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## THE GREEK GENOCIDE AND THE AMERICAN SOURCES

### **1. The Greek genocide**

The decision for the genocide against Greeks was taken by the Young Turks (Cemal, Enver and Talat pasha) in 1911, was put into practice during the World War I and was completed by Moustafa Kemal (1919 – 1923).

The persecutions were originally appeared in the form of cases of violence, destruction, deportations and exiles. Soon though, they became better organised and extensive and turned massively against the Greeks (and against the Armenians).

According to C. Fotiadis<sup>1</sup>, the first phase of the Genocide of the Greeks begins in 1908 and lasts until the beginning of the World War I, when the Eastern matter, the ascent of the Young Turks, the Balkan wars and the entry of Germany as a strategic partner of the Ottoman state, created the suitable circumstances for the outbreak of the persecutions of the Greeks<sup>2</sup>. During this period the eloquence of the Turkish established order for equality before the law ceases to exist and the Greeks have to

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<sup>1</sup> Fotiadis, K. The genocide...op. cit. vol. 1, 2 and 3.

<sup>2</sup> Inside the Ottoman Empire the citizens were divided into two categories, the Muslims (muslim) and the non-Muslims (Gayri Muslim). The non-Muslims were separated according to their nationality-millet- as were called for example the Greeks (Rum Milliet), The Armenians (Ermeni Milliet), the Assyrians (Asuri Milliet), the Syrian Christians (Suriani Milliet).

be exterminated. The 'Special Organization '(Teskilati Mahsusa in Turkish), with a para- military structure<sup>3</sup>.

The second period of the genocide begins in 1915 when the conflicts of the First World War widened the policy of the genocide. The state of the Young Turks commands an amount of enterprises which will continue the elimination of the Greeks.

The period 1919 – 1923 is the third, last and most intense phase of the genocide, when the establishment of Mustafa Kemal in the ottoman interior coincides with the creation of the Union of Soviet Socialistic Democracies and its help towards the chauvinistic and nationalistic Mustafa Kemal movement, the Greek presence in Ionia and Thrace as well as the change in orientations in foreign policy of the major European forces<sup>4</sup>.

In December 1916 an extermination plan against the Greek civilian population of was elaborated by generals Enver, Cemal and Talaat, leaders of the Young Turks movement and that plan foresaw *'immediate extermination only of the men, in the cities from 16 to 60 years old and general exile of all the men, women and children in the villages to the interior of the East through a program of massacre and extermination. 'That was the period of the realization of the genocide of the Armenians.*

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<sup>3</sup> Aksam T. The Armenian genocide.....op. cit.

<sup>4</sup> Hofmann T., (ed.) Verfolgung, Vertreibung und vernichtung der Christen im Osmanischen reich, 1912-1922, Munster-Hamburg, Lit Verlag, 2005.

## **2. The American Sources**

### **2.1 Henry Morgenthau**

USA with the ambassador in Constantinople Henry Morgenthau<sup>5</sup>, closely supervised the policy of the Young Turks, and openly disagreed on the methods of settlement of the Greek matter of Asia Minor, while the successor of Morgenthau, E. Elkus stressed to Austria's official Trauttmansdorff that he was highly interested, for humanity reasons, in the fate of the Greeks who were displaced in the depths of the East. These two diplomats agreed on the matter of the inhumane extremes concerning the application of these measurements.

Henry Morgenthau (1856-1946) was United States ambassador to the Ottoman Empire between 1913 and 1916. He witnessed the Ottoman entry into World War I and the genocide of the Empire's Armenian, Aramaean/Assyrian and Greek population. "Ambassador Morgenthau's Story" was published in 1918 and deals largely with the plight of Armenians in the Empire. thousands and the deportation to, and starvation in, the deserts of other hundreds of thousands, the destruction of hundreds of villages and cities, will the wilful execution of this whole devilish scheme to annihilate the Armenian, Greek and Syrian Christians of Turkey -- will all this go unpunished?"<sup>6</sup>

### **2.2 George Horton**

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<sup>5</sup> Morgenthau, H. *Ambassador's Morgenthau story*. Garden City, N.Y.: Page & Company 1918.

<sup>6</sup> Morgenthau, Henry, "The Greatest Horror in History", *The Red Cross Magazine*, March 1918

George Horton was a member of the US diplomatic corps who held several consular offices, principally in Greece, in late 19th century and early 20th century. Horton came in Greece in 1893 and left Greece after 30 years in 1924. During two different periods he was the US Consul to İzmir/Smyrna, the first time between 1911-1917 (till the cessation of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and the Ottoman Empire during the First World War) and the second time between 1919-1922, during the Greek liberation of the city in the course of the Greco-Turkish War.

Today, George Horton is best remembered for his book about the events leading up to and during the fire. The book was published in 1926, and its title, *The Blight of Asia*, refers to what he considered the abominable behavior of the Turks, and by extension, all of Islam.

"The Blight of Asia" relating, among a variety of topics, the Great Fire of Smyrna that ravaged the city of İzmir, Turkey, starting on 13 September 1922, two days after the consul's departure from his post there on 11 September, and that lasted for 4 days<sup>7</sup>.

In a report addressed to the US Secretary of State, George Horton (1859-1942), former United States Consul General at Smyrna, wrote:

"I wish to repeat that the consistent policy of the Turk, since the fall of Abdul Hamid, has been the expulsion, killing and elimination of the Christian races."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> *The Blight of Asia, An Account of the Systematic Extermination of Christian Populations by Mohammedans and of the Culpability of Certain Great Powers; with the True Story of the Burning of Smyrna*; George Horton, 1926

<sup>8</sup> George Horton in Athens to Secretary of State (27 September 1922), "The Near Eastern Question", US National Archives, NA 767.61/476. Also reproduced in "George Horton and Mark L. Bristol: Opposing Forces in U.S. Foreign Policy 1919-1923" by Marjorie Housepian.

### **2.3. Quotes by Relief Workers and Missionaries**

**Alfred Brady**      Alfred E. Brady of Texas and member of the American Smyrna Disaster Committee, stated in 1922.

“Although the majority of Greek and Armenian civilian men in Asia Minor have been deported into Angora, into what is tantamount to slavery, and the majority of women and children exiled, the Turks' campaign of massacre and terror continues, as the last surviving Christian communities are wiped out one by one.”<sup>9</sup>

**Stanley Hopkins** . Stanley E. Hopkins (b. 1895), an American citizen and employee of the Near East Relief, 16 November 1921:

“... the Greeks of Anatolia are suffering the same or worse fate than did the Armenians in the massacres of the Great War. The deportation of the Greeks is not limited to the Black Sea Coast but is being carried out throughout the whole of the country governed by the Nationalists. Greek villages are deported entire, the few Turkish or Armenian inhabitants are forced to leave, and the villages are burned. The purpose is unquestionably to destroy all Greeks in that territory and to leave Turkey for the Turks. These deportations are, of course, accompanied by cruelties of every form just as was true in the case of the Armenian deportations five and six years ago.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Oeconomos, Lysimachos, *The Martyrdom of Smyrna and Eastern Christendom: A File of Overwhelming Evidence, Denouncing the Misdeeds of the Turks in Asia Minor and showing their responsibility for the Horrors of Smyrna*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1922, p. 170.

<sup>10</sup> See Stanley E. Hopkins testimony

**Frank Jackson.** Frank W. Jackson (1874-1955), chairman of the Relief Committee for Greeks of Asia Minor, on 17 October 1917 stated:

"The story of the Greek deportation is not yet generally known. ... There were some two or three million Greeks in Asia Minor at the outbreak of the war in 1914, subject to Turkish rule. According to the latest reliable and authoritative accounts some seven to eight hundred thousand have been deported, mainly from the coast regions into the interior of Asia Minor. . . . Along with the Armenians most of the Greeks of the Marmora regions and Thrace have been deported on the pretext that they gave information to the enemy. Along the Aegean coast Aivalik stands out as the worst sufferer. According to one report some 70,000 Greeks have been deported towards Konia and beyond."<sup>11</sup>

**Ernst Jacob .** Ernst Otto Jacob, General Secretary to the Smyrna Y.M.C.A, after arriving in Athens in late 1922 declared:

"The Turkish policy of the elimination of the Christian minorities in Asia Minor has been determinedly carried into effect. The Christian quarters of Smyrna have been practically wiped out; the populations are dead from massacre, fled, or banished into exile. When I left, only fifty thousand homeless and foodless refugees remained in the city."<sup>12</sup>

In his diary entry for 24 September 1922, Ernst Jacob noted:

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<sup>11</sup> Hlamides, Nikolaos, "The Greek Relief Committee: America's Response to the Greek Genocide", *Genocide Studies and Prevention*, Volume 3, Issue 3, 2008, pp. 375-376.

<sup>12</sup> Dr. Rechad and the Greeks", *The Times*, 17 October 1922, p.8.

"In Smyrna, hunger and exposure are the least of the evils: persecution, deportation, robber, rape, murder—those are going on now, and the victims are justified in dreading that they will go on until the last of their races are extinguished."<sup>13</sup>

**Ethel Thompson** Miss Ethel Thompson of Boston worked with the Near East Relief in Turkey and when she returned to America she described:

"the ghastly lines of gaunt, starving Greek women and children who staggered across Anatolia through the city of Harput, their glassy eyes fairly protruding from their heads, their bones merely covered with skin, skeleton babies tied to their backs, driven on without food supplies or clothing until they dropped dead—Turkish gendarmes hurrying them with their guns."<sup>14</sup>

**Mark Ward** Dr. Mark Hopson Ward (1884-1952), medical missionary for the Near East Relief at Kharput, 7 June 1922:

"From May, 1921, to March last, when I left, thirty thousand deportees, of whom six thousand were Armenians and the rest Greeks, were collected at Sivas and deported through Kharput to Bitlis and Van. Of these thirty thousand, ten thousand perished last winter and ten thousand escaped or have been protected by the Americans. The fate of the other ten thousand is not known. The deportations are continuing; every week's delay means deaths to hundreds of these poor people. The Turkish policy is extermination of these Christian minorities."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> 5. Papoutsy, Christos, *Ships of Mercy: The True Story of the Rescue of the Greeks: Smyrna, September 1922*, Portsmouth, N.H.: Peter E. Randall, 2008, p. 62

<sup>14</sup> Oeconomos, *The Martyrdom of Smyrna and Eastern Christendom*, p. 40.

<sup>15</sup> "Kemalist War on Christians", *The Times*, 8 June 1922, p. 7.

**Edith Wood** Miss Edith Wood of Philadelphia who worked in Kharput and later in Malatia as a nurse with the Near East Relief wrote in her diary in May 1922 that during her two weeks journey to the coast she saw every day:

"groups of deportees, mostly women and children, all starving, and a great number of bodies along the road ... and the entire remaining population was being deported without food and clothing ... Conditions at Malatia, where the deportees died at the rate of forty or fifty a day, were far worse than in Harpoot."<sup>16</sup>

**Forrest Yowell** . Major Forrest D. Yowell (b. 1882), director of the Kharput Near East Relief unit, May 1922:

"Two thirds of the Greek deportees are women and children. All along the route where these deportees have travelled Turks are permitted to visit refugee groups and select women and girls whom they desire for any purpose. These deportations are still in progress, and if American aid is now withdrawn all will perish. Their whole route is today strewn with bodies of their dead, which are consumed by dogs, wolves, vultures. The Turks make no effort to bury these dead and the deportees are themselves not permitted to do so."<sup>17</sup>

"The condition of the Greek minorities is even worse than that of the Armenians."<sup>18</sup>

"The Turkish authorities frankly state their deliberate intention to exterminate the Greeks, and all their actions support these statements. At the present time fresh deportations and outrages are starting in all parts of Asia Minor, from the northern seaports to the southern districts."<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Psoimiades, Harry J., "The American Near East Relief (NER) and the Megali Catastrophe in 1922 ", *Journal of Modern Hellenism*, No.19, p. 139.

<sup>17</sup>British Foreign Office Archives, FO 371/7878.

<sup>18</sup> "Killing by Turks has been renewed", *The New York Times*, 6 May 1922, p. 2.

<sup>19</sup> Killing by Turks has been renewed", *The New York Times*, 6 May 1922, p. 2.



#### 4. Conclusions:

With the creation of the Young Turks group in the Ottoman State, a nationalistic ideology appeared and consolidated, and with the domination of power in 1908, there was a desire for the Christian populations to become extinct, a dream which came true during World War I, the Greeks was a central target<sup>20</sup>.

The Greek genocide, continued even after the end of WWI and systematically after 1919, when on May 19th of the same year Mustafa Kemal arrived at Samsun. Operations of massive assassinations, deportations, banishments, destruction of cultural and religious places took place as well as burning down villages and cities. Nobody can explain these crimes and this fact is confirmed by the Turks<sup>21</sup>, many foreigners<sup>22</sup> and allies of Kemal's coup<sup>23</sup>.

This premeditated destruction of the 50% of the Greeks, constitutes genocide according to the criteria of U.N. (article 2 of the Treaty for the Prevention and Control of Genocide, paragraphs a, b, c, d and e).

The Greek genocide is an issue and its international extension refers to the commitment of all the institutions of the International community, to the states and the international organizations to recognize the offence of genocide which was

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<sup>20</sup> Charalambidis M. -Fotiadis K. Pontians: Right to memory. Athens: Herodotus 1988. (In Greek).

<sup>21</sup> Speeches, that pronounced Moystafa' Kema'l in the second concentration of Democratic Popular Party of (15-20 October 1927) for the Pontus question and the attempt of foundation of Democracy of Pontos and the reports of Ottoman are certain sources. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Nutuk. Ankara: Kultur Bakanligi Yayinlari 1980. For the proceeding of Turkish National assembly see Proceeding of Secret Meetings of Big National assembly, Türkiye Is Bankasi Kültür Yayinlari, vol. 3, Ankara 1985. (In Turkish)

<sup>22</sup> See the volumes 12,13, 14 of the Fotiadis K. The genocide....op. cit.

<sup>23</sup> See the opinions of Soviet envoy in Turkey. The presence of Frounze in Turkey. Istanbul: Cem 1978. (In Turkish)

committed at the expense of the Greeks of and to restore, this way, the huge moral damage they suffered.



