence and potential interference restrained the sultans and later, the Young Turks from acting freely in their own way. To some extent, it protected Armenians from the unlimited tyranny and violence of Turks. The war removed that restraining factor, giving freedom of action to the Young Turk leadership, who immediately took up the commitment of the Armenian Genocide, which plan had been developed and kept in the drawer since long.

Second, Naim al-Yaffi underlines another important aspect – the secrecy of perpetrating the Genocide. It was also related with the external, or international factor. The split into hostile camps European states, involved in the flames of war, were engaged in solving their own problems and had neither time, nor opportunity or wish to busy

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

themselves with the Armenian massacres. It created a unique, or, as the Arab author puts it, dark and obscure atmosphere, which ensured the secrecy of the Armenian Genocide. Indeed, it had been kept secret for a long time, becoming known to the international community gradually.

Analyzing the local regional causes of the Armenian Genocide, Naim al-Yaffi first of all adverts to the "geographic location of Armenia from the point of view of its potential unity and independence"¹⁴⁵, noting that said unity and independence had been the dream of Armenians from the olden times. Approaching the problem from this aspect, Naim al-Yaffi qualifies the geographic position of Armenia as "the first cause for the Armenian massacres"¹⁴⁶. Furthermore, he is sure that without taking that fact into account, "all the other causes prove idle", or senseless and incomprehensible. In particular, he finds that the geographic location had had two important outcomes for Armenians. "The first outcome was the disappearance of the independent Armenian state from the world political map. The second one was the appearance of the Armenian Question as a result of the attempts to liquidate the Armenian state"¹⁴⁷.

Among the local regional problems that affected Armenia and Armenian history, Naim al-Yaffi points out two factors. "First, the geographic location made Armenia a bridge between contending and opposing empires, such as Persia and Rome, Persia and Byzantine, Tsarist Russia and the Ottoman Empire"¹⁴⁸. Second, the Arab author underscores that "Armenia was on the natural axis of marches of the belligerent Asian peoples, such as the Turanian tribes, which annihilated its (Armenia's - N. H.) chances for independence and became the cause of the nation's genocide and exile"¹⁴⁹.

Giving the geographic location of Armenia no positive assessment, Naim al-Yaffi, when touching upon the local regional problems, mentions that in this region, i.e. in Transcaucasia, in the new period, the struggle mainly evolved between three states - Persia, Tsarist Russia and the Ottoman Empire, adding that no matter which of them was defeated or ruined, it was sure to affect the Armenian people. He specifically underlines the severe consequences for Armenia of the Russo-Turkish

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 39-40.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 40.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

wars and military-political rivalry, the attempts of the Sublime Porte – the Turkish government – to blame Armenians “for cooperation with Russia”, Turkey’s enemy, and, based on that, announce them “traitors”¹⁵⁰. Naim al-Yaffi also adverts on the Young Turks’ efforts to make Armenians rise against Russia, on the refusal of Armenians to become a tool in the Young Turks’ hands, which added momentum to the latter’s anti-Armenian feelings.

Armenia’s unfavorable geographic location and the acute regional controversies, in Naim al-Yaffi’s opinion, became the second cause of the Armenian Genocide.

Naim al-Yaffi sees the third cause of the Great Massacre in the internal developments of Armenians and those historical conditions, in which Armenians had lived from the ancient times up to our days¹⁵¹.

Here, he first of all singles out the issue of the unity of Armenians, noting that Armenians had not always been united against enemy’s intervention, assault and violence. He marks out three fields, or zones of the Armenian discord.

First, the discrepancy of Armenians in the matters of assigning a king to their throne by foreign states, dethroning or killing kings, the latter involving also the members of the royal family. This, as Naim al-Yaffi has justly mentioned, “shocked the economy of the Armenian state and produced an adversary effect on two spheres - military and political”¹⁵².

In his view, the second field, or sphere is the struggle within the local forces – the feudal system – the struggle, that produced discrepancy among their own ranks and inside the state, thereby weakening both. They, the emirs or princes, in the given circumstances – the nakharars, in their struggle would rely on this or that neighboring state, and it would often happen that one prince would ally with Persia, the other one – with Byzantine, each leading the Armenians in their own direction, i.e. having them involved in the discord and struggle¹⁵³.

Naim al-Yaffi makes a very important remark, “This discrepancy continued all through the Ottoman period and in Tsarist Russia who was its regional enemy”¹⁵⁴.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid. p. 45.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 45-46.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 46.

The third sphere of the Armenian discrepancy and discord, as to Naim al-Yaffi, is that of the Armenian parties and religious groupings. The author sees the reason for that discrepancy in their relations with the countries surrounding Armenia, underlining that "in different historical periods, some parties and religious groupings supported Persia, or Byzantine, or Arabs, or Russians – against this or that state"¹⁵⁵. These states in their turn, naturally, made use of this disunity of Armenians' to achieve their own political, economic or religious ambitions, presenting a serious "threat to the security and unity of Armenia"¹⁵⁶.

In the modern and recent period, the Armenian political parties, Naim al-Yaffi notes, have already been greatly influenced by the European parties and political thought, including Marxism. New controversies arise, which make the discrepancy between the Armenian political powers even deeper. He exemplifies this by the struggle between nationalists and internationalists, the division into revolutionists and non-revolutionists, the right-winged and the left-winged, etc.

The fact of the Armenians' disunity and discord, the struggle between the parties and trends certainly had had its adverse role, which was further masterfully used by the Young Turks in implementing their monstrous plans against Armenians.

Not all of Naim al-Yaffi's viewpoints are indisputably or equally acceptable, especially in terms of the emphases, like, for instance, in the matter of the geographic location and the like. In all events, they present a great interest and help gather a more comprehensive idea of the causes that had made the Armenian Genocide possible, draw our attention to individual aspects, make them more salient, like, for instance, the discrepancy and disunity of Armenians, etc.

We think that Naim al-Yaffi's viewpoints should take their due place in the system of the prerequisites and causes of the Armenian Genocide.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

THE KURDISH FACTOR FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF
ARAB HISTORIOGRAPHY

Typologically, the Kurdish factor belongs to the system of the causes of the Armenian Genocide. Yet, it has an important peculiarity. It was not a prime cause, but, rather a derivative, connected with the policy of the Ottoman rulers. Having adopted the policy of slaughters, and further – of the genocide of Armenians, the Ottoman sultans used Kurds as a tool in implementing their monstrous plans against Armenians. The priority here was the conceptual approach of the Ottoman state, as well as of the sultans and the Young Turks to the solution of the Armenian Question through extirpating Armenians, within which frames the Kurdish factor harmoniously fit.

Prioritizing the policy of the Ottoman rulers, and regarding the anti-Armenian activity of Kurds and their participation in the genocide as derivative and secondary, we do not mean to extenuate the historical responsibility of Kurds, let alone to justify them. Nothing of the kind. They have their own share of guilt, and history shall not silence that matter.

This peculiarity was wisely noted by the Arab authors, in whose works a considerable place is given to the Kurds' activity, their participation in the Armenian massacres and, further, in the Genocide of 1915, i.e. to the elucidation of the Kurdish factor in the Armenian Genocide.

1. "FURSAN AL-HAMIDIE" AND THE KURDS' PARTICIPATION IN THE ARMENIAN MASSACRES

The Arab historians, particularly Moussa Prince¹⁵⁷, Usman at-Turq¹⁵⁸, Fuad Hasan Hafiz¹⁵⁹ and others, underline that sultan Abd al-Hamid II made extensive use of Kurds and Circassians in pursuing his anti-Armenian policy.

They analyze this problem at the times, when the Armenian Question became an issue for international diplomacy, along with the terms of the Congress of Berlin of 1878, which in fact gave a definite freedom of action to sultan Abd al-Hamid II, which the latter was quick enough to benefit from. Using Kurds for his own goals and widely involving them in the Armenian massacres was not spontaneous for the bloodthirsty sultan, but well considered. As is mentioned in Arab historiography, a specific part was assigned to "Fursan al-Hamidie", which literally means "Hamidie Cavalry". It was named after its founder sultan Abd al-Hamid II¹⁶⁰. Hamidie was set up in 1891 purposely to keep Armenians under pressure and organize Armenian carnages. As Fuad Hasan Hafiz notes, it was made up of Kurds to execute the Armenian massacres¹⁶¹. Moussa Prince cannot imagine the massacres of the 1890s, especially in Sasun, without the participation of Hamidie, qualifying it as the bloody deed of the Kurdish cavalry¹⁶². The peculiarity of Hamidie was, Usman at-Turq writes, that it was not part of the Ottoman army. It was an autonomous unit directly under sultan Abd al-Hamid II's command. It was stationed in the Armenian town of Yerznka. The Hamidie "soldiers" looked more like bandits, thieves and robbers, who periodically invaded the Armenian towns and villages, killed the defenseless people, stole and robbed the Armenians of their property and possessions. The Arab historians assure that Hamidie was mostly completed of the Kurds from Diarbakir.

¹⁵⁷ Moussa Prince. *L'Armenocide*, p. 28.

¹⁵⁸ Usman at-Turq, *Pages from the History of Armenian Nation*, p. 199.

¹⁵⁹ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 207-208.

¹⁶⁰ It is also called "Firk al-Hamidie", which has almost the same meaning, literally - "Hamidie Division".

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

¹⁶² Moussa Prince. *L'Armenocide*, p. 28-29.

Fuad Hafiz Hasan, Usman at-Turq, Marwan al-Moudawar, Samir Arbash, Salih Zahr ad-Din, having made an ample analysis of the massacres of 1894-1896, unanimously state that the bloody slaughters, initiated by the "red sultan" Abd al-Hamid II, were mainly committed by Hamidie. They particularly single out the Kurd chieftain Moussa-bek's actions, shocking by their cruelty and inhumanity¹⁶³, the evildoings of the Kurdish bands in the vilayet of Bitlis, especially in Mush, Sasun, in the other five Armenian vilayets.

About the armed Kurdish detachments and their mean actions during 1894-1896, the Lebanese encyclopedia says that "thousands of Kurd nomads entered the Armenian territories – Mush, Van, Erzurum, formed armed detachments, known as Hamidie, which with the connivance of the government demolished Armenia"¹⁶⁴.

In this connection, the Arab authors have referred to the decisions of the Congresses of San-Stefano and Berlin of 1878, devoted to the internationalization of the Armenian Question and introduction of reforms in the Armenian vilayets, prioritizing the latter. The Arab historians viewed this from the point of interests of the Armenian people, its security in particular. Such approach is shown by Marwan al-Moudawar, Moussa Prince, Usman at-Turq, Fuad Hasan Hafiz, Muhammad Rifat al-Imam and others. They especially focus on Article 16 of the Treaty of San Stefano, where it says that the Sublime Porte commits to carry out reforms in the Armenian vilayets, improve the condition of Armenians and guarantee their life and security¹⁶⁵.

Giving an overall positive assessment to the Treaty of San Stefano, the Arab historians single out the passage, which states that the Russian army should leave West Armenia only after the sultan had kept his promise and introduced the reforms. In that condition, they saw a reliable guarantee that the reforms would be introduced and the sultan would take practical steps to ensure the security of Armenians. Incidentally, the Arab historians, speaking of the security of Armenians, as a rule, also imply the problem of protecting Armenians from the assaults of the Kurdish tribes.

As is known, the reforms had not been carried out, but the Arab historians blame for this not only sultan Abd al-Hamid II, but also the Great Powers – England and Germany in the first place. "The Anglo-

¹⁶³ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 208.

¹⁶⁴ *Dairat al-Maarif*, vol. X, p. 309.

¹⁶⁵ Marwan al-Moudawar, *Armenians Throughout History*, p. 396.

Russian competition and Bismarck's¹⁶⁶ 'Machiavellism', Moussa Prince writes, 'did not allow to enforce Article 16 of the Treaty of San-Stefano'¹⁶⁷.

The issue is touched upon in greater detail in the works by Usman at-Turq, Fuad Hasan Hafiz and Marwan al-Moudawar. The latter notes that "Britain felt uneasy at the growing power of Tsarist Russia and the progress in setting control over the straits"¹⁶⁸. Weakened Turkey was out of England's plans, and its Premier Disraeli, as Fuad Hasan Hafiz puts it, spared no efforts to keep the Ottoman Empire as a buffer "against Russia's expansion"¹⁶⁹. With the strenuous efforts of England, the Congress of Berlin was held in June-July of 1878, where the Treaty of San-Stefano was replaced by the Treaty of Berlin. One of the key points of that Treaty – Article 61 – was the one stipulating that the Russian army should leave West Armenia immediately, and that the sultan should introduce reforms in the Armenian regions with no Russian troops in place. In other words, there was no restraining-force for Kurds any longer; everything was left to bloodthirsty sultan Abd al-Hamid II's discretion; the sultan could carry on with his anti-Armenian policy, relying on the support of the Kurdish cavalry, called Hamidié, and the Kurd chieftains.

In Arab historiography this particular Article of the Treaty of Berlin, according to which Russia was to withdraw its army from the territories under its control, and return Erzurum and Bayazed to Turkey, has been studied in detail. The Arab historians noted that the decision of the Congress of Berlin to withdraw the Russian army meant to deprive Armenians of the Russian guarantees and leave them unprotected. For that reason, the announcements and demands to carry out reforms in the Armenian regions, as Usman at-Turq has precisely defined, remained "wishes in theory", for which realization no practical steps were taken¹⁷⁰.

Explaining the causes of that phenomenon, i.e. the European powers' policy in the Armenian Question, Usman at-Turq notices that their policy was first of all subjected to their own interests in the Near East. Not denying that the "Western states, especially Britain, looked at Turkey

¹⁶⁶ Otto von Bismarck was Chancellor of Germany at that time.

¹⁶⁷ Moussa Prince, *L'Armenocide*, p. 28.

¹⁶⁸ Marwan al-Moudawar, *Armenian Throughout History*, p. 396-397.

¹⁶⁹ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 198.

¹⁷⁰ Usman at-Turq, *Pages from the History of Armenian Nation*, p. 189.

with hostility", the Arab author notes that "at the same time, Britain viewed Russia as a threat to its interests in the East"¹⁷¹. In our opinion, well-grounded is Usman at-Turq's opinion, that the controversies between the Great Powers and their fear of Russia's growing power in the East, contributed to the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire, adding regretfully that "those states were not sincere in the matter of liberating Armenians from the Turkish slavery"¹⁷².

As a consequence of all said, nothing changed in the policy of the Ottoman Empire towards Armenians, on the contrary, after the Congress of Berlin the violence and massacres of Armenians evolved on a larger scale, with the Kurds' active participation. Right after the Congress of Berlin, in 1891, the Hamidie cavalry was formed, and in 1894-1896 the Armenian massacres were perpetrated in the Ottoman Empire, unprecedented by their coverage, during which one of the major weapons of sultan Abd al-Hamid II, if not the most important, was the Kurdish Hamidie cavalry and chieftains like Moussa-bek.

Salih Zahr ad-Din, who in his works has repeatedly adverted to the issue of the Kurds being used in the Armenian massacres by the Ottoman rulers, notices that sultan Abd al-Hamid II had been extremely active and consistent in that matter since the early 90s of the XIX century. He chooses Sasun a focus for his anti-Armenian acts, considering it "a rebellious region, which needed to be subjugated. The eradication of the Sasunians, however, was to be carried out with the hands of Kurds"¹⁷³. In 1891, Tahsin pasha, governor of Bitlis, gathers the chieftains of the Kurdish gilán tribe and, on behalf of sultan Abd al-Hamid II, calls to embark on jihad – sacred war against Armenians¹⁷⁴.

Elucidating the Kurdish factor in the Armenian Question, Salih Zahr ad-Din shows impartial approach and remains true to the facts and the historical truth, which is evidenced by the facts, stated below.

Related with the call of Tahsin pasha to declare jihad, which was the Ottoman sultan's demand, the Arab historian writes, "Jihad did not happen neither in 1891, nor in 1892 or even 1893, as a numerous wing of Kurdish sheikhs, being against such war, refused to partake in it.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., p. 195.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Salih Zahr ad-Din, *The Policy of the Ottoman Empire in West Armenia and the Position of the Great Powers*, p. 19.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 20.

Although some Kurdish tribes did assault locally, anticipating booty, no mass actions happened. Contrarily, many instances of Armenian-Kurdish cooperation against Turks are known in the villages of Sasun in 1891-1892¹⁷⁵.

Unfortunately, such Armenian-Kurdish cooperation, by the fault of the Kurdish chieftains and the Ottoman sultan, did not acquire a continual character, and did not become an elaborated and well-considered policy, remaining a manifestation of good will by individual Kurd chieftains, connected with a concrete reality.

A confirmation of this, along with other Arab authors, is given by Salih Zahr ad-Din. He especially notes "the Turkish-Kurdish military actions of 1894 against Sasun", the atrocities of Hamidie detachments with Baha ad-Din pasha at the head¹⁷⁶.

The bloodthirsty sultan used Kurds against Armenians further, committing carnages of Armenians with their hands, particularly in 1903, when he started the large-scale military operations in Sasun. Salih Zahr ad-Din, making this a separate issue for discussion, writes that "the events of 1894 and the heroic self-defense of the Sasunians convinced the Ottoman sultan that cleansing of that mountainous region was not an easy task and required massive military forces"¹⁷⁷. For that reason, in 1901-1902, he begins extensive preparatory work, sparing no efforts to provoke and use Kurds against Armenians. "In 1903", Salih Zahr ad-Din writes, "the commander of the Fourth Anatolian army Zaki pasha, based on the sultan's order, threatened to take up severe measures against the Kurdish tribes, unless they took part in the new attack on Sasun. He set on foot 25 000 armed Kurds."¹⁷⁸. Here, the Arab author makes an important observation, namely, that some Kurds were against attacking Armenians, "some Kurds objected to attack Armenians, reasoning that the Ottoman Empire is the common enemy for Armenians and Kurds, and they should unite against that common enemy"¹⁷⁹. Unfortunately, that stream of Kurds was weak and unable to shape a political atmosphere in the Kurdish environment, to withstand the sultan's plans, or at least not to take part in the Armenian massacres. Therefore, "their voice found no

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21-22.

response, and the attack on Armenians remained effective, since lots of Kurds were looking forward to robbing Armenians of their wealth"¹⁸⁰.

2. QAMAL AHMAD ON ARMENIAN-KURDISH RELATIONS AND POLITICAL, SOCIAL-ECONOMIC, ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS CAUSES OF THEIR CONFRONTATION

The Kurdish-Armenian relations make an extremely tangled knot, which requires a unique approach and comprehensive analysis, taking into account all the factors and circumstances.

In Arab, and not only Arab historiography on the Armenian Genocide, the Kurdish factor is always present. The Arab historians, as was shown in the previous chapter, had devoted a considerable place to that problem. However, we should admit, that they did not purpose a profound and comprehensive study of the question. Their goal was to show the Kurds' negative role in the new period of Armenian history, in perpetrating the Armenian massacres and the Armenian Genocide. In that sense, the work performed by them helps greatly to correctly understand the mechanisms of commitment of the Armenian Genocide and other concomitant issues. In this regard, their contribution deserves commendation.

Fortunately, there are works which authors have set themselves wider tasks. Analyzing the Armenian Question and the Kurdish-Armenian relations, they try to be consistent with the scientific principles and elucidate the problem realistically. True, such works are very few, yet they do exist, and among them worth mentioning is Qamal Ahmad's interesting research "Kurdistan in the Years of World War I", published in Baghdad in Arabic¹⁸¹.

Unlike many Kurd authors and political figures, who, unwilling to involve in the true-to-life elucidation of the Kurdish-Armenian relations, either bypass that acute problem, or seek to bury it in oblivion, Qamal Mazhar Ahmad¹⁸², an Iraqi historian of Kurdish descent, Professor at

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 22.

¹⁸¹ Qamal Mazhar Ahmad, *Kurdistan fi harb al alamiya al-aval - Kurdistan during World War I*, Baghdad, 1977.

¹⁸² We met with Qamal Ahmad in Yerevan and in Baghdad, had long conversations on various issues, including the Armenian-Kurdish relations.

Baghdad University, boldly analyzes all the components of the intricate tie of the Kurdish-Armenian relations, gives or tries to give explanation to the wrinkled questions, substantiates his approaches and dares to determinedly denounce the actions of the Kurd feudal-sheikhs and chieftains, who had taken part in the Armenian massacres and, further, in the Armenian Genocide.

Analyzing this issue, which is a critical one, we have understandably given preference to Qamal Ahmad, taking into account his Kurdish origin and the fact, that his work equally belongs to both Kurdish and Iraqi historiography.

This valuable research contains a special section devoted to the Armenian-Kurdish relations, including the Kurdish participation in the Armenian massacres of 1894-1896 and the Armenian Genocide of 1915.

Qamal Ahmad divides the Kurdish factors into two categories – those separating Kurds and Armenians, and those bringing them together; in his work he gives each a detailed analysis.

Among the factors separating Armenians and Kurds, Qamal Ahmad names religion in the first place. "Religion," he writes, "was one of those factors that separated them"¹⁸³. At the same time, he remarks that the religious factor had not shown itself before the other factor did, becoming the real cause for the Armenian-Kurdish controversies. "There was another factor here", he writes, "separating the two peoples from each other: Armenians were better developed in comparison with Kurds."¹⁸⁴. Giving top grades to the civilization, created by Armenians, the Iraqi Kurd historian stresses that "for many reasons, Armenia got involved in the capitalist market much earlier than Kurdistan, and the new relations appeared in the Armenian community earlier than in the Kurdish"¹⁸⁵. In addition, he notes that the handicraft industry and trade in Kurdistan were in the hands of Armenians, whom Kurds turned to of necessity. Armenians were becoming the major source of monetary credits and loans. Besides, the Kurdish handicraft industry could not compete with the Armenian. In this connection, Qamal Ahmad emphasizes that the Kurd feudal lords resorted to violence and persecuted Armenian merchants in order not to give back the borrowed money. In Qamal Ahmad's opinion, "subsequent to this, in different times, the just

¹⁸³ Qamal Ahmad, *Kurdistan during World War I*, p. 237.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

liberation movement of the Armenian people caused some fear of its (Armenian liberation movement's – N. H.) further outcomes among the Kurds¹⁸⁶.

Summing up the views of the Arabic-speaking Kurd author, we should say that the factors, separating Armenians from Kurds, involve: religion, difference in developmental levels, and controversies between the Kurdish feudal elders and the young Armenian bourgeoisie.

Further, Qamal Ahmad explicates the factors, that drew Armenians and Kurds together. Here, he first of all points out the fact that, for centuries, both peoples had been exposed to oppression – by the Sefid shahs and Ottoman sultans. "No doubt", he writes, "this situation united the feelings of Armenians and Kurds"¹⁸⁷.

As a unifying factor, Qamal Ahmad also brings up the fact that both the Armenian and Kurdish farmers paid taxes to the same treasury, which grew heavier day by day¹⁸⁸. He quite justly adds that, with the connivance of the Turkish sultans, especially under Abd al-Hamid II's rule, the Kurdish feudal lords put incredible pressure on the Armenian villages. He relates about the heavy taxes, including the "taxes on infidels", that Kurdish feudal lords and agas collected from Armenians, about their cruelty and despotism¹⁸⁹.

In this connection, Ahmad Qamal makes two important observations. First, the "existing conditions in the Ottoman Empire encouraged the said behavior of the Kurdish feudal lords, while sultan Abd al-Hamid not only incited them (Kurds – N. H.), but supported financially and legally, for them (Kurds – N. H.) to seize the Armenians' lands"¹⁹⁰.

Second, the difference of religions and the fact that Armenians were considered "giaours", in view of the Kurdish feudal lords and agas, made the violence against Armenians permissible¹⁹¹. Along with this, Qamal Ahmad agrees with Academician V. Gordlevski's viewpoint that Turks instigated Kurds against Armenians, and that the "enmity between Armenians and Kurds was in their interest, as the Turkish government pursued the "divide and rule" policy".

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 238-239.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 239.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 242.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

After all this, Qamal Ahmad concludes that "in order to study the role of Kurds in the Armenian massacres, all these factors should be taken into consideration, all these causes taken together"¹⁹², which is hard not to agree with.

Returning to the question of Kurdish participation in the Armenian Genocide of 1915, Qamal Ahmad underscores, "We ought to admit with a heavy heart that Kurds, to a greater or lesser extent, consciously or unconsciously, instigated by others or deliberately, did participate in that carnage"¹⁹³.

Having come to this crucial conclusion, Qamal Ahmad justly protests against the Ottoman public figures' efforts to put the responsibility for all the massacres on Kurds and correlate it with their backwardness and fanaticism, although he does not deny that Kurds were backward and to some extent also fanatic. "It should be admitted from the very beginning", Qamal Ahmad writes, "that the blind religious fanaticism and cultural backwardness were the two major causes, that drove the majority of Kurds to kill the *giaours*"¹⁹⁴.

Qamal Ahmad, a consistent supporter of the analytical method, makes a very interesting and logical remark concerning the carnages, which like happens but seldom in historiographic literature. "Kurds and Turks and the offsprings of the other peoples of the region," he admits, "had been more backward and more tied with Islam prior to the emergence of such novelty as massacres. Still, during hundreds of years no bloody dramas occurred between Armenians and Kurds, Kurds and Assyrians"¹⁹⁵.

Given that, what was the cause of it?

Qamal Ahmad, who is not the one to avoid discussing acute problems, this time, too, remaining true to that scientific principle of his, gives the answer to the question, posed by himself. He notes that now, as he puts it, "instigating factors" showed up, that were masterfully disguised under the veil of the "Kurds' blind religious fanaticism against Armenians". He first of all blames the Turkish government for it. The Ottoman leaders spread false rumors about the independence of Armenians, thereby "arousing fear among Kurds and ruining the

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 243.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 259.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 260.

Armenian-Kurdish relations. It was to the benefit of the state (Ottoman – N. H.)¹⁹⁶. Then he adds that the Turkish government did everything to inflame controversies between the two neighboring peoples, on the one hand, and to set up barriers in front of all the forces that would furthering the relations between Armenians and Kurds, on the other. By this, Qamal Ahmad does not annul the responsibility of Kurds, and does not strive to justify in any way their complicity in the Armenian Genocide. On the contrary, he blames them. We have already brought his view on this matter, but it is relevant to bring yet another observation of his. Qamal Ahmad finds that “the majority of Kurds that took part in the Armenian Genocide were from the Hamidie cavalry. That military unit was set up to perform that kind of acts, and it was entrusted to Kurds”¹⁹⁷.

This is for one. The other cause, or reason for the Kurdish participation in the Armenian Genocide, up to Qamal Ahmad, was the greed and avidity of the upper levels of the Kurdish tribes, that longed to get rich at the expense of Armenians. He notes that the Hamidie troops and some Kurd feudal lords and agas believed that murdering Armenians was the most agreeable way to usurp their lands, property and possessions, therefore they took part in those acts, i.e. in the Armenian Genocide.

This evidence of Qamal Ahmad’s certainly helps understand why the Kurds were against the independence of Armenians, although, to be fair, we should note that at that period, Armenians did not offer an issue of independence. The Kurdish elders, feudal lords and agas feared that Armenia’s independence would deprive them of the chance to rob and plunder Armenians, make a fortune at the expense of Armenians.

And, finally, Qamal Ahmad thinks that many Kurds “regarded the murder of Armenians as jihad in the name of Allah”¹⁹⁸.

Along with this, in Qamal Ahmad’s book examples are brought from the history of Armenian-Kurdish friendship, also during the Armenian Genocide of 1915, when Kurds, endangering their lives, attempted to save or aid Armenian refugees.

In general outline, such is Qamal Ahmad’s conceptual approach to the Armenian-Kurdish relations and to the wrinkled problem of Kurdish

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 274.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 262.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 261.

complicity in the Armenian massacres and the Armenian Genocide. Three principal aspects should be singled out in his approach.

First, within the Kurdish community, there were certain powers and social groups – feudal lords, sheikhs, tribe elders, agas and soldiers, who in political and economic terms were interested in “settling the Armenian Question through eradication of Armenians”.

Second, the Armenian-Kurdish controversies were the reflection of specific realities and different levels of development – Armenians being at a higher level of development and stepping into capitalist relations, and Kurds being at a lower level, still groping their way in feudal and tribal relations.

Third, the Ottoman government and the Turkish ruling elite used Kurds as tools in effecting their criminal plans of extirpating Armenians.

We are more than convinced that Qamal Ahmad's work, which can unconditionally be regarded as a serious study, the thoughts and viewpoints, expressed in it, will facilitate the better perception of the nature of the complicated Armenian-Kurdish relations, the political, economic and ethno-cultural motives of the big historical error of that people, which produced heaviest effect on West Armenians, later also costing dear to the Kurdish people and their political fate.

ARAB HISTORIOGRAPHY ON THE CLAIMS OF WESTERN ARMENIANS

Analyzing the causes of the Armenian massacres and the Genocide, it is natural to ask: what were the claims of Armenians? Did they contain any threatening provisions to the integrity or existence of the Ottoman Empire, thereby laying grounds for their own physical extermination?

These questions have long become a subject for debate in contemporary historiography, so Arab historiography could not pass by that principal problem either.

The Arab authors, having studied the question thoroughly and profoundly, are unanimous on that Western Armenians in the historical period under consideration had not raised a question of separating from the Ottoman Empire and becoming an independent state. As no such statement had been made by Armenians, hence there is not a single Arab scholar presenting an opposite view. This is a principal approach, which makes the fault of the sultans and Young Turks even graver, as they committed a genocide of a people that had never come up with the suggestion to separate from them and establish its national state unit.

Nonetheless, Armenians did have a problem, anchored on respecting of their national and human rights, ensuring their secure existence, maintaining their national values and identity, which they sought to achieve within the borders of the Ottoman Empire.

This, however, does not mean that the claims of Armenians remained stiff and did not modify along with the political and social-economic changes in the Ottoman Empire.

When we approach the problem from this aspect, we see that content-wise, the Armenian Question had had three phases of

development, with an appropriate model suggested for each.¹⁹⁹ This truth is confirmed by Arab historiography as well.

1. THE MODEL OF REFORMS

The roots of this model can be seen in embryo in the early XVII century, when Armenia was split between Sefid Persia and Ottoman Turkey, and when West Armenia was integrated into the Ottoman Empire. But the model, more or less shaped, appeared during the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1878 and the Congress of Berlin following it, when the Armenian Question transformed from inter-Ottoman into international issue.

The Arab authors – Usman at-Turq, Marwan al-Moudawar, Moussa Prince, Fuad Hasan Hafiz and others, have given quite a detailed elucidation of the matter, particularly of those sections of the Treaty of San Stefano and the Treaty of Berlin, which concerned the Armenian Question, with the reforms' option for settling it.

As is known, and as was presented in the previous chapter, the Russo-Turkish war ended with Turkey's recurrent defeat, following which on March 3, 1878, in the village of San-Stefano in the vicinity of Istanbul, the peace Treaty between Russia and Turkey was signed, confirming the military defeat of the Ottoman Empire. The Treaty contained Article 16, which concerned specifically the reforms in West Armenia. The article stated, "The Sublime Porte commits to immediately carry out reforms and renovations, based on the local needs in the Armenian-populated regions, and secure Armenians from Kurds and Circassians"²⁰⁰.

There was another very important term in that Treaty: Turkey agreed that in Asian Turkey, that is in West Armenia, the Russian troops would stay for a period of six months, during which the reforms were to be implemented. The presence of the Russian troops served a guarantee for effecting the reforms.

¹⁹⁹ For details, see: N. Hovhannisyan, *The Lebanese Model for the Solution of the Armenian Question in the Ottoman Empire, Countries and Peoples of the Middle East*, XXI, Yerevan, 2002, p. 80-97.

²⁰⁰ *Armenia in the Documents of International Diplomacy and Soviet Foreign Policy (1828-1923)*, Yerevan, 1972, p. 92.

On the whole, the Treaty of San-Stefano, in terms of settling the Armenian Question, can be graded positively.

That is how the model has been comprehended by Arab historiography. Marwan al-Moudawar, who in his work has given the full translation of Article 16 into Arabic, stresses that the Ottoman Empire committed to carry out reforms in the Armenian vilayets and to ensure the security of Armenians²⁰¹. Usman at-Turq particularly notes that in San-Stefano, "Russians introduced the claims of Armenians"²⁰², which means that between Russians and Armenians there had been an agreement on certain issues, therefore Usman at-Turq considers Russia's claims to Turkey as Armenian.

Giving an overall positive assessment to the terms of San-Stefano and considering them advantageous for Armenians, the Arab historians at the same time express their regret that the Ottoman side rejected the Armenian claim to granting them administrative autonomy, agreeing instead to only carry out reforms in the Armenian vilayets²⁰³. It was certainly one of the drawbacks of the Treaty of San-Stefano, as the establishment of any administrative unit in West Armenia would put the introduction of reforms, and the Armenian Question within its scope, on legal grounds, and would make the regulation of the problem more reliable.

Here, it is relevant to focus on an important fact. The Treaty of San-Stefano, intended to introduce reforms in the Armenian regions and to ensure the security of Armenians from Kurds and Circassians, was a recognition by Turkey that the situation Armenians had been in was really tough, and that the question of their safety and security was really actual. Article 16 of said Treaty stated this in black and white. Had there not been any such problem, no such article would ever appear in a Treaty, under which the Ottoman government put its signature.

The Treaty of San-Stefano was Russia's diplomatic victory, which caused anxiety among Russia's rival European countries, under which pressure in summer of 1878, the Congress of Berlin was convened. We have given a detailed analysis of this issue in the previous chapter, so there is no need to advert on it again. We will only remark that within one year, the Great Powers had twice addressed the Armenian reforms, which

²⁰¹ Marwan al-Moudawar, *Armenians Throughout History*, p. 396.

²⁰² Usman at-Turq, *Pages from the History of Armenian Nation*, p. 188.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

was stated in Article 61 of the adopted Treaty. In some principal points it differed from the terms of San Stefano – not to Armenians' avail. This is confirmed by its content. "The Sublime Porte commits to immediately carry out reforms, proceeding from the local needs, in the Armenian populated regions, and to ensure the security of Armenians from Kurds and Circassians. The Sublime Porte is obligated to periodically report to the states, which are to supervise the implementation, on all the measures taken"³⁰⁴.

This Article contained two principal retreats from the Treaty of San-Stefano. First, it annulled the mechanism for effecting the reforms in the Armenian vilayets, which was related with the stay of the Russian troops in those vilayets for at least 6 months, during which the reforms were to be carried out. It was a binding factor, which the Ottoman government would hardly be able to bypass. The terms of the Congress of Berlin obligated that the Russian troops be immediately withdrawn from Asian Turkey, or West Armenia, which meant that no factor or mechanism was left to compel Turkey to introduce the reforms.

Second, not only the mechanisms of reforms were removed, but the Congress of Berlin handed over the solution of the problem to the sultan, although the European states – England, Germany, Austria-Hungary and France knew very well that the first responsible for the hardships of Armenians was sultan Abd al-Hamid II, who personally incited the anti-Armenian acts of Kurds and Circassians.

Thus, Moussa Prince is absolutely correct when he writes that the first victims of the decisions of the Congress of Berlin fell Armenians, as the European countries, mentioned above, barred the implementation of Article 16 of the Treaty of San-Stefano³⁰⁵. That gave grounds to Usman at-Turq to state that these European states lied to Armenians, and their assurances of empathy and readiness to help Armenians out were but false.

It should be noted that in Arab historiography, the terms of the Congress of Berlin and the policy of the European countries towards the Armenian Question were strictly criticized, which is evidenced not only by the works of Moussa Prince and Usman at-Turq, but also of Marwan al-Moudawar, Fuad Hasan Hafiz, Salih Zahr ad-Din, Asad Daghbir,

³⁰⁴ Сборник договоров России с другими государствами.1856-1917гг., Москва, 1952, с.225.

³⁰⁵ Moussa Prince. L'Armenocide, p. 28.

Muhammad Rifat al-Imam, Samir Arbash and other scholars, the Islamic and Lebanese encyclopedias, etc. The most accurate and comprehensive assessment is, perhaps, given by Zein Zein. The Congress of Berlin, he writes, "saved the Ottoman Empire from immediate break-up and collapse"²⁰⁶.

As a consequence of the policy of the Great Powers, which handed the issue of the Armenian reforms over to sultan Abd al-Hamid II, the implementation of the reforms in West Armenia failed. The sultan did not only defaulted on starting the reforms, but took up more active and dangerous anti-Armenian steps, which the Arab historians noticed and criticized. Following the Congress of Berlin, he formed the Hamidie cavalry, the primary goal of which was to keep Armenians in fear and horror and to carry out carnages; he banned the use of the word "Ermenistan" – "Armenia" in the territory of the Ottoman Empire; planned and committed the massacres of 1894-1896, etc.

Thus, the model of reforms, which did not even imply any administrative autonomy, for a number of internal and especially external reasons had never been brought to life.

2. THE MODEL OF DECENTRALIZATION OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE: LAMARQAZIYA

In Arab historiography, in terms of discussing the Armenian claims, a unique place is given to the elucidation of decentralization, as a model for solving the national question in the Ottoman Empire and within this scope – of the Armenian Question.

The model of decentralization of the Ottoman Empire first appeared on the arena after the Young Turk revolution of 1908. The appearance and dissemination of that viewpoint was furthered by the fact that the Young Turks, initially backed by some representatives of Armenians, Jews and Arabs, acted under the slogans of the French revolution: "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity". The residents of the empire proved naive enough to believe that in the history of the Ottoman Empire a new period

²⁰⁶ Zein N. Zein. *The Emergence of Arab Nationalism*, p. 55.

was setting in. Among the first ranks of the naive believers were also Western Armenians – if not all, then at least certain social layers.

The idea of decentralization of the Ottoman Empire found its ardent supporters among almost all the nations of the Empire, particularly Arabs and Armenians. It had its adherents also among some Turkish political figures. In the Turkish society, the authoritative leader of that stream was prince Sabaheddin, the nephew of sultan Abd al-Hamid II, his sister's son. He was anxious about the future of the Ottoman Empire, the problem of overcoming its backwardness and turning it into a progressive and developed state, and was supportive of the idea that all the non-Turkish nations of the empire be given wide autonomy. He found that the remote national territories of the empire might be given autonomy, and the Ottoman Empire be reorganized as a confederation of state structures, enjoying equal rights. Such rights would be granted to Western Armenians, too.

Sabaheddin's project to rebuild the Ottoman Empire as a confederation was quite an audacious proposal; we think, Turkey was not mature enough to undergo such radical reconstruction up to the European standards.

Given that, Sabaheddin's views were supported by the leaders of the "Liberty and Concordance" party, founded in 1911, which, having approved of the decentralization principle, proposed the following slogans: "Balkan countries – to Balkan peoples", "Arab countries – to Arabs", "Armenia – to Armenians", and "Kurdistan – to Kurds". These should not become independent states, but rather internal autonomous regions within the Ottoman Empire³⁰⁷.

The concept of decentralization found especially ardent supporters in the Arab countries, among almost all of the Arab social strata. This was very important, because Arabs, outnumbering even Turks, were the most numerous nation in the Ottoman Empire. In 1912 in Cairo, they founded "Hizb al-lamarqaziya al-idariya al-osmani" – the "Ottoman Administrative Decentralization Party", Lamarqaziya for short, meaning Decentralization³⁰⁸. Its leaders were outstanding Arab national-political figures, such as Rafik al-Azm, Abd Hamid az-Zahravi, and others.

³⁰⁷ Луцкий В.Б. Новая история арабских стран, Москва, 1983, с.301.

³⁰⁸ For more details, see: N. Novhannisiyan, *History of Arab Countries*, v. II, p. 477-495.

Among the claims of Lamarqaziya, the central was granting a special provincial status to the vilayets, inhabited by Arabs and all the other non-Turkish peoples of the Ottoman Empire. They should have their own governments and provincial councils with wide authorities, including the right to appoint foreign counselors for reorganizing the police, gendarmerie, justice and finance in the given province²⁰⁹.

Armenians, too, were for the decentralization of the Ottoman Empire, supporting both Sabaheddin's model of turning the Ottoman Empire into a confederation, and the version, proposed by Lamarqaziya. The evidence of it we find in A. Hourani's work, where he notes that the leadership of Lamarqaziya from its very first day was in close relations with Turk liberals, headed by Sabaheddin²¹⁰. Armenians, in their turn, were in constant relations with Lamarqaziya, and, undoubtedly, were appropriately informed about Lamarqaziya-Sabaheddin contacts. The position of Armenians was well known to Arabs, their national and political figures, first of all the leadership of Lamarqaziya. They supported each other in various matters. This fact is especially underlined by Moussa Prince, who notes that Armenians strived for administrative autonomy. He names the renowned Armenian writer and member of the Ottoman Parliament Grigor Zohrap, as well as the leaders of the "Dashnaktsutiun" party, emphasizing that "they - Zohrap and the "Dashnak" party - dreamt about a state, in which national discrimination would be replaced by administrative autonomy"²¹¹. In that way "Armenians", Moussa Prince writes, 'wanted to advance their intellectual and economic life'²¹².

The Arab documents evidence that the leadership of the Lamarqaziya party cooperated with Armenians, they consulted with each other and coordinated their positions, basing on the principle of decentralization of the Ottoman Empire. The best manifestation of it was the First Arab Congress, held on June 18-23, 1913, in Paris. Along with the representatives of different Arab countries, at the congress present was one Armenian with a guest status. The Congress was presided by Abd Hamid az-Zahravi.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 484-485.

²¹⁰ See: A. Hourani, *Arab Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939*.

²¹¹ Moussa Prince. *L'Armenocide*, p. 31.

²¹² *Ibid.*

The work of the Congress and the discussions evolved were quite stormy. The presenters stated that Arabs wanted to reform the empire, because they wanted to become part of the contemporary civilization, and they look to Europe for assistance. Along with this, the delegates of the Congress considered it requisite to express their loyalty to the Ottoman Empire, wishing to see it a powerful state. On behalf of the Congress, no claim for separation was raised, the adopted resolution was based on the aforementioned provisions of the *Lamarqaziya* on decentralization of the Ottoman Empire.

The Armenian representative at the Congress, as the Arab sources evidence, on behalf of the Armenian people expressed full support to Arabs and their struggle, to the proposed by them model of decentralization.

The Congress in its turn adverted to the state of Armenians in the empire and to their national claims. The question was presented by presiding at the Congress Abd Hamid az-Zahravi, who said the following: "The state of our Armenian brothers is similar to our state. They are people such as we are, they think just like we do, and they demand just what we do. We wish success to both us and them. We are united in the matter of unity of the Ottoman Empire"²¹³.

In the resolution, adopted by the Congress, the Armenian claims were presented separately. Paragraph 8 of the resolution was devoted to them, which read, "The Congress approves of and supports the Ottoman Armenians' claims, which are based on the principles of decentralization, and through their delegate sends greetings to them"²¹⁴.

The model of decentralization, unfortunately, did not work either, and could never have worked, because the Young Turks were quick enough to throw away the slogans of equality and fraternity, that sounded false on their lips from the very beginning, and replace them with the concept of forcible Turkization of all the non-Turkish peoples of the Ottoman Empire to establish an ethnically "pure" Turkish state, and the concept of pan-Turkism, which was of strategic significance for them.

For the Young Turks, neither the theses of equality and fraternity, nor those of decentralization and confederation existed any longer. They

²¹³ *Wasaiik al-mu'tamar al-arabi al-awal*, 1913 –Documents of the First Arab Congress, 1913, Beirut, 1985, p. 117.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.* See also, N. Hovhannisyann, *The First Arabic Congress, 1913, The Armenian Question*, Encyclopaedia, Yerevan, 1996, p. 51.a

contrasted the decentralization claims of Arabs, Armenians and the other non-Turkish peoples with the dilemma of either Turkization-assimilation, or extirpation of those peoples. The Young Turks had started execution of said dilemma back in the times of World War I: in 1915 the Armenian Genocide began, in 1915-1916, by Cemal pasha's order, Abd Hamid az-Zahravi and dozens of leaders of the Arab national movement were hanged; a great many were thrown into prison. As regards prince Sabaheddin, he, having sensed the upcoming danger and realizing that, under the circumstances, his descent from the Ottoman dynasty would hardly serve him a protective shield and save him from inevitable murder, fled from his fatherland, designated "Abd al-Hamid Prison", and found shelter in Switzerland.

3. THE LEBANESE MODEL FOR SOLVING THE ARMENIAN QUESTION

The Lebanese version, or the Lebanese model, to which particular attention is given in Arab historiography, was, perhaps, the most promising for the solution of the Armenian Question within the Ottoman borders. Compared to the other versions, it, firstly, presented a higher level, and, secondly, had had its precedent. The matter concerns the "Organic Statute of Mountainous Lebanon", which was applied in the Ottoman Empire in 1861.

It was preceded by bloody clashes between the Druze and Maronites in Lebanon in 1845 and 1860-1861, which developed into mass slaughters. In instigating them, their own share of guilt had both the Ottoman leadership and the European states, England and France in the first place. Armed detachments of the Arab Maronite and Druze communities slaughtered each other in Beirut, Zahle, Saida, Deir al-Kamar, Damascus and its environs, in which course 20 thousand people were killed, destroyed were 380 Christian villages, 540 churches and 40 temples, etc. Casualties and losses among Muslims and the Druze were heavy, too.

Under the arisen heavy circumstances, on September 5, 1860, England, France, Russia, Austria and Prussia founded an international committee, in which the Ottoman Empire was also forced to participate. The goal of the committee was not only and not so much to reveal the

causes of the slaughter and punish the guilty, as to develop measures to prevent the recurrence of such events, and above all, to develop a new administrative model, or a new legal statute for Lebanon.

After long negotiations, the committee finished the making of the legal document, which was signed on June 9, 1861 in Istanbul by England, Austria, Prussia, Russia, France and the Ottoman Empire. The document was entitled "Statute Granted to Lebanon", which in specialized literature is known as "Organic Statute of Lebanon".

The Statute involved all the aspects concerning the administrative, legislative, judicial, economic, police and local bodies of Mountainous Lebanon.

According to the Statute, Mountainous Lebanon was proclaimed an autonomous province – mutasarifiya, headed by a Christian governor, or viceroy-mutasarif. He was appointed by the Ottoman sultan, which candidacy was to be previously coordinated and approved by the above European states, that had signed the agreement and who were the guarantors of the new statute – the autonomy of Mountainous Lebanon. Mutasarif's being Christian was binding. An Administrative Council was to be established under mutasarif. Mutasarif was bound to ensure law and order and peace all around the province, where everyone was declared equal under law. Within his authorities was to appoint local functionaries and judges, ensure the enforcement of law-based decisions, establish local police to maintain peace and law, etc.

By the presentation of the European states, the Ottoman sultan appointed Karapet Artin Daudian the first viceroy, or mutasarif in Lebanon²¹⁵. This outstanding Armenian was gifted with highest qualities of a statesman, and carried out his responsibilities of viceroy remarkably.

This Lebanese model later on, after the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1878, with minor amendments, was implemented also in Bulgaria, when, by the Treaty of Berlin, Bulgaria was divided into two sectors. In one sector, the Bulgarian autonomous state was formed, granted with the right to elect its own prince, which, however, was to be approved by the

²¹⁵ Hovhannisyan N. H., *Arab Historiography on Modern Armenian History – Modern Armenian History in the Works of Foreign Authors*, Yerevan, 1993, p. 118-119, (Russian).

Ottoman sultan, by the consent of the European states. Bulgaria did have its organic statute – it was given the right to have a Constitution.

The other section of Bulgaria – East Rumelia, remaining under the direct domination of the Ottoman sultan, received administrative autonomy. Its governor, whose being Christian was binding, was appointed by the sultan, the candidacy having been approved by the European states²¹⁶.

Such was the political and legal content of the Lebanese model, that proved principally acceptable for the Ottoman sultan and the leading European states, and was applied in the Arab and Balkan regions of the empire.

In Arab historiography, this model is also studied in regard to the solution of the Armenian Question. The Arab authors confirm that the model was also acceptable for Western Armenians, its various political powers, as well as for the Armenian church. The model was supported by Khrimian Hayrik, Patriarch of Constantinople Nerses Varjapetyan, and others. The model, as the Arab historians evidence, served a source of inspiration for Armenians and gave them big hopes. "Inspired by the Lebanese precedent", Moussa Prince writes, 'Armenians wished to receive a modest administrative autonomy, less ambitious than the international statute of Mountainous Lebanon'²¹⁷. Moussa Prince considers the Lebanese model but a humble claim, stressing that Armenians were ready to obtain an even lower status, than that granted to Mountainous Lebanon.

Armenians wished to bring this question up at the Congress of Berlin of 1878 and request that the Ottoman leadership and the European Great Powers grant West Armenia a statute of the type, granted to Mountainous Lebanon. In this connection, in Arab historiography, the issue of participation of Armenians at the Congress of Berlin is touched upon. In the Lebanese encyclopedia it says that Armenians formed a delegation with Catholicos of Armenia Khrimian Hayrik at the head, and sent to Berlin to participate at the Congress²¹⁸. Yet, the participating countries, the same Arab source observes, did not allow the Armenian delegation to participate at the Congress, reasoning that said delegation did not

²¹⁶ Diplomatic Dictionary, V. I, Moscow, 1960, p. 178.

²¹⁷ Moussa Prince. *L'Armenocide*, p. 28.

²¹⁸ *Deirat al-Msarif*, vol. X, p. 309.

represent any state²¹⁹. The depressing about it is that when in 1861, Mountainous Lebanon was given the status of a viceroy-ruled region, it was not a state either. Clearly, the position of the participating countries at the Congress of Berlin was groundless and illogical.

The issue of participation of the Armenian delegation at the Congress of Berlin and application of the Lebanese model was raised by Fuad Hasan Hafiz, too. He attaches a unique shade to it when he notes that, although the Armenian delegation was not allowed to take part at the Congress of Berlin, they submitted a Memorandum to the participants of the Congress, in which the claims of Western Armenians were stated. Based on those claims, the Egyptian author confirms that Armenians did not present claims of separation from the Ottoman Empire, but requested to establish an autonomous Christian administration with international guarantees, like the founded in 1861 Lebanese administration²²⁰.

Such was the main claim of Armenians, and attributing separatist ambitions to them is aspersion, only cast on arena to justify the Ottoman government's policy of carnages and genocide.

Although the Congress of Berlin refuted the Armenian demand and did not consider the submitted Memorandum, the Armenian Question was not removed from the agenda. From time to time Armenians reminded about the necessity to introduce reforms in the Armenian vilayets, including the model of Mountainous Lebanon as a possible version for solving the Armenian Question, waiting for a more opportune moment to return to it.

Armenians, as the Arab sources note, resumed addressing the European states, calling them to compel Istanbul to carry out the promised at the Congress of Berlin reforms in the Armenian-populated regions. Usman at-Turq particularly mentions the address of the Armenian Catholicos Gevorg V to the European countries – participants at the Conference of London in 1912. Not contented with this, the Armenian Catholicos, Usman at-Turq writes, dispatched a special delegation to London with Poghos Nubar at the head, charging him to bring up the issue of reforms to be implemented in the Armenian regions. Yet, the Arab historian proceeds, the conference refused to consider the

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 199.

Armenian request²²¹. By Moussa Prince's precise definition, "the promises to carry out reforms in the Armenian vilayets remained deadlocked", while the state authorities and Kurdish tribes kept breaching all the legal norms and plundering²²².

As is mentioned in Arab historiography, the favorable conditions for once again to bring up the Armenian Question were created in 1912-1914, connected with the Balkan wars and Turkey's defeats. The Arab historians evidence that once again the Armenian Catholicos Gevorg V came out with the initiative.

The Tsarist government, meeting the request of Catholicos Gevorg V, developed and in 1912-1913 submitted to the European Great Powers a proposal for regulating the Armenian Question, basing on the principles of autonomy of Mountainous Lebanon. The Russian proposal became a subject of discussion at the meeting of the accredited in Istanbul ambassadors of the European Great Powers, held on July 3-24, 1913.

Russia proposed to unite the six Armenian vilayets – Erzurum, Bitlis, Kharberd, Svaz, Van and Diarbakir, and to establish one Armenian province with a governor at the head. He would be appointed by the sultan, by the consent of the European States, for a period of five years. The governor would be an Ottoman subject Christian, or a European. The executive power would be focused in the hands of the governor; an Administrative Council would be established and a province council elected, in which Christians and Muslims would be represented equally.

The proposal also contained some other critical provisions, of which worth mentioning are the demands to eliminate the Hamidie cavalry, return the confiscated lands to Armenians or compensate for them, ban inhabiting the Armenian province by Muslim refugees from the Balkans, and the like. The latter was a sore point for Armenians. Quite understandable, because, as the Egyptian historian Muhammad Rifat al-Imam notices, "Over 500 thousand refugees had come to West Armenia from the Balkans"²²³. Adverting on the same question, Salih Zahr ad-Din writes, "The empire was plunged into chauvinism and racism, as a result

²²¹ Usman at-Turq, Pages from the History of Armenian Nation, p. 191.

²²² Moussa Prince, L'Armenocide, p. 31.

²²³ Muhammad Rifat al-Imam, The Armenian Question in the Ottoman Empire in 1878-1923, p.56.

of which the state of Armenians aggravated by continual and unpunished plunder and crime. The depopulated Armenian villages were inhabited by Turk refugees²²⁴.

This was obviously the best ever draft, submitted for the solution of the Armenian Question. Such is the assessment given in Arab historiography.

The European states took different stands towards the project, presented by Russia.

England and France, the allies of Russia by Entente, principally agreed with the proposal, but never showed any active support.

Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey spoke against Russia's proposal. They were particularly against the idea of uniting six Armenian vilayets to create one Armenian province, appointing a governor by the consent of the European states, parity of Christians and Muslims in the province and local councils, in the state positions, etc.

Germany, together with Austria-Hungary and Turkey, suggested to consider the Turkish project as a basis for negotiations, where the paragraph on establishment of the Armenian province was missing. Instead, restoration of the status of the six vilayets was proposed. Turkey also opposed against the European control over assigning officials and implementing the project.

A long diplomatic struggle unfolded around these proposals, in which course Russia was compelled to compromise.

The matter in point is as follows. The Arab historians paid attention to an important provision, proposed by Germany and adopted by Russia. While Armenians were demanding to carry out reforms under Russia's supervision, Germany proposed to refute that claim, and carry out the reforms under the supervision of two international commissioners, representing neutral countries²²⁵. This claim was stated in the Russo-Turkish agreement. It was obvious that the German contra-proposal intended not to allow consolidation of Russia's positions on the one hand, and covertly to leave the implementation of the reforms to the Young

²²⁴ Salih Zahr ad-Din, *The Policy of the Ottoman Empire in West Armenia and the Position of the Great Powers*, p. 23.

²²⁵ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 220. Usman at-Turq. *Pages from the History of Armenian Nation*, p. 237.

Turks' discretion, on the other. But in the final analysis, the German contra-proposal was pointed against the interests of Armenians.

In return, it succeeded in making Turkey sign the agreement on the Armenian reforms on January 26, 1914.

The Russo-Turkish agreement chose an all new version of solving the administrative-territorial problem, which was the central one. The option of forming an Armenian province, as well as the option of six vilayets were both declined. The parties agreed on dividing West Armenia into two zones. The first zone united the vilayets of Erzurum, Svaz and Trabzon, which gave Armenia access to the Black sea. The second zone comprised the vilayets of Bitlis, Van, Kharberd and Diarbakir. The center of the first zone was Erzurum, and Van was the center of the second zone. Each zone was headed by Inspector General, a foreigner, i.e. not a Turkish subject, who was appointed by the Ottoman government, by the recommendation of the European Great Powers.

Inspector General was given certain authorities to exercise executive power, was authorized to hire and fire officers, settle land disputes, etc.

The local council members should be elected to the principle of maintaining the numerical parity of Christians and Muslims. Hamidie was eliminated and a reserve cavalry was formed instead²²⁶.

Such is the general outline of the option of the Lebanese model, proposed for regulating the Armenian Question, acceptable both for the Ottoman Empire and the European states – Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, England and France. In this way, the solution of the Armenian Question was taken out of the Ottoman sultan's exclusive competence, and moved to a different legal field. This was a great advancement in itself, which inspired hope, that the solution of the Armenian Question was at last breaking the deadlock to enter the practical phase.

Indeed, the first steps that followed the agreement gave certain ground for being optimistic.

The sultan, by the consent of the European states, appointed Inspector Generals for both zones. Inspector General was key figure in the system of the Lebanese model, given wide authorities; the consistent implementation of the agreement reached between the states greatly depended on him.

²²⁶Collection of Diplomatic Documents. Reforms in Armenia. November 26, 1912 – May 10, 1914, P. 1915, p. 158-180.

Vestenenk, a Dutch citizen, was appointed Inspector General in the first zone, comprising the vilayets of Erzurum, Svaz and Trabzon; in the second zone, comprising Bitlis, Kharberd, Van and Diarbakir, appointed was Hoff, a Norwegian citizen.

Analyzing the Lebanese model, adopted by the Russo-Turkish agreement as a basis for regulating the Armenian Question, the Arab authors mark as novelty the factor that the vilayet of Trabzon was entered in the list of vilayets to undergo reforms. They also qualify as novelty the appointment of two European observers or supervisors²²⁷.

Both of the Inspector Generals arrived in Constantinople, ready to leave for Erzurum and Van and assume their challenging and responsible duties. Only Hoff managed to do it: in July, 1914, he arrived at his residence in Van²²⁸. As for Vestenenk, he delayed a little and never managed to leave for Erzurum. Both he and Hoff, who did reach Van, had never had a chance to take up their duties. On August 1, 1914, World War I broke out. Russia, England and France, and Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey appeared in the opposing military-political blocks and became warring sides.

Turkey, backed by Germany and Austria-Hungary, brilliantly benefited by this new military-political situation and invalidated the Russo-Turkish agreement of January, 1914, on the reforms in West Armenia. The Inspectors General Hoff and Vestenenk were deported from the territory of the Ottoman Empire by the Turkish authorities.

The Arab historian Asad Dagher has expressed his viewpoint on the situation, which cannot be qualified other than audacious. 'The Armenian Question', he writes, 'became one of the causes of the great European war, that gave an opportunity to solve the Eastern Question with all its branches on the basis of racism'²²⁹. Even if some would consider this viewpoint of Asad Dagher disputable, still it has a great portion of truth in it.

Such was the tragic end of the Odyssey of the Lebanese model, as applied to the solution of the Armenian Question.

The Arab historians – Moussa Prince, Fuad Hasan Hafiz, Marwan al-Moudawar, Naim al-Yaffi, Usman at-Turq and others, albeit with certain

²²⁷ *Dairat al-Maarif*, vol. X, p. 310. Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 221.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

²²⁹ Asad Dagher, *The Arab Revolt*, p. 31.

reservations, give an overall positive assessment to the Lebanese model of solving the Armenian Question and to the Russo-Turkish agreement of 1914, seeing there manifestation of new approaches to the solution of the Armenian Question, anchored not on the principles of forcible Turkization, assimilation or physical extermination, but on the principle of reforms. On the other hand, the failure to implement that model was an occasion for them to revert to the stand of the European states in solving the Armenian Question. They strictly criticize those states, accusing them of hypocrisy, and first of all – of pursuing their own political, economic and strategic interests, for which the Armenian people paid dear. In this matter, the Arab historians point the fire of their criticism at Germany and Austria-Hungary. They find that should those states, as Turkey's allies, wish, they would have the opportunity and potential to obligate the Ottoman leaders to meet their commitments, or at least to prevent the impending bloody feast. They did not, for which Marwan al-Moudawar, Salih Zahr ad-Din, Samir Arbash, Usman at-Turq, Fuad Hasan Hafiz and others consider Germany Turkey's accomplice in failing the Lebanese model and not preventing the Armenian Genocide.

Thus, Arab historiography verifies the truth that Western Armenians sought to solve the Armenian Question within the borders of the Ottoman Empire, and had never brought up the issue of separating from the Ottoman Empire. For them, acceptable were all three models: of reforms, of decentralization and the Lebanese model.

It is not the fault of Armenians at all, that none of those options worked, as a consequence of which Western Armenians appeared on the threshold of genocide.

ARAB HISTORIANS AGAINST THE YOUNG TURK VERSION OF ARMENIANS "TREASON" AND "REVOLT"

I. REFUTATION BY ARAB HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE ATTEMPTS OF THE YOUNG TURK LEADERSHIP TO ACCUSE ARMENIANS OF TREASON

Studying the problems of the Armenocide, the Arab authors have specifically dwelt upon an issue of principal significance. The matter concerns the accusation of treason against Armenians by the Young Turk leadership, which the latter employed to justify their own crime.

In this connection, the stifling political atmosphere is described, that formed in the Ottoman Empire by the beginning of World War I. We think Salih Zahr ad-Din has given the truthful picture of that atmosphere. "At that time," he writes, "in the Ottoman Empire the extreme pan-Turkist feelings gained momentum. Pan-Turanism became the official doctrine of the Young Turks. Guided by that doctrine, they turned their eyes towards the East, towards the Caucasus and Central Asia. The Turanian theorists found that Russia should be forced out of the Caucasus to thereupon annex those lands to Turkey, while the Black Sea should become Turkey's interior sea"²³⁰. However, as the Arab authors note, "the Young Turk leaders thought that the existence of Armenians hindered the implementation of their plan. Ali Ihsan pasha, a member of the "Ittehad ve Terakki" party, said in this connection, "But for Armenians, we would have long occupied the Caucasus"²³¹.

In July, 1914, the VIII Congress of the Armenian Revolutionary Dashnak party was convened in Erzurum. The World War had not begun yet, but the mankind was on its threshold and could already smell it. For

²³⁰ Salih Zahr ad-Din, *The Policy of the Ottoman Empire in West Armenia and the Position of the Great Powers towards the Armenian Question*, p. 23.

²³¹ *Ibid.*

that very reason, the War and the position of Armenians towards it became the central issue for discussion at the Congress.

Everything shows that the Arab historians are well familiar with the materials and resolutions of the Congress.

The Young Turk leaders attached great importance to the Congress and the resolutions to be adopted, which is evidenced by the fact that Shaqir Behaeddin and Naji bey, these leading representatives of the Young Turk "Ittehad ve Terakki" party, participated at the Congress. Shaqir Behaeddin, then member of the central committee of the party, later became the leader of the so-called "Ad Hoc Organization" – an organization made up of homicides and criminals, set out of prisons to slaughter Armenians, of adventurers and other dregs of the Turkish society²³². That organization proved the most active perpetrator of mass carnages of Armenians.

They were charged by the party leaders to impose on Armenians a decision that would exceptionally serve the interests of the Ottoman Empire and be radically contrary to the national interests of Armenians.

This is how Marwan al-Moudawar, having studied this question in detail, describes the process of the Congress of Erzurum, the Turks' claims and the resolutions of the Congress. He writes that when the Young Turk leadership learnt about the Congress of the Dashnak party, they decided to delegate their representatives Shaqir Behaeddin and Naji bey to the Congress, charging them to speak on behalf of the Young Turk party and present their claims. They did it: they demanded that the Congress of the Dashnak party declare loyalty to Turkey of all Armenians, both Turkey and Russia subjects, and in the event of war, form detachments of Armenian fidais to war against Russia and incite mutiny in the ranks of the Russian army in the Caucasus²³³. In order to tempt Armenians, the Young Turk representatives, on behalf of the leaders of their party, promised that "should they take such stand, they will be given the right to establish their independent state on some Armenian territories of Turkey and Russia after the war"²³⁴.

The works by other Arab authors, particularly Naim al-Yaffi, Fuad Hasan Hafiz and others bring the same proposals, which speaks about the difficult condition Armenians were in at the threshold of World War I.

²³² Ibid., p. 24.

²³³ Marwan al-Moudawar, *Armenians Throughout History*, p. 407.

²³⁴ Ibid.

Naim al-Yaffi writes that the Young Turks "announced the following claims at the VIII Congress of the Dashnak party:

1. To form armed detachments of Armenian fidais to war against Russians.

2. To organize riots in the Caucasus against Russians in order to incite the flame of revolt, break down and disorganize the Russian Army.

3. To unite Armenians abroad and cooperate with Turks²³⁵.

The third claim of the Young Turks, mentioned in Naim al-Yaffi's work, is missing in the works by Marwan al-Moudawar and other Arab authors. Meanwhile, it is very important, as it evidences that the Young Turks tried to subdue and employ for their own goals Armenians not only in Russia, but in the entire Armenian Diaspora, "shyly" masking that purpose under the phrase "cooperation of Armenians abroad and Turks".

What was the resolution adopted at the Congress, which the Young Turk leadership took as the response of West Armenians to their claims?

The Congress decided that, in the event of war, the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and the Armenians in Russia would appear in different camps, as they are subjects of these two states and shall each be loyal to theirs²³⁶. As Marwan al-Moudawar correctly noted, it meant that this decision "barred the road for the Young Turks"²³⁷ to use Russian Armenians against Russia with the aid of Western Armenians.

The Arab historians find very interesting the section of the Congress decisions concerning the entry of the Ottoman Empire into the war. The Armenian leaders inform the Ottoman leaders through their representatives at the Congress that "it is to the benefit of Turkey to retain neutrality in the upcoming war"²³⁸. In fact, Armenians openly recommended that the Ottoman authorities do not embark on the war, which was not in the interests of the Ottoman Empire and the nations comprised in it.

It was quite a daring suggestion on behalf of Armenians to the Ottoman Empire's leadership, considering the goals the latter was pursuing – the pan-Turkism policy, which success directly depended on

²³⁵ Naim al-Yaffi, *The Armenian Genocide and the Position of Arab Public Opinion*, p. 41.

²³⁶ Marwan al-Moudawar, *Armenians Throughout History*, p. 407.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

Turkey's victorious war, and the depth and nature of the relations, already established between Turkey and particularly Germany.

Along with this, the Congress passes a highly important decision, which we think was of top significance under the circumstances, and which Arab historiography has dwelt upon specifically. That passage is fully quoted in Marwan al-Moudawar's work, "Yet", the decision reads, 'should the Turkish government decide to enter the war, the Armenians in Turkey will discharge all their duties, imposed on them as Turkish subjects, serve the homeland in all spheres – in the army and in defending the country, by way of service, as all the citizens of the empire'²³⁹.

We repeat that it was a decision of crucial importance, which clearly stated that Armenians were subjects of the Ottoman Empire, and, as such, were ready to discharge all their duties, including serving in the army and defending the country. It was worded so as no other interpretation on behalf of the Turkish authorities was possible.

As regards the Young Turk leadership's demand that loyalty to Turkey be declared by Russian Armenians, and revolts be incited against Russia in the Caucasus, the Congress rejected it. The decision of the Congress on this issue stated that, "the Congress cannot speak on behalf of Russian Armenians, who are subjects of another state"²⁴⁰.

The Lebanese encyclopedia contains interesting information on this matter. Particularly, it is noted there that the "Ittehad ve Terakki", or the Young Turk party, with its representatives Shaqir Behaeddin and Naji bey also delegated to Erzurum representatives of Georgia and Azerbaijan, who suggested that Armenians join Georgians and Azerbaijanis in inciting a revolt against Russia²⁴¹. But Armenians refused the representatives of Georgia and Azerbaijan as well and reasserted their position – Armenians are loyal allies of Turkey and in case of war will do their duty towards their homeland²⁴².

Thus, the Young Turks' attempts to use Western Armenians as a bait, and with their aid to involve the Armenians in Russia in a war against the latter and stir up disorders in the Caucasus, ended in outright failure. They collided with the resoluteness of Western Armenians not to allow to involve themselves in a fratricidal war.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Dairat al-Maarif, vol. X, p. 310.

²⁴² Ibid.

Turning to this issue and Shaqir Behaeddin's complaints that their proposals had not inspired Armenians and were refused by them, Fuad Hasan Hafiz approves of the position Armenians had held, asking how at all the latter could be inspired by that the "Ottoman Armenians should war against their Russia subject brothers"²⁴³.

The position of Armenians aroused not just discontent, but profound rage among the Young Turk leadership. Fuad Hasan Hafiz relates Shaqir Behaeddin's reaction to the rejection of their proposals by Armenians. Out of control and in extreme fury, upon learning about the decision of the Congress, Shaqir Behaeddin exclaims, "It's a treason!"²⁴⁴. The Egyptian author underscores that it was the first accusation of high treason against Armenians by the Young Turks²⁴⁵.

Naim al-Yaffi confirms this, saying that the position of Armenians was perceived by Turks as a treason – *khain*²⁴⁶.

Related with this, the following observations would be appropriate.

First, the Young Turks' accusation of treason against Armenians lacked any arguments, there was no concrete display of any treason or crime.

Second, the groundlessness of this accusation is evident, as Western Armenians clearly declared that they were ready to do their duty towards Turkey in case the latter entered the war, and to protect the country up in arms.

Third, the Young Turks brought accusations of treason against Armenians neither during the war, nor after it, but before the war – in July, 1914, when World War I was not launched and Turkey was not in war yet. Under such conditions, the accusation against Armenians of treason is nothing but illogical and absurd.

Fourth, Arab historiography gives quite a correct elucidation of the events with quite persuasive and equitable inference, stating that there had been no treason on the Armenian side.

This should be considered an important contribution of Arab historiography to the elucidation of the Armenian Genocide, especially to a tangled and critical issue of the loyalty or state treason of Armenians.

²⁴³ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 300.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁶ Naim al-Yaffi, *Genocide of Armenians and the Position of Arab Public Opinion*, p. 41.

The conclusion is one and only – no treason had been committed.

2. ARAB HISTORIOGRAPHY ABOUT THE SELF-DEFENSE OF ARMENIANS IN VAN AND THE TURKISH VERSION ABOUT THE "REVOLT" OF ARMENIANS

The self-defense of Armenians in Van of 1915 has become a subject for special investigation in Arab historiography. This is accounted for by the fact that the Young Turks tried to present said self-defense as a revolt against the Ottoman state and accuse the Armenians of high treason. This accusation was brought by the Ottoman leadership as an official viewpoint. Actually, it is their second argument to prove the "treason" of Armenians. The first argument, as has already been mentioned, was their accusation against Western Armenians of their refusal to raise Russia's Armenians against Russia and start subversive activities in the Caucasus, in the Russian army's rear and ranks.

In connection with the events in Van, of which we will speak below, the accusation of treason against Armenians was officially presented by one of the chief organizers of the Armenian Genocide, minister of interior of the Ottoman Empire, further – prime-minister Talat, fully cited by the Egyptian author Fuad Hasan Hafiz. "What happened to Armenians", Talat said, 'is a punishment for betraying the Ottoman State, for joining Russia in the war and revolting in Van in April, 1915'²⁴⁷. The phrase "what happened to Armenians" stands for nothing but the Armenian Genocide, one of the key perpetrators of which was Talat in person.

Usman at-Turq underlines that the topic of the revolt in Van was widely exploited by the Turkish political figures as an evidence of the "treason of Armenians". Taking into account this fact, the Arab historians make a detailed analysis of the matter and infer on their own that no revolt against the Ottoman State took place in Van.

Fayez al-Ghossein, himself an eye-witness of the Armenian tragedy of 1915, an author of a book about it, notes that he has carried out a special investigation about the events in Van, talked with the citizens of Van, inquired the local officials, which efforts showed that neither in Van proper, nor in its environs not a single Muslim was killed by Armenians.

²⁴⁷ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 302.

He stresses that the Ottoman government had required that Armenians turned in their weapons, but the latter, afraid of Kurds and the government, refused to meet the requirement²⁴⁸. Upon the refusal, as Favez al-Ghossein notes, "the government required that the prominent figures of the community (Armenian – N. H.) yield themselves hostages. They did as required... But in other sections of the vilayet (Van – N. H.), the Turkish government gathered all the Armenians, took them out of their homes and killed them all on the road"²⁴⁹.

For the events taken place in Van, Usman at-Turq holds responsible the governor of Van, minister of war Enver's son-in-law Jevdet and the Turks, who longed to seize the Armenian districts and homes. "On April 17, 1915", he writes, "Turks launched their attack. They shelled the Armenian districts from artillery, while Armenians defended themselves"²⁵⁰. Muhammad Rifat al-Imam, too, confirms that the initiative to aggravate the situation in Van came from the Turkish side which is held responsible for the further events, singling out governor Jevdet's provocative moves²⁵¹. He concludes that "no matter what happened in Van, it was not a revolt, but an unarmed defensive act to withstand the Turkish siege"²⁵².

Moussa Prince considers the Turkish, as he calls it, thesis²⁵³ of the Armenian "revolt" groundless, too, as he does not think any Armenian revolt took place. He puts straightforwardly that in Vaspurakan, the massacres were initiated by Jevdet pasha, who used the army, relocated from the Caucasian front to Van and reinforced by the military forces, relocated to Van from Erzurum, to shell the Armenian districts of Van. And Armenians resisted, up to Moussa Prince, heroically²⁵⁴. Moussa Prince, in his own words, gathered this information from the notes, made by American and German missionaries, who had worked in Van and witnessed the events, and, the author underlines, gave a detailed description of the developments in Van. "One can deduce from their

²⁴⁸ Favez el Ghossein, *Massacres in Armenia (Evidences of a Witness)*, p. 46.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁰ Usman at-Turq, *Pages from the History of Armenian Nation*, p. 241.

²⁵¹ Muhammad Rifat al-Imam, *Armenian Question in the Ottoman State, 1878-1923*, p. 61.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 62.

²⁵³ Moussa Prince, *L'Armenocide*, p. 34.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

notes that Armenians in Van conducted **LAWFUL DEFENSE** (accentuated by Moussa Prince – N. H.)²⁵⁵.

The issue has been rather thoroughly elucidated by Fuad Hasan Hafiz, too. He considers the revolt in Van the Young Turks' fabrication. "Armenians", he writes, 'did not revolt in Van in April, 1915, but defended their own lives from the Ottoman attacks; they defended themselves until the Russian troops approached, entering Van on April 19, 1915'²⁵⁶.

As is seen, all the mentioned Arab authors, as well as those, whose names we did not bring here, are unanimous as to the point that Armenians, as subjects of the Ottoman state, did not revolt against it, hence, the issue of their betrayal of the Ottoman Empire is absolutely irrelevant. They are also unanimous that the attackers were Turks, while Armenians only defended themselves.

All the Arab historians, who have addressed the events in Van, consider the Armenian self-defense quite natural and the legal right of any nation, including the Armenians. In his book, published in French, Moussa Prince calls the defense of Van "legitimate defense" – "legitimate defense"²⁵⁷.

In this connection, some Arab historians adverted on another question, which, being relatively less studied in historiography in general, therefore not familiar to wide public, comes to refute the Young Turks' fabricated accusations against Armenians of treason and revolt. The issue is as follows.

Some Arab historians, first of all Samir Arbash and Fuad Hasan Hafiz, not denying that April 24, 1915, is the official date for the Great Armenian Massacre, draw our attention to the fact that the Armenian massacres had started even earlier, than the events in Van. Fuad Hasan Hafiz thinks that, during World War I, the first massacres of Armenians happened in the Iranian town of Urmia, during the first occupation of the town by Turkish troops. The Ottoman army had occupied it on January 2, 1915, and held until May 24 of that same year. The organizer of the massacres was the governor of Van, same Jevdet bey²⁵⁸. The Arab historian writes, "The massacres were organized and committed by

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁶ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 302.

²⁵⁷ Moussa Prince, *L'Armenocide*, p. 34.

²⁵⁸ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 301.

Jevdet bey, chief governor of the Armenian vilayet of Van, who had participated in the Ottoman military campaigns in the northwest of Iran, which then ended in said occupation²⁵⁵. Even the Turks make not a single allusion to the revolt of Armenians in Urmia. They slaughtered Armenians because they were Armenians.

This fact completely refutes the "viewpoint" of Talat and other Young Turk leaders, by which they attempt to justify their brutish actions as a "necessitated" measure in response to the "revolt" of Armenians. The Armenian massacres by the Ottomans in the northwest of Iran had taken place long before the alleged revolt of Armenians in Van, when even they, the Young Turks, did not utter a word about the Armenian revolt, be it in Van or any other place. Consequently, the "revolt" has nothing to do here. The massacres of February, 1915, in Urmia and the attack of the Ottoman armed forces on the Armenians of Van in April, 1915, had nothing in common with any Armenian revolt, as no such revolt had ever taken place. Hence, the treason of Armenians cannot become an issue either, which the Young Turks threw onto arena to justify their crime.

We find information on the events in Urmia, as was said, in Samir Arbash' work, too, which by content completely coincides with that brought by Fuad Hasan Hafiz'. This proves that they had the same source at hand. "During the occupation (Turkish - N. H.) of the north-western territory of Iran," he writes, "in February, 1915, thousands of Armenians - women, children and men were killed in Urmia"²⁶⁰.

The Armenian slaughters in Urmia, committed by the Ottoman troops, come not only to refute the "viewpoint" of the Armenian revolt and treason, but to confirm that the massacres of Armenians had been planned in advance.

In regard to Talat's accusation that "during the war they (Western Armenians - N. H.) joined Russia", which he used to make the revolt of Armenians even more persuasive and the crime of the Young Turks justifiable, the Arab historians refute this "argument" of the great executioner, too, as completely unfounded. This viewpoint is clearly worded in Fuad Hasan Hafiz' work, where he writes, "In respect of the Armenians, who fought against the Ottoman state in the beginning of 1915, those were Iranian and Russian Armenians, who had no obligations

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Samir Arbash, *Armenia: Land and Nation*, p. 167.

to the Ottoman state whatsoever²⁶¹. They lived in Iran and Russia, so quite logical is the question of the Arab authors why they should have any obligations to the Ottoman state, which was in war with Iran and Russia. Logical is their conclusion that Western Armenians should not be held responsible for the actions of Armenians, living in other states, Russia and Iran in this case. They assert once more that Western Armenians did not act on behalf of Russia, and, as subjects of the Ottoman state, conscientiously met their obligations to Turkey. This standpoint is explicitly stated in the Lebanese encyclopedia, where it says that Armenians confirmed their former position – they were loyal citizens of Turkey, and in case of war would meet their obligations to their homeland²⁶².

In this connection, we would like to notice that in historical literature on the Armenian Genocide, including Arabistics, the position of Russia is often made an issue. On the whole, Arab historiography elucidates the problem from a correct standpoint, particularizing the positive role of Russia in carrying out reforms in the Armenian regions, in signing the Treaty of San-Stefano of 1878, during the Russo-Turkish negotiations of 1912-1914, etc. The positive assessment of Russia's role in the Armenian Question may be qualified as prevailing in Arab historiography.

Given that, the approach and estimations by Fuad Maydani, a Lebanese author, brought in his article entitled "The Armenian Revolt against the Ottoman Sultanate and Its Causes", sound in discord with those cited above. Underscoring, that the "Armenian-Turkish friendship had a long history", he adds, "The Russian advocacy damaged that friendship and turned it into a ferocious hostility"²⁶³. Further in the analysis, Fuad Maydani, breaking away from the reality, gets to the point that he denies any pressure on Armenians by the sultans even in the national aspect, saying that in the field of national question nothing happened to Armenians, except that the Kurdish feudal lords exerted violence against them. Coming back to the Russian matter, Fuad Maydani writes, that Russia called Armenians to mutiny, and "this call of Russia was a success, and in different eastern vilayets revolutionary unions were

²⁶¹ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenia People*, p. 302.

²⁶² *Dairat al-Maarif*, vol. X, p. 310.

²⁶³ Fuad Maydani, *As-Saura al-armaniya did al-sultanat al-usmaniya maa bayan al-ashabuha* – The Armenian Revolt against the Ottoman Sultanate and Its Causes, "Al-Asrar", Beirut, 1938, No. 35, p. 1.

organized³⁶⁴. The author does not bring any argument to support this speculation, giving preference to declarative statements. In fact, he follows the Turkish historians' and political scientists' popular viewpoint in Turkish historiography in their attempt to exonerate the Ottoman Empire from responsibility and burden Tsarist Russia. Then the author, probably feeling that he has gone too far, at the end, nonetheless, admits that the carnage of the Armenian leaders was perpetrated by the Turks' hands, by the Ottoman government, and that Enver, Talat, Cemal and their partisans from the "Ittehad ve Terakki" party are the principal organizers and the responsible for their murders³⁶⁵.

Fuad Maydani's position in the policy of Russia towards the Armenian Question is but an exception, which contradicts the opinion of the overwhelming majority of the Arab historians.

In conclusion of this section on the Armenian revolt, we can state that Arab historiography has made a valuable contribution to refuting the Turkish fabrication.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2-3.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, No. 36, p. 1-3.

ARMENOCIDE

Arab historiography, as we have tried to show, provides detailed elucidation of the prerequisites, motivations of the Armenian Genocide, the role of the political and ethnical incentives, the dominating in the Ottoman Empire mentality and psychology, that favored the perpetration of the Genocide, the fundamentals and purposes of Turkization and pan-Turkism, the Ottoman leadership's resorting to racism, and other concomitant issues. The Arab authors studied the above questions against the background of the international relations of the time, and the attitude of the European Great Powers towards the Armenian Question.

All of these form a cluster of questions, without studying which it is impossible to give a scientific interpretation to the Armenian Genocide. To Arab historiographers credit be it said, in our opinion, they basically gave scientific, veracious and persuasive answers to the above questions.

Another group of questions covers the study of the genocide proper, its perpetration and processes, definition and analysis of its major constituents, revelation of the nature and elucidation of the consequences, considering the Armenian historical fate, as well as of the world developments, the Armenian Genocide serving a precedent and a model.

Here, too, Arab historiography has had its own saying, expressed substantiated, reasoned, persuasive viewpoints, quite impressive and, very often, offering new attractive ideas.

Among them, we would like to note the invention of the term "Armenocide" and putting it into scientific circulation, which honor of priority, as far as we know, belongs to Moussa Prince. This brilliant Lebanese scholar and historian referred to this question in his two books²⁶⁶, published in French, and in his monographic study, published in

²⁶⁶ Moussa Prince avec la collaboration de Marie-Ange M. Prince. Un genocide impuni. L'Armenocide. Introduction. Edition speciale numerotee (1 a 3000) a l'occasion du IIeme Congres International de Prophylaxie Criminelle. Paris (10-14 Juillet 1967),

Arabic²⁶⁷. It is evident that he has made up that term by analogy and likeness to Raphael Lemkin's groundbreaking invention of the term "genocide" – massacre of race.

"Armenocide" is not only a linguistic, but a political term, which has a very concrete ethno-political content. It clearly implies the total annihilation of Armenians – Armenians, as a race, an ethnos. It is so clear and concrete, that leaves no room for alternative interpretations. In that we see one of the secrets why this invention of Moussa Prince has quite easily won the right to existence and became so popular with the scientific circles.

Had not Moussa Prince done anything besides, the creation of this term only would be enough for his name to go down in one of the most tragic pages of Armenian history – that of the Great Massacre of 1915, as well as in genocidology.

1. THE ISSUE OF PLANNED ARMENOCIDE

As is seen, in Arab historiography prevailing is the viewpoint that there had been neither treason nor any revolt on the Armenian side, that could serve a pretext for the Armenian Genocide. Thus, logically, the question of the planned genocide comes to the foreground. It is one of the cornerstones of the problem of the Armenocide, perhaps the most crucial one. The Arab historians have conducted their research exactly in this direction.

The Arab scholars-historians in their works, based on various prime sources, show and prove that the Armenian Genocide of 1915 had been carried out according to a previously worked out and approved plan of the Young Turk leadership. For them, it is beyond doubt that the Ottoman leaders did have such plan, and acted according to that plan.

A starting point for that monstrous plan was the Young Turks' racist idea of turning the Ottoman Empire into a pure Turkish state through

Heidelberg Press-Lebanon, 103 p.: Moussa Prince. *Un genocide impuni: L'Armenocide*, 1975, 582 p.

²⁶⁷ Moussa Prince, *Majazar al-Arman. Jaraim did al-Insaniya- Armenian Genocide, Crime Against Humanity*, Aleppo, 1996, p. 157.

forcible Turkization, by that paving the road for the triumph of pan-Turkism.

The fact of the existence of a plan for total annihilation of Armenians, or for the genocide, was mentioned in the works of all those, who studied the issue – Moussa Prince, Marwan al-Moudawar, Samir Arbash, Ilyas Zananiri, Fuad Hasan Hafiz, Muhammad Rifat al-Imam, Naim al-Yaffi, Salih Zahr ad-Din, Salih Jihad, Emil Tuma, Amin Said and a great many other Arab authors.

We dare insist that said approach is dominating in Arab historiography.

The Arab scholars in their works bring the decisions of the Young Turk "Ittehad ve Terakki" party on extermination of Armenians, the commands and dispatches of Talat and other Young Turk leaders to the valis of vilayets to strictly stick to the decisions in the provinces, etc. In his work, Fuad Hasan Hafiz brought the decisions of the secret meeting of the Young Turk leaders, convened in early February of 1915. The secret meeting, at which Talat, Enver, Shaqir Behaeddin, Ahmed Aghaev and others participated, unanimously adopted the decision to "annihilate Armenians in the Ottoman Empire"²⁶⁸.

Ahmed Aghaev's participation at that meeting is worth mentioning. He was Azerbaijani, the organizer of the Armenian massacres in Baku in 1905. This is known to Fuad Hasan Hafiz, about which there is a mention in his book. Experienced in massacres, Ahmed Aghaev most probably shared his extensive expertise with the Young Turk leaders at the secret meeting, although the latter were not toddlers in that matter either.

The minister of war Enver, as Usman at-Turq mentions, informs Vangenheim, German Ambassador in Istanbul, about that decision. The latter in his telegram, sent to Berlin on May 31, 1915, writes: "Enver requires us not to impede those events"²⁶⁹ (extirpation of Armenians – N. H.).

The existence of the plan for exterminating Armenians is also adverted to in the work by one of the best genocide experts Naim al-Yaffi. Here is what he writes, "The Armenian Genocide was perpetrated

²⁶⁸ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 237.

²⁶⁹ Usman at-Turq, *Pages from the History of Armenian Nation*, p. 244.

deliberately, by commands – up to the adopted plan²⁷⁰. The fact that such plan existed, stresses also Ilyas Zananiri. "When the war was launched", he writes, "the Turkish government rejected the plan of improving the condition of Armenians²⁷¹, and considered the war an opportune chance for bringing about the plan of annihilation of the Armenian people"²⁷². We find it appropriate to refer to the viewpoint of an author such as Marwan al-Moudawar, one of the worthwhile aspects of whose work is abundance of truthful facts, which the author brilliantly makes use of. Giving the overall outline of the policy of the Ottoman leadership at the beginning of the war, Marwan al-Moudawar then writes, that the Ottoman Young Turk leaders "embarked on executing the plan of annihilation and deportation of the Armenian people"²⁷³.

It is noteworthy that the Arab authors find the deportation – the forcible displacement of Armenians, an inseparable part of the plan of annihilation of Armenians. This view, besides Marwan al-Moudawar and other Arab authors, is pronouncedly emphasized in Salih Zahr ad-Din's work. He writes that the Ittehadists, meaning the Young Turks, formulated the plan for "displacing Armenians from their native lands and exterminating them all through the Ottoman Empire"²⁷⁴. And Salih Zahr ad-Din is not alone in his opinion.

We could continue quoting the Arab historians, yet we think this much suffices to prove that in Arab historiography prevailing is the viewpoint that the Armenian Genocide was an elaborated policy of the Young Turks.

The fact that the Armenian Genocide had been planned, i.e. made a state policy, is explicated by the Arab authors not only in analyzing the problems, related with the Armenian Genocide proper, but also in analyzing the Arab problems in the XX century.

Arab historiography considers irrefutable also the viewpoint that the Young Turk leadership had had a plan for physical extermination of Arabs during World War I. "Armenians and Arabs", Salih Zahr ad-Din

²⁷⁰ Naim al-Yaffi, *Armenian Genocide and the Position of the Arab Public Opinion*, p. 12.

²⁷¹ The Russo-Turkish Agreement of 1914 is meant.

²⁷² Ilyas Zananiri, *The Tragedy of the Nation*, p. 60.

²⁷³ Marwan al-Moudawar, *Armenians Throughout History*, p. 406.

²⁷⁴ Salih Zahr ad-Din, *Armenians: People and Problem*, p. 95.

writes, 'were the two peoples, most of all exposed to the racist policy of annihilation'²⁷⁵.

As long as Armenians and Arabs existed, the establishment of the ethnically pure Turkish state, the unification of all the Turkish-speaking peoples to accomplish the insane dreams of the Young Turks of establishing the "Great Turan" state could never be put on the agenda. This concept is very clearly stated in Arab historiography. This is confirmed in the works by Zein Zein, Masud Dahir, Fuad Hasan Hafiz, Marwan al-Moudawar and other Arab authors, where the through idea is that during the years of World War I, the Young Turks considered Armenians and Arabs most dangerous, by this meaning the latter's intention and determination to maintain their existence and national identity.

The problem was in greater details addressed by such an authoritative Arab historian as Amin Sayid. In fact, he views the program issue of annihilation of Armenians and Arabs within the overall context of the Young Turks' national policy. In his work "The Revolt of Arabs in the XX century", mentioning that the Armenian Genocide was perpetrated in compliance with a previously developed plan, he writes, "Turkey's minister of interior Talat bey headed the campaign for extirpation of Armenians. The plan of the organizer of the campaign was to drive Armenians out of East Anatolia on foot through the Arabian desert under the soldiers' supervision, where the inevitable death awaited them"²⁷⁶. Thereafter, turning to the issue of exterminating Arabs, he expresses the following idea – the initial victories of the German-Turkish block during World War I "made dizzy the Istanbul leaders, who were great apologists of pan-Turkism. They decided it was high time to finish with the two powerful national movements – the Arab nationalistic movement in Syria, Iraq and Hijaz, and the Armenian movement in East Anatolia. The point is that in the internal regions of Turkey a great many Armenians lived"²⁷⁷. If the annihilation of Armenians was headed by Talat, the campaign for annihilation of Arabs was taken up by another leader of the Young Turk Triumvirate, minister of navy Ahmad Cemal. Member of the Young Turk Triumvirate Cemal pasha was the commander of the Fourth Turkish Army, stationed in Syria, and Syria's

²⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 67.

²⁷⁶ Amin Sayid. *The Revolt of Arabs in the XX century*, p. 79.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

absolute ruler, in whose hands the entire military and political power was concentrated. "In Syria", Amin Sayid writes, 'the solution of that problem (annihilation of Arabs - N. H.) was taken up by the minister of navy, Talat bey's fellow Ahmad Cemal pasha, called "bloodthirsty" in Syria. In Beirut, Damascus and Gaza gallows were erected. Ahmad Cemal pasha hanged, exiled and put to prison'²⁷⁸. Addressing that issue, Zein Zein notes that Ahmad Cemal "sentenced to death many Arab leaders as "traitors", accusing them of their intention to disintegrate the Ottoman Empire through decentralization, and sell their country to foreigners"²⁷⁹.

The crimes of Cemal and his surroundings against Arabs drew the Lebanese historian Masud Dahir's attention. He particularly accentuates "the mass slaughter of the Arab national figures, carried out by Cemal in person"²⁸⁰.

In view of the question under consideration, of significant value is also Asad Dahir's work "The Revolt of Arabs". The author is of the same opinion as the other Arab authors in regards to the existence of a definite plan of the Young Turks to annihilate Arabs. In his work, he gives the names of the Arab national-political leaders and all the outstanding figures, hanged by the command of the Young Turk leaders in Burj Hamud square in Beirut, in Aley, Damascus, Jerusalem and elsewhere, placing the photos of some of them²⁸¹. The list of those sentenced to death and hanged is also given by Amin Said, who refers to the official declarations of Cemal pasha on that they all had been accused of treason and intended "to separate Syria, Palestine and Iraq from the Ottoman Empire and establish an independent state"²⁸².

Amin Sayid noticed a peculiar fact.

He writes, that within the frames of the Young Turk plans, the crime against Armenians and Arabs was committed at the period, when prime minister of the Ottoman government was Sayid Halim pasha, the grandson of Muhammad Ali - the one who had devoted his whole life to the lofty cause of destroying the Ottoman Empire and achieving the

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

²⁷⁹ Zein N. Zein. *The Emergence of Arab Nationalism*, p. 110.

²⁸⁰ Masud Dahir, *Tarikh al-Lubnani al-ijtimai - Social History of Lebanon*, Beirut, 1974, p. 25-26.

²⁸¹ Asad Dahir, *The Arab Revolt*, p. IV-XII.

²⁸² Amin Sayid, *As-saura al-arabiya al-kubra - The Great Arab Revolt*, v. III, Cairo, 1934, p. 80.

independence of Egypt. But his mean grandson chose another path. "It is noteworthy", Amin Sayid writes, 'that the Turkish government, that committed all those crimes and tried to annihilate two nations – Armenians and Arabs, was led by emir Sayid Halim, the grandson of Muhammad Ali'²⁸³.

The facts, including the Turkish ones, confirm that the extermination of Armenians and Arabs, the implementation of the plan of genocide was not the sole domain of the Young Turk leadership. The Ottoman authorities, from top to bottom, had been obsessed by it. It would be wrong to view this as realization of the principle of subordination, or as rigidity of the Ottoman governmental system. The officials at the medium and lower levels spared no efforts to fulfill the commands from Istanbul. That the genocide was committed successfully, can be to some extent explained by their determination and psychology. Here is an example, very typical in the given period for the mentality and behavior of the Turkish authorities, taken from the memoirs of Naim-bey, secretary general of the General Committee for Deportation in Aleppo. It is a record of a conversation between him and the chairman of the Committee Abdullahad Nuri-bey, when the Armenian Genocide had reached its peak, and the dead bodies of many Arab national-political figures swung on the gallows.

Naim-bey writes, "Once I said to Abdullahad Nuri-bey, 'Bey-effendi, let's make the expulsion of Armenians less severe, or else death will threat all of Mesopotamia. In that vast terrain no one will be left, but Satan. The kaymakam of Ras ul-Ain sends alarming messages.' Nuri-bey laughed and said, 'My son, in that way we will get rid of two dangerous elements at once. Don't the Arabs die with the Armenians? Is that not good? In that way, the road for Turkism is cleared'²⁸⁴.

Before concluding the elucidation of this question, we would like to remark on that the Young Turks were guided by an amazingly alike, similar model in their experiments of committing the genocide of Arabs. Besides the massacres and beheading of the Arab national-political leaders, they also put into practice the policy of displacing Arabs, the prominent figures and their families, just like during the Armenian Genocide. With only one difference. If Armenians were displaced or

²⁸³ Amin Sayid, *Arab Revolts in the XX Century*, p. 80.

²⁸⁴ *The Genocide of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, Collection of Documents and Materials*. Editor M. G. Nersisyan, Yerevan, 1982, p. 473.

2. ARAB HISTORIOGRAPHY ON THE FACTOR OF JIHAD IN THE SYSTEM OF PERPETRATING THE ARMENOCIDE

The specificity of the Armenocide, particularly the possibility of its implementation, is hard to comprehend correctly without elucidating such a complex, even intricate issue as jihad, and its role in the Armenian Genocide.

Jihad occupies a special place in the system of Muslim religion. In Arabic "jihad" literally means "exert". In a wider sense it means "to spare no efforts" for the victory of Islam and its doctrine. Due to certain semantic changes through centuries, jihad was gradually perceived and interpreted as "sacred war" of Muslims against the infidels, Christians in the first place. That is exactly how jihad is perceived today – a sacred war.

On November 7, 1915, soon after World War I broke out and Turkey entered the war, allying Germany, Italy and Austria-Hungary against the countries of Entente – Russia, England and France, the spiritual leader of the Ottoman Empire, sheikh ul-Islam, issued a fetwa – manifesto, addressing all the Muslims of the world, declaring their sacred duty to unite in the struggle against Islam's three major foes – Russia, England and France. Shortly the manifesto of Sultan Mehmed V followed, calling Muslims of the world to struggle "for the liberation of the enslaved Islam and to defend the endangered Ottoman Empire"²⁸⁹. On November 23, that same year, a new manifesto was issued, requesting that all the Muslims in the world submit to the doctrines of the Sacred Book – Koran and defend Islam and its sacred places²⁹⁰.

The mentioned three manifestos made the official basis for jihad, the sacred war, and called Muslims to launch war against the infidels – Christians all over the world.

Jihad, declared by the Ottoman political and spiritual leaders in 1915, has become a subject for detailed discussion in Arab historiography. It is explained by the fact that jihad directly concerns also Arabs, as Muslims. The Ottoman government very well realized that jihad – the war, declared

²⁸⁹ N. Hovhannisyan, *History of Arab Countries*, v. II, p.506.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 507.

against Christians, would be a success, if joined also by Arabs, the most numerous nation in the Ottoman Empire, and their spiritual leaders, including sheriff of Mecca Hussein, very popular among the Muslim world. Fortunately, Arabs did not respond to the calls of the sultan and sheikh ul-Islam, because they were preparing to revolt against the Ottoman domination, which they did shortly afterwards, in June, 1916.

Within the scope of these questions, the Arab historians turned to the factor of jihad, now related with the Armenocide.

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attain considerable success²⁹⁴. In other words, the Muslim nations proved reluctant to launch a sacred war against Christians throughout the world. At least, no such occurrence had been recorded during World War I. It goes about masses. Certainly, there had been individual fanatics, theologians, feudal and tribal leaders, who responded to the call to the sacred war, but those were so small in number, that were unable to generate a climate, or change the overall picture. That is why Emil Tuma, Albert Hourani, Amin Said and other Arabists are right to state that jihad did not yield any results in the external policy, even assert that it failed.

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deported from West Armenia and the internal regions of the Ottoman Empire towards the Arab countries, Arabs were displaced in the opposite direction: from the Arab states – Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan and Iraq towards the depths of Anatolia. The issue of deportation of the Arab families is duly dwelt upon in Amin Sayid's book "The Great Arab Revolt"²⁸⁵. It is evidenced by other Arab authors, too. Here is what Zein Zein writes in that connection, "Many families were exiled to the internal regions of Anatolia, and a large amount of property was confiscated"²⁸⁶. What a familiar hand!

Arab historiography has also addressed the Assyrian Genocide, as a constituent part of the Young Turks' national racist policy. Arab scholars find that together with Armenians and Arabs, on the list of nations, exposed to extermination, were also Assyrians. The Young Turks, as is mentioned in the works by the Arab authors, "conscientiously" killed Assyrians, too. "In the vilayets of Diyarbakir", Fuad Hasan Hafiz writes, 'the massacres embraced also Assyrians and Christian Chalcidians. Thousands of Assyrians and Catholics were murdered not only in Diarbakir, but also in Mardin and Urfa'²⁸⁷. Shaqir Khasbaq, Muhammad Ahmad al-Maana and Feisal Najim al-Din al-Atraji have also referred to the great national tragedy of Assyrians²⁸⁸.

Summing up, we may state that the Armenian Genocide is qualified in Arab historiography as an outcome of the Young Turk government's planned actions and a display of state policy. This thesis is also confirmed by the attempts of the Ottoman authorities to exterminate Arabs and Assyrians.

The fact that the Great Armenian Massacre of 1915 had been planned, is one of the most characteristic, essential and principal features of the Armenocide.

²⁸⁵ Amin Sayid, *The Great Arab Revolt*, vol. III, p. 83.

²⁸⁶ Zein N. Zein. *The Emergence of Arab Nationalism*, p. 110.

²⁸⁷ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 313.

²⁸⁸ Shaqir Khasbaq, Muhammad Ahmad al-Maana, Feisal Najim ad-Din al-Atraji, *Geography of Iraq*, p. 221.

2. ARAB HISTORIOGRAPHY ON THE FACTOR OF JIHAD IN THE SYSTEM OF PERPETRATING THE ARMENOCIDE

The specificity of the Armenocide, particularly the possibility of its implementation, is hard to comprehend correctly without elucidating such a complex, even intricate issue as jihad, and its role in the Armenian Genocide.

Jihad occupies a special place in the system of Muslim religion. In Arabic "jihad" literally means "exert". In a wider sense it means "to spare no efforts" for the victory of Islam and its doctrine. Due to certain semantic changes through centuries, jihad was gradually perceived and interpreted as "sacred war" of Muslims against the infidels, Christians in the first place. That is exactly how jihad is perceived today – a sacred war.

On November 7, 1915, soon after World War I broke out and Turkey entered the war, allying Germany, Italy and Austria-Hungary against the countries of Entente – Russia, England and France, the spiritual leader of the Ottoman Empire, sheikh ul-Islam, issued a fetwa – manifesto, addressing all the Muslims of the world, declaring their sacred duty to unite in the struggle against Islam's three major foes – Russia, England and France. Shortly the manifesto of Sultan Mehmed V followed, calling Muslims of the world to struggle "for the liberation of the enslaved Islam and to defend the endangered Ottoman Empire"²⁸⁹. On November 23, that same year, a new manifesto was issued, requesting that all the Muslims in the world submit to the doctrines of the Sacred Book – Koran and defend Islam and its sacred places²⁹⁰.

The mentioned three manifestos made the official basis for jihad, the sacred war, and called Muslims to launch war against the infidels – Christians all over the world.

Jihad, declared by the Ottoman political and spiritual leaders in 1915, has become a subject for detailed discussion in Arab historiography. It is explained by the fact that jihad directly concerns also Arabs, as Muslims. The Ottoman government very well realized that jihad – the war, declared

²⁸⁹ N. Hovhannisyan, *History of Arab Countries*, v. II, p.506.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 507.

against Christians, would be a success, if joined also by Arabs, the most numerous nation in the Ottoman Empire, and their spiritual leaders, including sheriff of Mecca Hussein, very popular among the Muslim world. Fortunately, Arabs did not respond to the calls of the sultan and sheikh ul-Islam, because they were preparing to revolt against the Ottoman domination, which they did shortly afterwards, in June, 1916.

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the Ottoman political and spiritual leadership about jihad. However, this is not Usman at-Turq's only observation. He thinks that the declaration of jihad by the consent of Germany pursued two principal goals. First, "to raise the Islamic world, especially the Muslims in Africa and India, against the European colonists"²⁹⁷. The second objective, as Usman at-Turq writes, was connected with the Armenian Genocide. "Turkey's responsible figures", the Arab author puts it, "believed that the extermination of Armenians was one of the demands of the sacred war – jihad"²⁹⁸.

We think that Fuad Hasan Hafiz and Usman at-Turq have given an exhaustive characterization of the purposes of jihad and its fundamental role in the annihilation of Armenians.

The wave of religious fanaticism, risen on the basis of jihad, involved millions of Turks, Kurds and Circassians, ensuring their part in the Armenian Genocide. Between them, there was a specific competition as to who was a better Muslim and devotee to the "sacred" cause of jihad. This circumstance, as the Arab authors think, should always be borne in mind in order to apprehend the coverage of the Armenocide and the mechanisms of its perpetration.

We should add, that in the meat grinder of jihad, together with Armenians, minced were Assyrians and Greeks, which fact has also been recorded in Arab historiography.

Some Arab authors have expressed their apprehension connected with jihad, saying that in the course of time, the whole blame for its commitment and for the Armenian Genocide may be attributed to Islam, naming it the main responsible for that crime. This anxiety is verbalized in Fayez al-Ghossein's work on the Armenian Genocide. He writes that with time, Europe may blame Islam and consider it responsible for all the crimes and ferocities that Turks and their mullahs had practiced against the unprotected and innocent Armenians²⁹⁹. A pious Muslim himself, Fayez al-Ghossein experienced very deep feelings, and, understandably, would rather not have the world form such opinion about Islam as religion.

Thereby, Fayez al-Ghossein does not think that Islam shall be held responsible for the Armenian Genocide, for the ferocities of Turks against

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁹ See: Fayez al-Ghossein, *Massacres in Armenia*.

Armenian women, children, the old, the sick, the starving. For all that, he holds responsible the Ottoman authorities, the Young Turk leadership, who exploited Islam and its sacred book – Koran for their political ambitions and racist plans.

In fact, we deal with a phenomenon, which from that time on has been practiced in the Islamic reality. We mean here Islam as religion, and Islam as a political phenomenon, or political Islam. In the first case, we really deal with religion, which conveys a definite concept of the world, mankind, death and eternity, of God as the superior and only creator, the relations of man and Allah and other like issues.

While in the second case, that of political Islam, it goes about employing, exploiting Islam for political ambitions by certain political and religious circles. No sign of equality shall be put between these two approaches. Fayez al-Ghossein is right when he partitions Islam as religion from jihad, which is a classic example of using the doctrines and dogmas of Islam for political purposes.

We think that the elucidation of the issue of jihad in Arab historiography and the critical views of Arab scholars on that jihad was directed against Armenians, is extremely valuable for forming a more comprehensive picture of the mechanisms and policy of the Armenian Genocide of 1915 – the Armenocide.

3. "ARMENOCIDE – THE MOST GENOCIDAL GENOCIDE"

The author's right of this definition also belongs to Moussa Prince³⁰⁰.

Not satisfied with making up the term "Armenocide", further he opened the brackets of its content, which has yielded unprecedented, unparalleled results. It has enabled, or even induced the author to compare the Armenocide with the ensuing genocides or attempts of genocide, and draw a fundamental conclusion: compared with all the other genocides of the XX century, the Armenocide is the biggest, gravest, wickedest, in a word – the most genocidal genocide.

Moussa Prince finds that genocide usually has ethnical, geographical, historical, economical and political causes³⁰¹. It certainly does. But he is

³⁰⁰ Moussa Prince. *L'Armenocide*, p. 26-27.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 18-19.

one of the first to draw our attention to the psychological and pathological factors, too, which, according to him, were present both in Armenian-Turkish and in German-Jewish relations, and had their negative part in the Armenian Genocide and the Jewish Holocaust³⁰². The sadism, displayed in those two crimes – the Armenian Genocide and the Jewish Holocaust, committed by Turks and Germans respectively, he explains by a pathological factor, by the psychology, shaped in Turks against Armenians, and in Germans against Jews.

In the works of Arab authors in all details and scrupulously the horrible picture of the Armenian Genocide is given, which was perpetrated in a most barbaric way in six Armenian vilayets – Erzurum, Kharberd, Svaz, Bitlis, Van and Diarbakir, as well as against Armenians in other provinces, districts, towns and villages of the Ottoman Empire. This has been elucidated in Armenian, Russian, European and American historiography in particulars, hence we do not think it appropriate to dwell on the descriptions of those events, especially that the works by Arab authors principally do not contain anything new in that sense.

Nonetheless, we think it relevant to advert on some issues touched upon in Arab historiography, which in our opinion, are of key importance. The point here is the tactics of the Young Turks.

The Young Turk leadership took up the preparation and implementation of the Armenian Genocide very seriously. The sequence of the important political and military steps was clearly determined.

The Arab authors first of all accentuate the arrest and murder of the Armenian political and national figures, intellectuals and clergy. By this, the Armenian national-political leadership, the cream of the society was beheaded, and Armenians were left without an organizing and coordinating center.

Second, they elucidated such an essential issue, as the policy of the Young Turks to deprive Armenians of military force. Usman at-Turq writes that, when World War I began, "in 1914, full mobilization was ordered, and all the men aged 18-45, without exception, were conscripted into army"³⁰³. Among them were also the Armenian men, who, as subjects of the Ottoman Empire, joined the army to discharge their duty. Thus, the Armenian men, as the Armenian national figures had assured

³⁰² Ibid., p. 22.

³⁰³ Usman at-Turq, Pages from the History of Armenian Nation, p. 239.

the Young Turk leadership, served in the ranks of the Turkish army away from their villages and towns. Initially, they were employed in construction work. Yet, before passing on to the commitment of the genocide, by the decision of the Ottoman government, the Armenian soldiers, as Moussa Prince notes, were disarmed and killed³⁰⁴.

Consequently, Western Armenians were beheaded and left defenseless in both political and military sense. As the Arab authors remark, mainly women, children, the old and the sick were left in towns. They quite justly explain the Young Turks' success in perpetrating the Armenocide partly by this.

The Armenocide, or the Armenian Genocide, by its policy and outcomes differs in several ways from other genocides, perpetrated later against other nations in other countries.

First, the Armenian Genocide was committed in the native land of Armenians – in West Armenia.

Second, the executors were not natives, but incomers – Turks, who had occupied the western territories of Armenia.

Third, the Armenian Genocide in West Armenia was not happening locally and was not limited by territory and population – it was comprehensive and total, covering the whole of the Ottoman Empire from North to South, from East to West.

Forth, as an outcome of the Genocide, Western Armenians lost their homeland, were deprived of their cradle. West Armenia was emptied of its native population – Armenians, in whose place, in their homeland aliens settled down – Turks and Kurds.

Fifth, only one tenth of their historical homeland was left to Armenians.

Sixth, finding shelter in various countries around the world, the survivors of the Armenian Genocide laid the foundation for the present day Armenian Diaspora. A unique phenomenon is observed: presently, Armenians in Diaspora outnumber Armenians in the independent state of all Armenians – in the Republic of Armenia.

Such is today's merciless reality, which directly proceeds from the Armenian Genocide.

³⁰⁴ Moussa Prince, *L'Armenocide*, p.32.

All this provides enough grounds to state that "the Armenocide is the most genocidal genocide"³⁰⁵.

³⁰⁵ This semantic definition of Armenocide is suggested by us, see: N. Hovhannisyan. *The Armenian Genocide. Armenocide*, Yerevan, 2002.

THE HUMANITARIAN ATTITUDE OF THE ARAB PEOPLE

Along with the scientific study of the problems of the Armenian Genocide, Arab historiography also turned to the elucidation of the attitude of the common Arab people, local authorities and national-political figures, when the Armenocide had already been under way and caravans of Armenian refugees appeared in the Arab countries. Arabs are the people who eye-witnessed the great Armenian tragedy, saw with their own eyes the violence, the slaughter and plunder, committed by the Turkish authorities and soldiers against Armenians. We can say that the first genocide of the XX century – the Armenian Genocide of 1915, shocked Arabs. And at that fatal for Armenians period they reached their helping hand to the Armenian exiles.

This has found its due place in the works by Arab authors, some of which, like Marwan al-Moudawar, Usman at-Turq and others, have even devoted separate chapters in their works to the attitude of Arabs towards the Armenian refugees.

The Young Turks planned to commit the Armenian Genocide by two levels. The first level was to murder the overwhelming part of Armenians in their native land – West Armenia, and the second – to exterminate the rest in the Arab deserts and settlements on the roads of exile.

By expelling Armenians to Arab countries, the Young Turk leaders were convinced that they would have two natural and reliable allies in carrying on with the carnage of Armenians. The first were the Muslim Arabs: Istanbul was positive that they would ardently welcome the call for jihad and, carried away by the mania of the sacred war, would go on with the bloody carnage they had started in Anatolia. The second was the desert. Talat and his associates had no doubt that Armenians would fall victims of the sands of the desert, unable to withstand the burning sun, the inevitable hunger and thirst.

In their works, the Arab authors have addressed both of these aspects. The issue of the Sahara desert is always touched upon in the works by Arab authors³⁰⁶.

But the expectations of the Young Turk leadership did not come true.

A number of factors account for it. First and foremost – there was friendly cooperation between the Arab and Armenian intellectuals, national-political figures, that had been formed since the late XIX century due to the notion that the common enemy of both Armenians and Arabs was the brutal Ottoman yoke. It is accentuated in Salih Zahr ad-Din's work, where he writes that "he fully agrees with Prof. N. Hovhannisyanyan's viewpoint that "as far back as in the late XIX – early XX century, the Arab and Armenian political thought came to the conclusion that the national interests of Arabs and Armenians coincided, that they suffered from the same Ottoman yoke and had a common enemy – the Ottoman dictatorship. Consequently, these peoples shared the same fate"³⁰⁷. It all likelihood, this viewpoint of ours is acceptable for Arab historiography.

Secondly, as was mentioned, Arabs accepted the call for jihad very coolly, refusing to join the so-called sacred war, eventually refusing to obey the orders from Istanbul to massacre Armenians. On the contrary, as the facts brought in Arab historiography evidence, Arabs very often would endanger themselves and reach out to help the Armenian orphans, women and the old, the sick and the starving. Related to this, Usman at-Turq notes that Arabs, women and men, gave a helping hand to the Armenian refugees, "opened up their hearts and homes for all Armenians"³⁰⁸. He makes a specific stress on the caring attitude of Arab women towards the Armenian orphans, providing them with a shelter and housing. He mentions the danger that impended over Arabs for their help to Armenians. The threat, understandably, came from the Turkish authorities, who had strictly forbidden Arabs to offer any aid – even bread or water – to the Armenian refugees³⁰⁹. Despite that, Arabs

³⁰⁶ See: Usman at-Turq, Pages from the History of Armenian Nation, p. 243 etc., Marwan al-Moudawar, Armenians Throughout History, p. 408, etc.

³⁰⁷ Salih Zahr ad-Din, The Policy of Ottoman Government in West Armenia and the Position of Western Powers in the Armenian Question, p. 28-29.

³⁰⁸ Usman at-Turq, Pages from the History of Armenian Nation, p. 247.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

continued to help the Armenian refugees, or, as Usman at-Turq puts it, "our Armenian brothers" ("ikhvanuna al-arman")³¹⁰.

He also mentions with satisfaction that up to this day, in their books – scientific and fiction, published in Armenian, Armenians have highly appreciated the "position of the honest Arab people"³¹¹.

The Young Turk leaders were certainly aware of the philanthropic attitude of Arabs towards the Armenian refugees. A number of secret telegrams, dispatched by minister of interior Talat to the governor of Aleppo and other local administrators, evidence that.

Here are some of them: "To the governor of Aleppo, September 9, 1915. The right of Armenians to live and work on the Turkish land is totally invalidated. In this connection, the government takes the whole responsibility and commands not to spare even newborns. Execution of this order has already yielded results in some provinces. As opposed to this, for some unknown reasons, exceptions were made for some people – they were kept in Aleppo, instead of being exiled. This circumstance puts the government in a tight squeeze. Paying no attention to their objections, drive everyone out, whoever they be – women or children, even those unable to move. Do not let people protect them. Talat, minister of interior"³¹².

A week later, on September 16, 1915, Talat sends another telegram to the governor of Aleppo, "You have already been informed that, by the decision of the party, commanded is to exterminate all the Armenians living in Turkey. Those, who would stand against this decision, cannot retain responsible imperial office. However cruel the measures taken may be, their existence shall be put an end to. Pay no attention to their age or sex, neither feel any remorse. Talat, minister of interior"³¹³.

And finally, one more secret order to the governor of Aleppo, dated November 23, 1915, "Secretly exterminate the Armenians that get into your hands from the eastern vilayets. Talat, minister of Interior"³¹⁴.

If we add to all these higher commands the "Law on Deportation" of Armenians, adopted by the Turkish government on May 14(27), 1915, by which the commanders of all the Turkish corps, troops and divisions were

³¹⁰ Ibid.

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² See: N. Hovhannisyán, *History of Arab Countries*, vol. II, p. 563.

³¹³ Ibid. p. 563-564.

³¹⁴ Ibid., p. 564.

ordered to punish with arms all those, who would in any way stand up against the execution of the law on deportation of Armenians³¹⁵, not only the extent of the cruelty the Ottoman Empire had undertaken the total extermination of Armenians will become clearer, but also the menace, suspended over all those Arabs, who dared not to obey the above orders.

The other member of the Young Turk Triumvirate, minister of war Enver was in charge of the execution of the "Law on Deportation". He is equally liable for the Armenian Genocide.

Under such circumstances, when the threat of cruel punishment was awaiting each Arab, they, despite that, went on with their philanthropic aid to the unprotected Armenians, who appeared in their villages and towns due to the forcible deportation. Fortunately, we have enough information on that. As Moussa Prince noted, "The Arab officials of the Ottoman government, to the extent possible, tried to ease the brutal orders of Istanbul. Some of them proved even brave enough to determinedly refuse to obey them"³¹⁶.

Marwan al-Moudawar brings an example of that in his book. It goes about the unparalleled humane deed of Ali Suvad-bey – the haqim, or administrator of Deir az-Zor, which characterizes best the Arabs and their attitude towards Armenians. "In his district, he takes thousands of Armenian refugees under his patronage, finds work and payment for them, grants them an opportunity to obtain something"³¹⁷. The Young Turk government in Istanbul learns about it and sends him threatening telegrams to stop his philanthropic aid to Armenians and "drive them away to the depths of the desert"³¹⁸. Ali Suvad-bey displays enough courage not to obey the Istanbul orders. Moussa Prince, who also addressed this story, writes that Ali Suvad-bey sent the following reply to the capital of the Ottoman Empire, "We do not have enough means to transport them, but if your aim is to murder and slay them, I cannot let it happen or order my subordinates to do it"³¹⁹. For that, Talat fired Ali Suvad-bey and appointed Zaki bey the governor of Deir az-Zor. According to Marwan al-Moudawar, Usman at-Turq and Moussa Prince, he "was known as a bloodthirsty person".

³¹⁵ Ibid.

³¹⁶ Moussa Prince. *L'Armenocide*, p. 39.

³¹⁷ Marwan al-Moudawar, *Armenians Throughout History*, p. 408.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ Moussa Prince. *L'Armenocide*, p. 39.

For the philanthropic position of Arabs taken towards Armenians, Marwan al-Moudawar, indeed, has all the reasons to call his nation "noble and honest Arab people"³²⁰. We are convinced that Armenians all to a man would put their signature under such a Certificate.

The more so as Ali Suvad-bey's example is not single. In the same way acted Sabit-bek as-Suveydi, the head of the province of Al-Bashir in the vilayet of Diarbakir who, upon receiving the order to exterminate Armenians, refused to obey it and sent his resignation to the Ottoman government, motivating that "his conscience does not allow him to do such work"³²¹. His resignation was accepted, but shortly after he was murdered by the Turk soldiers to give a lesson to others who would refuse to obey the orders of the Ottoman government to extirpate Armenians, and would go on helping the Armenian caravans passing through the Arab countries.

Some Arab officials remained well-disposed towards the Armenian refugees. Such was the attitude of the head of Lijan in the vilayet of Diarbakir, who was also murdered by Turk soldiers³²².

Commendable is the deed of Abdullah Musavi (Massai), the Muslim religious figure in the Syrian town of Hama: it took him four months to build an orphanage at his own expense and provide the orphans with food and clothing³²³.

We should also mention with gratitude the names of Jalil-bek, governor of Diarbakir, and Sami-bek, who replaced him at the office³²⁴.

The Arab elite of Mosul also acted with dignity. When the Arab governor received the command from Istanbul to exterminate the Armenians in Mosul or the caravans passing by, he, instead of obeying it, invited the renowned figures of the town to discuss said order. The council unanimously decided to reject the demand of the Turkish government, declaring that "their conscience does not allow them to have their hands drenched in the blood of Armenians, and become criminals like Turks"³²⁵.

³²⁰ Marwan al-Moudawar, *Armenians Throughout History*, p. 408.

³²¹ Salih Zahr ad-Din, *The Policy of the Ottoman Empire in West Armenia and the Position of the Great Powers towards the Armenian Question*, p. 30.

³²² *Ibid.*

³²³ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 30-31.

In those nightmarish years, a manifestation of humane attitude of Arabs towards Armenians was the invaluable aid of Egyptians, the people and the government, to the Armenians of Mussa Dagh. Almost all the Arab authors have referred to the heroic self-defense of the Mussa Daghis, unable to conceal their sincere admiration for the endurance and heroic stand of Armenians. Marwan al-Moudawar, Usman at-Turq, Muhammad Rifat al-Imam and others have written about this circumstantially. The Egyptian historian Muhammad Rifat al-Imam calls the actions of Mussa Dagh rebels heroic, underlining their determination not to let Turks slay them. He rates high their skill in taking the correct strategic positions³²⁶. The Arab authors emphasize the important fact that the Mussa Dagh rebels, saved with the help of the French ships, were open-heartedly received in Egypt and housed in Port Said³²⁷, where a special camp had been prepared for them. It is worth mentioning that Hussein Kamil, the sultan of Egypt, himself covered the considerable portion of maintenance costs of the Mussa Dagh survivors.

In the Armenian-oriented position of Arabs, of special significance was the attitude of Hussein ibn Ali al-Hashimi, administrator of Hijaz and sheriff of Mecca, towards the crime of the Young Turks and the Armenian Genocide. He was very popular with the entire Muslim world, conditioned by two important circumstances. Firstly, he was the direct descendant of the founder of Islam, Muhammad prophet's Kureishi tribe's Hashimi family; secondly, the two important Muslim places of worship – Mecca and Medina, were under his control. During World War I, Hussein ibn Ali together with his sons headed the anti-Turkish uprising, which played an important part in the fall of the Ottoman Empire and liberation of Arabs from the Ottoman domination.

In his addresses of 1916-1917 to the Muslim world, Hussein ibn Ali strictly criticizes the Young Turk party and Talat, Enver and Cemal, the rulers of the empire, who, he believed, pursued the wrong policy³²⁸. He especially sharply criticizes their policy towards Arabs and the other non-Turkish peoples of the empire, including Armenians. In this respect he

³²⁶ Muhammad Rifat al-Imam, *The Armenian Question in the Ottoman Empire, 1878-1923*, p. 65.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*

³²⁸ *Manshur an min sharif Makka va amiraha ila jamii ikhvanihii al-muslimin*, 1916 huzeyran 26 - A Common Appeal of the Sheriff of Mecca and its Governor to all Muslim Brothers, June 26, 1916, *The Arabic Sources about the Armenian Genocide*, p. 11-19.

points out three circumstances – the attempts of the Young Turks to convert into Turks all the nations of the empire; their hostile attitude towards Arabs and Arabic, which was the language of Koran, the sacred book of Muslims; and the mass slaughter of Armenians during the war. According to the sheriff of Mecca, the Young Turks' policy contradicted the principles of Islam, and they "broke off with the Islamic world, the Holy Koran and the Sunnah" by committing those crimes³²⁹.

Hussein ibn Ali drew such conclusions also because of the Young Turks' policy towards the Armenian Question. He openly relates this in his letters to his son emir Feisal and emir Abd al-Aziz al-Jarba in 1916. The emirs coordinated the activity of the Arab rebellion army in the Syrian front. Hussein ibn Ali requested that they help the Armenian refugees in every way and "protect them as you protect your own self, your children and your property, because they (Armenians – N. H.) are the zimmi (people under wardship) of Muslims"³³⁰. The sheriff of Mecca had in mind the fact that, according to the doctrines of Koran and Muslim law, Christians were considered the wards of Muslims.

The survivors of the genocide remember with gratitude Arabs – common people and officials – as they very often would endanger their own lives, ignore the threats of the Turk askeri and help the Armenian refugees. Armenians trusted Arabs. Quite a few Armenian mothers, out of despair, gave their children to Arab women, in the hope to save their lives. In this way, thousands of Armenian children were saved from the jaws of death and the atrocities of the Turkish troops.

On May 9, 1919, in the city hall of Damascus, Emir Feisal's meeting with the leading public figures of liberated Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine was held. At that historic session, the religious leader of the Armenian refugees, settled down in Damascus, Aleppo and Syria, was present. In his speech, he expressed support to Arabs in their liberation movement for their national independence, and taking the occasion, on behalf of all Armenians, thanked Arabs for their kind and noble attitude towards the Armenian refugees, who already lived in the Syrian cities and regions for four years. Attended by stormy applause, the Armenian

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ See: N. Hovhannitsyan, *History of Arab Countries*, vol. II, p. 565.

delegate declared, "The name of Arabs will be entered in the History of Armenians in golden letters"³³¹.

The attitude of Armenians has not changed up to the present.

³³¹ Documents on British Foreign Policy. 1919-1939. 1st Series, vol. IV, London, 1952, p. 271.

"THE BLACK PAGE IN THE HISTORY OF MANKIND OF THE XX CENTURY"

Along with discussing the problem of the Armenocide – the genocide of Armenians, Arab historiography also gives the general assessment of the Armenian Genocide, based on its significance both for the Armenian people and the mankind.

The Arab authors, first of all, find that the events of 1915 in West Armenia can be only qualified as genocide. They clearly tell slaughters and massacres from genocide. In their works these terms convey different meanings. Massacres, in their judgment, are local phenomena of a limited scale, may sometimes be initiated by a local administrator, while genocide is ethnic extermination, total carnage of the given race, effected as state policy, by all measures and methods – political, economic, military, advocacy, moral-psychological etc., based on the ideas of racism.

This interpretation has been expressed in the already mentioned formula of Moussa Prince, "Armenocide is the most genocidal genocide". By content, i.e. in terms of being unprecedented and most brutal, this formula approximates the definition, given by the Arab authors, particularly by Fuad Hasan Hafiz³³² and Samir Arbash³³³, "The Armenian Genocide is the black page of the XX century".

The Arab historians are unanimous in that the Armenian Genocide is the first genocide of the XX century. In Arab historiography, this issue is not a subject for disputes or interpretations.

Arab historiography perceives and interprets the Young Turks' crime, committed against Armenians, as crime against humanity. Apologizing to the esteemed reader, below we will bring the Arab historians' views on those issues.

³³² Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 297.

³³³ Samir Arbash, *Armenia: Land and Nation*, p. 165.

Moussa Prince, besides the fact that he defines the Armenian Genocide as the most genocidal genocide, he also grades it as "crime against humanity"³³⁴. Usman at-Turq, considering the Armenian genocide as a barbaric act, finds that "it aroused the rage of the entire civilized world"³³⁵. The same viewpoint is held by Salih Zahr ad-Din, "What took place in 1915 and in the following years, was nothing but genocide. It has gone down in Armenian history as "the "Great Massacre", considered as a crime not only against Armenians, but against humanity"³³⁶. Fuad Hasan Hafiz has quite thoroughly referred to that issue. For him, the Armenian Genocide is "violation of all the norms of international law and the principles of humanism"³³⁷. In this connection, viewing the Armenian Genocide as the first genocide in recent history of the mankind, he calls it the black page of the XX century³³⁸.

We think that these viewpoints of the Arab authors are quite sufficient to prove that Arab historiography does not qualify the Armenian genocide as an isolated phenomenon, as the tragedy of the Armenian nation only, but regards it from the standpoint of the political fate of the humanity, and arrives at the one and only true conclusion that the Armenian Genocide is a crime against the entire mankind.

The Arab historians also observe the Armenian Genocide in the context of the ensuing genocides of other nations, marking some genetic linkage. This chain becomes even more evident, when they – Moussa Prince, Fuad Hasan Hafiz, Marwan al-Moudawar and others, identify certain successiveness between the Armenian Genocide and Hitler's policy towards the European nations during World War II. Moussa Prince puts it straightforwardly, that what had been done by the Young Turks to Armenians, Hitler repeated a quarter of a century later³³⁹. In his book, he brings the French translation of the passage from Hitler's speech in Obersalzberg on August 22, 1939, where there is a mention of the Armenian Genocide. In this speech, very well known to the scientific world, the Fuhrer of Germany, addressing the high command of the

³³⁴ Moussa Prince. *L'Armenocide*, p. 13.

³³⁵ Usman at-Turq, *Pages from the History of Armenian Nation*, p. 247.

³³⁶ Salih Zahr ad-Din, *Policy of the Ottoman Government in West Armenia and Position of Western Powers towards Armenian Question*, p. 26.

³³⁷ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 5.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 297.

³³⁹ Moussa Prince. *L'Armenocide*, p. 38:

German army and all present, informs them about his order to exterminate all men, women and children of Polish background, exclaims, "Who, after all, remembers today the extermination of Armenians?"³⁴⁰. And we cannot but agree with Moussa Prince, when he says that the "Armenocide was the initial phase on the road to the genocide, committed by the Nazis"³⁴¹.

We come across identical thoughts also in Fuad Hasan Hafiz' work. An evidence to this is the passage, where he draws parallels between the Armenian Genocide, perpetrated by the Young Turks, and the genocide, committed by the Nazis. "When Adolf Hitler committed his genocide", Fuad Hasan Hafiz writes, "he reminded about the Armenian Genocide as an example and model"³⁴². Said to the point – exactly, a model. It would not be any exaggeration to say that the Young Turks were the teachers of the Nazi Germans, who did not only prove worthy pupils of their teachers in their villainy, but even surpassed them.

The Arab authors regard the successiveness of genocides not only in that the Germans took the Young Turks as a model, and not only within the "Young Turks – Nazis" frame. They think that this successiveness is also demonstrated in the genocides, committed in other countries and continents.

No question, this issue is quite complicated and delicate, and can become a subject for discussion. Here we address it inasmuch as it is addressed in Arab historiography at discussing the Armenian Genocide, in the course of which new strata have been revealed.

Dr. Shafik Rais for instance, thinks that the genocides carried out against the other peoples "can be compared with the policy of the Turkish government, convinced that in order to put an end to the Armenian Question, it is necessary to exterminate Armenians"³⁴³.

This question was given circumstantial examination by Salih Zahr ad-Din, Nayim al-Yaffi, Fuad Hasan Hafiz, Samir Arbash and other Arab authors. Hussein Muruwa, professor at Lebanon University, a famous intellectual, philosopher, author of several valuable volumes on Arab philosophy, who fell victim of the civil war, stirred up in Lebanon,

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

³⁴² Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 297.

³⁴³ Shafik Rais, *Al-Lubnan al-ta'ibini - Mourning Lebanon*. 1975-1976, Beirut, 1986, p. 21.

having studied all the manifestations of genocide in the XX century, considered the Armenian Genocide as the first genocide of our era. He described the chain of the transition and development phases of genocide in the international policy. As starting point for that international chain of genocides, Hussein Muruwa regards Turanism or Turkism, which victims fell Armenians, which victims could also have fallen Arabs. In his view, said chain began with Turkish Turanism, followed by German Nazism, Italian fascism, etc.³⁴⁴.

The common between them is, as mentioned Hussein Muruwa, racism, which was carried out in practice through extermination of entire groups of peoples³⁴⁵.

Thus, Arab historiography perceives the Armenian Genocide – the Armenocide, as the first genocide of the XX century, which, if a tragedy for Armenians, proved a crime for the entire mankind, therefore, it should be qualified as crime against humanity.

On the other hand, the Arab authors, based on the experience of the Armenian Genocide, have identified a genetic linkage between the Armenocide and all the other ensuing genocides, perpetrated in other countries throughout the world.

We think, quite convincing is the thesis, brought up by Arab historiography, saying that as a starting point for all said served Turkish Turanism, the Genocide of Armenians, committed by the Young Turks, and in a broader sense – racism.

³⁴⁴ Hussein Muruwa, *Bayna Turaniya... va sibiuniya*, Beirut, 1986, p. 86-87.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

THE ASSESSMENT OF THE MISSION OF ARMENIAN AVENGERS IN ARAB HISTORIOGRAPHY

In Arab historiography, the issues of the responsibility for the Armenocide and denunciation of its organizers occupy a central place. Such approach is quite lawful, as any genocide in itself is a challenge to humanity, and a crime not only against the given ethnos, but against the whole mankind.

When discussing this issue, the Arab historians also proceed from the thesis that the punishability of genocide from the viewpoint of international law has no statute of limitation, no time limit, hence who and when committed it – never matters. For all times, it remains a crime against humanity, so it ought to be punished unreservedly.

The Arab authors, approaching the Armenian Genocide from this position, infer that the Armenian Genocide, as a phenomenon, has not yet been condemned by the mankind. The Armenocide has not yet been recognized internationally. And now the Arab historians Marwan al-Moudawar, Samir Arbash, Salih Zahr ad-Din, Muhammad Rifat al-Imam, Amin Sayid, Fuad Hasan Hafiz, Masud Dahir, Husayn Muruwa and many, many others strictly "condemn the world community, international organizations and the Great Powers, that until the present have not denounced those who committed that crime"³⁴⁶. Ilyas Zananiri considers this fact "a disgrace for the free world"³⁴⁷. Similar qualifications and definitions can be found at almost all Arab scholars. Yet, the most accurate, comprehensive, critical and impartial formulation is given by Moussa Prince. "The Armenocide", he writes, "has not had its Nurnberg"³⁴⁸. At the trial, held in Nurnberg, as is known, the International Tribunal sentenced to death all the leaders of Nazi Germany

³⁴⁶ "Payqar", Yerevan, 1995, No. 4, p. 27-33.

³⁴⁷ Ilyas Zananiri, *The Tragedy of the People*, p. 60.

³⁴⁸ Moussa Prince, *L'Armenocide*, p. 51.

for their crimes, including the Jewish Holocaust and the crimes against a number of European peoples.

Unfortunately, neither in its time, nor even now, at none such international instance have the Young Turk marionettes of the Ottoman Empire ever been sued for their crimes, that preceded the Jewish Holocaust. No doubt, it is a moral blow at the expectations of the Armenian people, who are claiming justice. On the other hand, for that improvident move of the international community, the peoples of the world pay dear indeed: the price is a series of genocides all through the XX century.

Paradoxical is that in its time, in 1919, after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I, by sultan Mehmed VI Vahieddin's command, an extraordinary military tribunal was established to bring to trial the Ottoman government and the Young Turk leadership. Grand vizier (1913-1916) Sayid Halim pasha, first secretary Midhat Shuqri-bey, member of the party's central committee Zia Gyokalp, speaker of majlis Ibrahim-bey, speaker of senate Rifat-bey, sheikh ul-Islam Mussa Qyazim effendi, ministers of justice, of external affairs, of the interior, education, etc., were arrested and appeared before the military tribunal.

As for the principal organizers – Talat, Enver, Cemal, Nazim, Shaqir Behaeddin and others, they did not appear before the court, because they had secretly left Turkey aboard a German submarine. Later they received asylum and settled in Germany, Malta, Italy, Georgia or Central Asia.

In their absence, the sultanic tribunal, upon hearing the policy of the Young Turk leadership during the war and the crimes, committed against Christians, first of all Armenians – mass murders, forcible displacement, etc. – sentenced to death the Young Turk leadership and its leading figures, totaling 11 persons. Among those sentenced to death were Talat, Enver, Cemal, Nazim, Shaqir Behaeddin, Cemal Azmi-bey and others. The documents and materials of that trial have been made public since long – they were published not only in Armenian, but also in Arabic, English and other languages³⁴⁹.

But the decision of the Turkish tribunal remained on paper and was not put into effect, as the principal perpetrators were not in Turkey.

³⁴⁹ See: The Armenian Genocide by the Documents of the Young Turks' Trials. Foreword, Translation, References by A. H. Papazyan, Yerevan, 1988.

Under the circumstances, the mission and the burden of executing the legal decision of the Turkish court was taken over by the Armenian people's avengers.

On March 15, 1921, Soghomon Tehlerian assassinated Talat in Berlin and voluntarily turned himself in to the German court, which, upon hearing the case and motivations for the murder, found him innocent and acquitted him. On December 6, 1921, in Rome, the Armenian avenger Arshavir Shirakyan shot Sayid Halim dead; on April 7, 1922, also in Berlin, from the bullets of Aram Yerkanian and Arshavir Shirakyan died Shaqir Behaeddin and Azmi-bey; on July 21, that same year, in Tbilisi, Cernal pasha was assassinated by Petros Ter-Poghosyan and Stepan Tsaghikyan³⁵⁰. The third member of the Young Turk Triumvirate, Enver, did not escape the just punishment either: he was killed in Central Asia by the commander of a Red Army detachment Hakob Melkumov.

The matter of elimination of the Young Turk criminals by the Armenian avengers became a subject of special study in Arab historiography.

How do the Arab historiographers assess that phenomenon?

The Arab scholars speak empathically about the Armenian avengers, and qualify their deeds as heroism. In the Lebanese encyclopedia they are designated heroes, fidais, individuals, who devoted themselves to an honest and sacred cause³⁵¹. Amin Sayid is not surprised at all that, in his estimation, after the war, the representatives of young Armenians killed emir Sayid Halim, Ahmad Cernal pasha, Talat Pasha³⁵². For him, it was quite logical and natural. The same opinion is held by Fuad Hasan Hafiz, who calls fidai those Armenian braves, who executed the Young Turks. He, too, having listed when and where which of the Young Turk butchers was killed by which of them, found it appropriate to give in his book one by one the names of those young Armenians, who performed that deed³⁵³. Such is the way the heroes are spoken about. They are unambiguously called heroes by Asad Daghbir³⁵⁴. Similarly are the Armenian avengers qualified by the Lebanese public figure Yusuf Khattar Helu in his article "The Armenian Refused to Bend His Head", which is a successful

³⁵⁰ Nikolay Bovhannisyan. The Armenian Genocide: Armenocide, p. 102-103.

³⁵¹ Dairat al-Maarif, vol. X, p. 310.

³⁵² Amin Sayid, The Arab Revolts in the XX Century, p. 80.

³⁵³ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, History of Armenian People, p. 316.

³⁵⁴ Asad Daghbir, The Arab Revolt, p. VII.

attempt to assess the Armenian-Arab friendly relations. He finds that they "are the heroes of the Armenian people, who became a victim of the genocide, organized by Fascism and Nazism in the early XX century"³⁵⁵.

Arab historiography does not interpret the issue of the Armenian avengers only as punishing the guilty for the Armenian Genocide. The matter is also viewed from the standpoint of the tragedy that happened to the Arab people. As was mentioned, the Arab authors find that Arabs and Armenians were the two main peoples, exposed to physical extermination in the first place, and that the Young Turks had tried to practice the policy of genocide also against Arabs. That is why a number of Arab authors think that by assassinating Talat, Cemal and other Young Turk leaders, the Armenian avengers also acted for Arabs. This viewpoint is quite clearly expressed in the chapter of Fuad Hasan Hafiz' work, which analyzes the acts of the Armenian avengers after World War I. "And that", Fuad Hasan Hafiz writes, "was a just punishment not only for the Armenian Genocide of 1915 during World War I, but also for the murder of the leaders of the Arab rebellion, hanged in Sham (Syria - N. H.) and the neighboring vilayets in 1916 by the commander of the Fourth Ottoman army Cemal pasha"³⁵⁶. Admitting that the acts of Armenians were well considered and fair, another Arab author - Samir Arbash, also finds that "it was fair not only for the Armenian Genocide, but also for the execution of the leaders of the Arab uprising, carried out by Cemal pasha and the command of the Fourth Ottoman army, stationed in Syria"³⁵⁷.

Asad Dagher found a unique way of expressing his view on the matter under discussion. In his book "The Arab Revolt" (issued in 1989), he placed the photo of Petros Ter-Poghosyan and Stepan Tsaghikyan taken together, captioned: "Armenian heroes Petros Ter-Poghosyan and Stepan Tsaghikyan, who murdered admiral Cemal pasha in the city of Tiflis in 1922, in revenge for a million and a half Armenian martyrs and Arab martyrs"³⁵⁸. It is interesting that on the previous page, the photo of the same admiral Cemal pasha, assassinated by the Armenian heroes, is placed.

³⁵⁵ Yusuf Khattar Helu, *The Armenian Refused to Bend His Head*, Beirut. "Kanch", March 23, 1996.

³⁵⁶ Fuad Hasan Hafiz, *History of Armenian People*, p. 316.

³⁵⁷ Samir Arbash, *Armenia: Land and Nation*, p. 182.

³⁵⁸ Asad Dagher, *The Arab Revolt*, p. VII.

We think that the Arab scholars had all the reasons, consequently, all the rights to hold such position while interpreting the acts of the Armenian hero-avengers, the assassinations of Talat, Cemal, Enver and other Young Turk leaders, who had been guided by the preposterous plans of Turanism and Turkization of all the non-Turkish peoples in the Ottoman Empire. Armenians and Arabs were blocking the way for them to implement those felonious ideas, hence their extermination was a must. Consequently, the Armenian heroes killed those, who were the common enemies of Armenians and Arabs, as well as Assyrians, Greeks, Bulgarians and the other nations of the empire.

Let us remind that they all had been sentenced to death by the extraordinary military tribunal of the Turkish sultanate court in 1919. The Armenian avengers became the involuntary executors of that verdict. Therefore, their acts shall never be qualified as terrorism. And in Arab historiography there is no such wording or statement.

What the Armenian avengers did were just, historically substantiated, logical and natural acts, typologically categorized as "necessitated acts".

CONCLUSION

Ninety years are separating us from the bloody events of 1915, gone down in history as "The Great Armenian Massacre", "The Armenian Genocide", "The Armenocide". Semantically, there is no difference between them. However, each of them attaches some shade and helps see the correlation between the Armenian Genocide as an Armenian phenomenon, and the Armenian Genocide as international crime and crime against humanity.

Much water has flowed under the bridges since the Armenian Genocide of 1915.

Lots of changes and events have happened in the world. In view of the matter under discussion, an important fact should be singled out among all those. Armenocide was followed by a whole series of genocides, carried out in different countries of Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America. Among them, by its scale and novel, more "delicate" technical methods the Jewish genocide – the Holocaust stands out, committed by Hitler in Germany during World War II.

From the genocides that succeeded the Armenocide, the genocides and ethnic cleansings in Cambodia, Rwanda, Burundi, in the Balkans – Yugoslavia (Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo), in Sudan, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Guatemala, Peru, Indonesia and other countries, as well as the tragedy of the Arab people in Palestine should be mentioned. Some countries, like the Ukraine, also find that there was a massacre of Ukrainians carried out during the Soviet years. If we were to qualify the total forcible displacement of any people as an organic component of a genocide, which is true, then into the circle of genocides shall be included the exiles by the Soviet authorities of the North Caucasian peoples, such as Chechens, Balkars, Kabardinians, Ingushes and others during World War II.

A number of scholars – Ted Robert Gurr³⁵⁰, Barbara Harff³⁶⁰ and others, have put into circulation the issue of nations, ethnic groups and especially ethnic minorities exposed to the risk of genocide, should potential opportune circumstances emerge. Ted Gurr, having studied the subject specifically, notes that in Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin and North America, there are 233 ethnic groups, exposed to political, national or economic discrimination. They are potential candidates for genocide. Helen Fein specifies the post-1960s as a period of genocide and politicide³⁶¹.

The genocides ensuing the Armenian Genocide, as well as the attempts of genocides and ethnic cleansings influenced the Armenocide, specifying its place in the international chain of genocides. The following factors are meant here:

First, the genocide came out of the scope of one state – the Ottoman Empire, and the phenomenon grew from mono-national into international.

Second, the era, when the Armenian Genocide was the only one, is gone; it carries the “privilege”, or the title of being the first in the XX century. Today, genocide is discussed as an impending global phenomenon, the study of which causes, furthering internal and external political, strategic, economic, moral-psychological factors are of primary scientific and political significance.

Third, this necessity gave birth to a new scientific trend – genocidology, which has its renowned centers in the USA, Canada, France, Armenia, Germany, Great Britain, and other countries.

Forth, at last, the Armenian Genocide has come out of shade, of the kingdom of oblivion, and, together with the Jewish and other genocides, constituted one of the cornerstones of genocidology. Regardless of the fact, whether the Armenocide is recognized or denied, today, unlike the previous decades, it is spoken out loud, it is disputed, many books and articles are written and published in various countries all over the world, it is discussed at international scientific conferences, etc.

³⁵⁰ Ted Robert Gurr, *Peoples Against States: Ethnopolitical Conflicts and the Changing World System*. *International Studies Quarterly*, 1994, No. 38, p. 347-377.

³⁶⁰ Ted Robert Gurr, Barbara Harff. *Ethnic Conflicts in World Politics*, Westview Press, Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford.

³⁶¹ Helen Fein, *Accounting for Genocide after 1945: Theories and Some Findings*, *International Journal on Group Rights*, 1993, No. 1.

Among the many scientific conferences, devoted to the 90th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, it is necessary to single out the International conference, held on June 4-7, 2005, in Boca Raton (Florida, USA), under the title "Ninety Years After the Armenian Genocide and Sixty Years After the Holocaust", convened by the International Association of Genocide Scholarship with the support of Florida Atlantic University. The participants, more than 150 distinguished scholars, profound specialists in genocidology and conflictology from the USA, United Kingdom, Germany, Israel, France, Australia, Japan, Denmark, Poland, Switzerland, Armenia, Turkey, Ireland, Sudan, Rwanda, Ethiopia and many other countries, unanimously qualified the tragic events of 1915 in the Ottoman Empire as Genocide of Armenians. It was recorded that "The Armenian Genocide is not a question for the Science any more". The Conference called the government of Turkey to officially recognize the Armenian Genocide, noting that its denial has no perspective. The conference also stated that the denial of any genocide is a genocide.

The era of oblivion of the Armenian Genocide is irretrievably gone. Today it is no longer possible to ask, "Who, after all, remembers today about the extermination of Armenians?"

As a result of all this, the unique privilege of Turkey to refute the Armenian Genocide has been done with. If in the XX century, at least until the 70-80s, they succeeded to some extent in doing it, now it is practically impossible. As was noted, it is now a subject of disputes on international scale – at the level of scholars, parliaments, governments, parties, non-governmental organizations, by all mass media. Turkey, in spite of the superhuman efforts exerted, is henceforth unable to taboo this issue. Too late. The train is gone.

Furthermore, today in Turkey itself some sober-minded figures have appeared, especially among the intellectuals – historians, writers, journalists, etc., who think that the unsubstantiated rejection of the Armenian Genocide by the official circles in Turkey is not only ineffective, but works against Turkey, deprives it of authority and puts in a difficult situation. The era of international recognition of the Armenocide has begun. The Armenian Genocide has been recognized by the European Parliament, World Council of Churches, and by the parliaments of Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Italy, Lebanon, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Sweden,

Switzerland, Uruguay, Vatican, Venezuela. The Armenian Genocide is recognized by 38 states of the USA, by Wales in Great Britain, some provinces in Australia, many cities in different countries, etc. The Armenian Genocide had been recognized by the President of the USA Ronald Reagan, who on April 22, 1981, in his address to the American Armenian community in commemoration of the Armenian Genocide, noted, "The lessons of the Holocaust, just as those of the Armenian Genocide, perpetrated earlier, or of the subsequent genocides of Cambodians and many other peoples, shall never be forgotten".

The process of the international recognition of the first genocide of the XX century – Armenocide, we believe, will get a new swing and reach its logical end, despite all the efforts by the legal successor of the Ottoman Empire – Turkey to refute the Armenian Genocide, and in defiance of all the political and economic pressures it is putting on those countries, which parliaments have recognized or are going to recognize the Armenian Genocide.

In the matter of the emergence and development of new procedures, related with the recognition of the Armenian Genocide, the contribution of Arabistics cannot be bypassed. At the times, when a great many silenced the very fact of the Armenian Genocide, the Arab historians of Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Palestine and Iraq, calmly and with great devotion studied the problems of the Armenian Genocide and published monographs and articles, organized commemoration meetings and conferences on the Armenocide in their countries, publicly spoke in support of the fact of the Armenian Genocide, and openly condemned the Ottoman sultans and the Young Turk executioners.

It is an exceptional model of serving the justice, scientific principles, philanthropy and honesty.

And the Armenian nation highly appreciates this noble attitude of the Arab scholars, the Arab people, national, public and political figures.

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