

**Zeitschrift:** Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Religions- und Kulturgeschichte = Revue suisse d'histoire religieuse et culturelle = Rivista svizzera di storia religiosa e culturale

**Herausgeber:** Vereinigung für Schweizerische Kirchengeschichte

**Band:** 108 (2014)

**Artikel:** Murder(ing) Armenians : the Turkish genocide against the Ottoman Armenians during the First World War and its place in the political history of the 20th century

**Autor:** Albrecht, Richard

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-544999>

### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

### **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

**Download PDF:** 12.01.2026

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**

# Murder(ing) Armenians. The Turkish genocide against the Ottoman Armenians during the First World War and its place in the political history of the 20th century

Richard Albrecht

*Nothing but a memory is productive which does not only remember what happened but also what still is to be done*  
(Ernst Bloch)

In this scholarly article, the author tries to sum up the very content of his own approach to genocide, genocidal action, genocidal policy, and genocidal mentality as a general pattern which he worked out, at first, in 1989<sup>1</sup> and which he published in his books on Genocide and Armenocide when discussing comparative and theoretical aspects of genocidal policy in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>2</sup> In the third volume of the author's trilogy on genocidal policy in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (*Genozidpolitik im 20. Jahrhundert*), presenting the first scholarly verification of the notorious speech of Adolf Hitler as chancellor of the German Reich and Führer of the German people delivered to his Supreme Commanders at Obersalzberg, on August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1939 was published: The key sentence of the speech can be valued as a sort of «genocidal connection» between Armenocide and Holocaust: «Who is, after all, today speaking about the destruction of the Armenians?»<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Richard Albrecht, Die politische Ideologie des objektiven Gegners und die ideologische Politik des Völkermords im 20. Jahrhundert. Prolegomena zu einer politischen Soziologie des Genozid nach Hannah Arendt, in: *Sociologia Internationalis*, 27 (1989) I, 57–88; Vom «Volksfeind» zum «objektiven Gegner», in: *Geschichte – Erziehung – Politik*, 6 (1995) 1, 1–7; *Lebenskultur und Frühwarnsystem: Theoretische Aspekte des Völkermord(en)s*, in: *Sozialwissenschaftliche Literatur Rundschau*, 51 (2005), 63–73; «Leben retten». Irving Louis Horowitz' politische Soziologie des Genozid. Bio-bibliographisches Porträt eines Sozialwissenschaftlers, in: *Aufklärung und Kritik*, 14 (2007) 1, 139–141.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Albrecht, *Völkermord(en). Genozidpolitik im 20. Jahrhundert I* (Berichte aus der Rechtswissenschaft), Aachen 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Albrecht, «Wer redet heute noch von der Vernichtung der Armenier?» – Adolf Hitler zweite Geheimrede am 22. August 1939 [«Who is, after all, today speaking about the destruction of the Armenians?» – What Hitler really said when talking to his Supreme Commanders, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1939]: *Genozidpolitik im 20. Jahrhundert III* (Allgemeine Rechtswissenschaft), Aachen 2007; summary and table of contents (<http://www.shaker.de/-shop/978-38322-6695-0>); short scholarly prospect (<http://www.hnet.msu.edu:80/announce/show.cgi?ID=160809>); «Wer redet heute noch von der Vernichtung der Armenier?» Adolf Hitlers Geheimrede am 22. August 1939: Das historische L-3-Dokument; in: *Zeitschrift für Genozidforschung*, 9 (2008), 1, 93–131; «Wer redet heute noch von der Vernichtung der Ar-

As a scholar of comparative genocidal research, the author looks upon three genocidal victim-groups – the Ottoman Armenians (1915/16), the European Jews, and the Serbs in «Satellite Croatia» (1941/45) as victims of the three basic genocidal events during the two World Wars.

Characterising comparative genocide research as a relatively «new» field of research, the author argues that the genocide against the Armenians in the Ottoman state named *Armeniermord* (in German) as well as *Armenocide* (in current English) is, as the historical genocide «the Young Turks are responsible for» (Johannes Lepsius), not only the starting point but also, as the first state-sponsored planned genocide in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a basic feature for comparative genocide research. In this article the author looks on the Armenocide by remembering the historical context as «the first great festival of death» (Thomas Mann) and by discussing its very meaning as the «prototyp»<sup>4</sup> of genocide as planned, and organized, destructive actions of a state. The Turkish Republic (*Türkiye Cumhuriyeti*) still denies the genocide during the First World War as committed by the late Osmanian Empire and its agents as *Turkish Genocide* and *Armenian Holocaust* with about one and a half million Christian Armenians as victims.

#### *Against newspeak: historical Turkish genocide*

I really don't want to coin out another definition of Armenocide (in German: Armenozid) but take the liberty to use, even in German, that artificial word which at first was used in the US Armenian community and its scholars. The word and its meaning allude to the fate of the Ottoman Armenians above all in 1915/16, expressing both the victimized group and what happened (*cidere* means killing). Neither the word nor the concept Armenocide implies anything about the way of murder(ing), in spite of the well-known, and as well artificially created, word Holocaust, which mirrors in its extensive meaning the form of the deliberate extermination of a people: *holokaustos* means totally burning humans when still living.<sup>5</sup> Whenever looking at the way both genocides were executed, not Jews in 1941/45, but Armenians in 1915/16 were burnt when still living, having fled expecting shelter within their churches. In September 1922, when Kemalist militia occupied the Smyrna city, both Armenian, and Greek quarters were set on fire. Genocide means, *strictu sensu*, killing what was traditionally named a tribe or a

---

menier?» Kommentierte Wiederveröffentlichung der Erstpublikation von Adolf Hitlers Geheimrede am 22. August 1939; in: Zeitschrift für Weltgeschichte, 9 (2008), 2, 115–132.

<sup>4</sup> Louis Irving Horowitz, *Genocide. State Power and Mass Murder* (Issues in Contemporary Civilisation), New Brunswick (N.J.) 1976; *Taking Lives. Genocide and State Power*. New Brunswick (N.J.)/London 1980; fifth, revised ed. 2002; *Genocide and the Reconstruction of Social Theory: Observations on the Exclusivity of Collective Death*; in: *The Armenian Review*, 1 (1984), 1–21; *Government Responsibilities to Jews and Armenians: Nazi Holocaust and Turkish Genocide Reconsidered*; in: *Armenian Review*, 39 (1986) 1, 1–9; *Counting Bodies: The Dismal Sciences of Authorized Terror*, in: *Pattern of Prejudice*, 23 (1989) 2, 4–15.

<sup>5</sup> Albrecht, *Die politische Ideologie* (see note 1), 69

race (genus *cidere*), typically nowadays named an ethnic group. Whenever any scholar uses the wide-spread expression «Armenian Genocide» (instead of correctly naming the subject «Turkish Genocide»), he or she should know that this term is a complete and horrifying reversal of the historical events and their genuine meaning, turning around the very relationship as if, in 1915/16, Armenians were the very perpetrators and Turks were their innocent victims. Moreover, as far as I know, until now no scholar has lost his/her «tenure» because he/she publicly named what really happened correctly as «Turkish Genocide» (in German: «türkischer Völkermord» [Martin Sabrow]).

Finally, there is good reason for understanding that, what is named Holocaust virtually expresses the special German way («deutscher Sonderweg»)<sup>6</sup> of historical genocidal policy (Völkermord): a people self-naming the master-race, organising in a fascist manner, and trying to set up a world-wide imperial(istic) dictatorship.<sup>7</sup>

#### *Armenocide – «terrible Holocaust» and greatest crime of WWI*

Whenever looking on genocide politically, the author feels that the best anti-genocidal perspective in fact is an anti-fascist and anti-racist one – although that cannot be regarded as a vital essential condition or *conditio sine qua non*. According to the dialectics of general and special features of the genocidal field and its sufficient condition(s), empirical details, and random aspects, a society need not be classified as «fascist» to be regarded as a «genocidal» society. The Italian society between the World Wars indeed was «fascist» but by no means genocidal like the South African society, which basically was racial (like some of the Southern US-states were at that time). Any genocidal society is racial but not any racist society is a genocidal or fascist one.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the German society since

<sup>6</sup> Richard Albrecht, *Die WahrheitsLüge: Subjektwissenschaftliche Kritik alter und neuer ganzganzdeutscher Zeitgeschichtsschreibung* (2009): [http://www.kritiknetz.de/images/stories/texte/Die\\_WahrheitsLuege.pdf](http://www.kritiknetz.de/images/stories/texte/Die_WahrheitsLuege.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> Richard Albecht, «Realizing Utopia» – Really Not. On the false world of a prominent German tenure historian; in: *Kultursoziologie*, 17 (2008), 1, 127–143.

<sup>8</sup> According to any scientific definition of genocide any rational logic has to apply the well known principle *definitio per genus proximum et differentiam specificam* to differentiating between general and specific aspects within societal action, or to express the methodological principle that *racism* is as *conditio sine qua non* an essential precondition for genocide graphically: not every racist society is essentially a genocidal society – but, however, every *genocidal society* is essentially a *racist society*. For meanwhile *racism* is by no means what it was at first: methodologically spoken the mechanistic dissolution of the highly contradictory unit (named dialectics) of the biological and the social for the sole benefit of the biosphere. Moreover, whenever discussing human action/s and the mentality of the actors, I may remind my scholarly readership to what William I. Thomas, with Dorothy S. Thomas, *The Child in America. Behavior Problems and Programs*, New York <sup>2</sup>1928, 571/572), accurately formulated as one of the basic theorems whenever describing human action/s: «If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences». Finally, W.I. Thomas (*The Unadjusted Girl. With Cases and Standpoint for Behavior Analysis* [Criminal



1933 soon became both a fascist and a racial society causing another world war (like in 1914). Both World Wars belong to the historical context of both genocidal crimes committed in Ottoman Turkey (1915/16) and in Satellite Croatia (1941/45). This is another feature that demonstrates the very meaning of the event Great or World War in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, either caused by a genocidal regime like the German or by Young Turk or by Ustase leadership in 1915 and 1941 actively using the given occasion (in the meaning of opportunity structure/s) under the umbrella of the German Reich as the most powerful ally.

I take the liberty not to name what happened in 1915 «the Armenian Genocide» as «the terrible Holocaust»<sup>9</sup> – «unquestionably the greatest crime of the First World War»<sup>10</sup>, and the ultimate human crime genocide. For I know, of course, that not only in the so-called «scientific community» this slang-version is more and more used instead of what must be precisely indicated, like the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* does in her latest CD-version (2004), «the Turkish genocide of the Armenians in 1915». Insofar I agree with distinguished genocide scholars like Irving Louis Horowitz when talking about the «Turkish Genocide» and the «Genocide against the Armenians».

Moreover, I feel that «Armenian Genocide» is, indeed, not only confusing and cretinous but also a sort of complete reversal – and a perverse reversal, too – in the very sense of *Umwertung aller Werte* in the sense of «general reassessment of all worths» (Friedrich Nietzsche) under most relevant moral, intellectual, political, historical, and linguistic aspects, declaring victims for perpetrators, and perpetrators for victims. I am not sure but do hope that, three generations later, the linguistic reversal as expressed in that false metaphor «Armenian Genocide» neither mirrors nor expresses the victory of the former genocidal violators as another final solution.

Finally, I may also remind of three facts of life the German poetical playwright Bertolt Brecht (1898–1956) had worked out in other contexts: (i) whenever injustice happens too often it will not become justice because it happens very often; (ii) in the last instance the truth cannot be suppressed but must be publicly repeated again and again even after it had been once recognized as the very truth; (iii) within the intellectual field democracy indeed means transforming the small circle of connoisseurs to the large circle of connoisseurs – a «so-

---

Science Monograph 4], New York 1923; N.Y./London 31967, 42) later on pointed out: «gradually a whole life-policy and the personality of the individual himself [...] will be influenced by a series of definitions the individual is involved in». According to small social worlds of every-day life – named intimacy – in particular W.I. Thomas stressed the very meaning of subjective impressions and feelings leading to definitions of the situation/s constituting another «real» social world of the acting individual/s: «subjective impressions can be projected onto life and thereby become real to projectors.» (Edmund H. Volkart [Hg.], *Social Behavior and Personality. Contribution of W. I. Thomas to Theory and Social Research*, New York 1951, 14).

<sup>9</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, London/New York/Toronto 1961.

<sup>10</sup> Magnus Hirschfeld/Andreas Gaspar (Hg.), *Sittengeschichte des Ersten Weltkriegs* [1929], 10.

ciological experience» which should never be forgotten by any genocide scholar whenever engaged in preventing genocidal action/s, too, for a basic virtuality must be taken into consideration: «Human actions are not destined by the very facts but by the perceptions of the facts acting humans have got» (Alexander v. Humboldt). Finally, I will by no means apologize for the very fact that the following scholarly piece is neither composed nor written due to the *Zeitgeist* (the actual spirit of the age) which (to quote a German «classic» literary figure) is, as spirit of the age, more or less mirroring the very ideology of the masters' race<sup>11</sup> but is partisan in the sense of saving life-policy which basically means the very contrary of genocidal or taking-life-policy (Horowitz). Whoever expects an attitude like that I named the «wikipedianization of knowledge and cognition»<sup>12</sup> claiming the overwhelming NPOV («Neutral Point of View») may, please, use that postmodern «open source» Encyclopædia self-naming wikipedia. For what I am still standing for, and working, as a scholar is that dedicated anti-genocidal perspective disposing, once and for all, of every point of origin for genocide and, consequently and in the very last instance, any genocide research, too.

### *On the peculiarity of genocide*

Genocide is not only mass killing and killing masses as traditionally well-known like massacres, mass atrocities, pogroms, riots, and slaughter, but «modern» serial killing, strategically planned and organized, not only of masses but of peoples as entire populations for racial, religious, ethnic, political, and even ideological reasons: neither traditional massacres and atrocities nor well-known mass slaughters, pogroms, and riots, nor «only» administrative murder of masses (as a conventional measure applied by absolute rulership, dictatorship, tyranny, colonialism etc. before WWI), but of a people. After WWI traditional «administrative mass-murder» (Al. Carhill) became modern «administrative mass-murder as organised by a state» (Hannah Arendt) which later on was described as «policy of extermination» (Marjorie Housepian), and as «organized state murder» (Helen Fein), and defined as «structural and systematic destruction of innocent people by a state bureaucratic apparatus» (Horowitz), indeed, as an outstanding «crime against mankind and civilisation as planned and organized by a state» (Albrecht), «the blackest page in history» (H. A. Gibbons)<sup>13</sup>. Insofar any genocidal action may include «ethnic cleansing» and its violent methods of ejection, expulsion, and displacement, as applied by the perpetrators – but genocidal policy has a peculiarity;<sup>14</sup> it is more than «ethnic cleansing», «demographical engineering», «ho-

<sup>11</sup> Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Faust. Der Tragödie erster Teil*, 575–577.

<sup>12</sup> Richard Albrecht, *Such Linge. Vom Kommunistenprozeß zu Köln* zu google.de. Sozialwissenschaftliche Recherchen zum langen, kurzen und neuen Jahrhundert, Aachen 2008, 13.

<sup>13</sup> Albrecht, *Die politische Ideologie* (see note 1), 67–76.

<sup>14</sup> Richard Albrecht, *Völkermord. Zur Begriffsbestimmung eines Schlagworts*; in: *Zeitschrift für Weltgeschichte*, 13 (2012), 1, 73–76.

mogenisation of population» as accompanied by massacres to fulfil a specific policy to «systematically eliminate another group from a given territory on the basis of religious, ethnic or national origin.»<sup>15</sup> Needless to stress that not only these but all pieces on genocide worked out and published by the author within the last decades are lead by a central principle according to a grounded problem of any research on genocide which the author himself, when sketching «a pilot-study on a <forgotten> basic problem of any scholarly peace-research», once named, in summer 1989, the urgent «development of an early warning system against genocidal tendencies» (1989, not printed [in German]). Given this setting, the author emphasizes the very meaning of a basic <historical memory> (Jorgé Semprún) which inevitably also includes «what still is to be done» (Ernst Bloch) as one of the central presuppositions and *conditio sine qua non* for preventing genocide.

### *Defining genocide*

According to my own research on genocide as the most destructive event in the history of mankind and state-sponsored <crime against humanity and civilisation><sup>16</sup> I take the liberty and quote the basic definition of genocide as worked out by Raphael Lemkin: «In this respect genocide is a new technique of occupation, aimed at winning the peace even though the war itself is lost.»<sup>17</sup>

To follow this concept means that in the 20th century there exist until now three outstanding events, two of them well-documented as genocides and crimes against humanity and civilisation: <Armenocide> (1915/18) and <Holocaust> (1941/45), the third, <Serbocide> (1941/45), still under-documented. Any specific silence as practised by German historians traditionally and actually until today regarding the first <colonial genocide> in German South West Africa (GSWA),

<sup>15</sup> Drazen Petrovic, Ethnic Cleansing. An Attempt at Methodology; in: European Journal of International Law, 5 (1994), 3, 342–359.

<sup>16</sup> In German/y since 1915 until now typically played down whenever named «Verbrechen gegen die Menschlichkeit» and not correctly called «Verbrechen gegen die Menschheit» – a sort of Orwellian Newspeak which Hannah Arendt reviewed as «the understatement of the 20th century» at all; cf. Hanna Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem. Ein Bericht von der Banalität des Bösen, deutsch by Brigitte Granzow, München/Zürich 1986, 324. – For good reasons censorious measures as run by military dictatorship in Germany during World War I especially when oppressing any facts on what was going on <backwards down in the very Turkey> – were of hard-core character and part of a policy later on named «the crime of silence». The German churchman Dr Johannes Lepsius (1858–1926), a prominent so-called «friend of the Armenian people», at first in 1916 detected the very character of «these new crimes against humanity and civilisation» when clearly naming that massacres, slaughters, and mass murders, as part of the «annihilation of the Armenian nation» («Vernichtung der armenischen Nation»), and, finally, «murder of a nation» («Völkermord, den die Jungtürken auf dem Gewissen haben.» (Albrecht, Völkermord[en] [see note 2], 117).

<sup>17</sup> Raphael Lemkin, Axis Rule in Occupied Europe, foreword by George A. Finch. Washington 1944, chp. XI: Genocide, 81.

1904–1907, is also a relevant subject: this «smart genocide»<sup>18</sup> started when the German representative declared the native ethnic group (Nama) no longer as subjects of His Majesty, the German Kaiser William II (v. Trotha, October 2nd, 1904): «The Herero people is no longer subject of the German crown. They have murdered and stolen [...] The Herero people has to leave this country. If the Herero people will not follow this order, I will force the Herero people by using my Great Fire Gun.»<sup>19</sup> This specific command, which indeed did exist, and its consequences and very meaning express what can be regarded as «genocidal mentality» due to the mainstream of German colonial and imperial ideology before WWI (*Herrenmenschen*, later on *Herrenvolk*) establishing the whites as the master race (*Herrenrasse*). Moreover, another relevant aspect of this early annihilation order given in 1904 lays in its very secrecy as a general feature of all genocidal actions in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Finally, the image and the perception of German rules in GSWA as mirrored in diary and letters written by the Nama-leader Captain Hendrik Witbooi, 1884–1894, are of scholarly relevance, too. This native individual indeed perceived military measures against his people as, in the last instance, both as destructive and lethal policy of the German occupants. In a way the Witbooi-writings can be regarded as the first (written) document which gave testimony of the underlying concept of any «modern» genocide and genocidal action in the 20<sup>th</sup> century: the very destruction of an entire population as planned and organised by a state and its (military, administrative, cultural, medical, ideological etc.) officials.

### *Armenocide as the first planned and organized modern genocide*

The mass murdering of about one and half million Armenians (fifteen hundred thousand humans) in the Ottoman/Turkish State in 1915–1922 was not only the genocide against the Ottoman Armenians which became «the embodiment of a terrible new quality of brute force against a civilian population during WWI»<sup>20</sup> but was also «the first planned and organized genocide in 20th century.»<sup>21</sup> Without studying this outstanding destructive event as the most nasty crime a state can ever commit any scholarly understanding of genocide is hardly pos-

<sup>18</sup> Micha Brumlik, Zu einer Theorie des Völkermords; in: *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*, 49 (2004), 8, 923–932.

<sup>19</sup> Helmut Bley, *Kolonialherrschaft und Sozialstruktur in Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1894–1914*, Hamburg 1968, 204.

<sup>20</sup> Dirk Schumann, Gewalterfahrungen und ihre nicht zwangsläufigen Folgen. Der Erste Weltkrieg in der Gewaltgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts [2004] <<http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/index.asp?id=523&pn=texte>>; vgl. Sönke Neitzel, Der historische Ort des Ersten Weltkrieges in der Gewaltgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts; in: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* [special issue: WWI], 64 (2014) 16–17, 17–23; 21: «Within the WWI the genocide against the Armenians is the outstanding special case; its extend remained unique.»

<sup>21</sup> Edgar Hilsenrath, *Das Märchen vom letzten Gedanken. Ein historischer Roman aus dem Kaukasus* (Heyne Bücher 9101), München 1989; München <sup>2</sup>1994, 16.



sible. Finally, Armenocide was, in fact, not only an outstanding crime but also the «essential prototype of genocide in the 20th century» (Horowitz) applying modern techniques.

The former (West) German Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, stressed, in April 1987, the very argument his ghost-writer at that time, Klaus Hildebrandt<sup>22</sup>, gave regarding the uniqueness of the Holocaust: its instrumental modernity and economic efficiency, following Arendt's consideration on the Holocaust as state-sponsored killing: «The crime of the Holocaust named genocide is indeed unique within human history whenever looking on the cold inhuman planning and its lethal efficiency.»<sup>23</sup>

Meanwhile there does exist a translation of relevant documents of the Turkish post-War military trials into German, and also into American English. In 1919, the Istanbul Trial condemned to death seventeen Young Turk politicians – one of them the prominent CUP-leader Talaat Pasha, the former Minister of the Interior (1913–1918) and a principle architect of the first genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – as responsible for the destruction of the Armenian people «organised by a united state-power». Moreover, the genocidal actions followed the official order given against «persons acting against the Ottoman government at war times».<sup>24</sup> The Ottoman Minister of the Interior and member of the most powerful triumvirat, Talaat Pasha, declared, in August 1915, that *The Armenian Question* does not exist any longer: «La question arménienne n'existe plus.»<sup>25</sup> In so far Talaat followed Abdul Hamid II who was the absolute ruler until the Young Turks overtook political power in 1908 responsible for two well-known atrocities against and massacres of Armenians in 1895/96 and in 1903/04. He publicly stated in 1896, «The way to get rid of the Armenian question is to get rid of the Armenians.»<sup>26</sup> The interview Talaat gave in 1916, two decades later, expresses the specific modernity of the first genocide of the 20th century. In his statement the most prominent CUP-leader publicly declared on «the Armenian question»:<sup>27</sup> «We have been reproached for making no distinction between the innocent Armenians and the guilty; but that was utterly impossible, in view of the fact that those who were innocent today might be guilty tomorrow.»<sup>28</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Klaus Hildebrandt, in: Manfred Bosch (Hg.), *Persönlichkeit und Struktur in der Geschichte. Historische Bestandsaufnahme und didaktische Implikationen* (Geschichtsdidaktik 1), Düsseldorf 1977, 55–61; for a critical view cf. Albrecht, *Die WahrheitsLüge* (see note 6).

<sup>23</sup> Helmut Kohl, *Tischrede* [in honour to the President of the State Israel]; in: Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, *Pressemitteilung*, No.111/97 [7.4.1987].

<sup>24</sup> Taner Akcam, *Armenien und der Völkermord. Die Istanbul Prozesse und der türkische Nationalbewegung*. Hamburg (1996), 2004, 178.

<sup>25</sup> Johannes Lepsius, *Der Todesgang des Armenischen Volkes. Bericht über das Schicksal des Armenischen Volkes in der Türkei während des Weltkrieges*, Potsdam 1919, 146.

<sup>26</sup> *The Nation*, 14th January, 1897.

<sup>27</sup> Henry Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story*, Garden City/N.Y. 1918, 336.

<sup>28</sup> *Berliner Tageszeitung und Handelszeitung* 4.5.1916: Wilhelm Feldmann, *Unterredung mit Talaat*: «Man hat uns vorgeworfen, daß wir keinen Unterschied zwischen den schuldigen und den unschuldigen Armeniern gemacht hätten. Daß war unmöglich, da bei der Lage der

To quote a legitimate US-scholar (of religious history) commenting the Talaat-interview: «The Armenians were slaughtered not for what they did but for what the Turks suspected some of them might do in the future.»<sup>29</sup>

What Talaat expressed in 1916 when he stressed «that those who were innocent today might be guilty tomorrow» anticipates possible developments, created what Arendt later identified as «the objective enemy»,<sup>30</sup> and expresses the modern scientific idea of latent potentiality (as worked out by theoretical physics, especially «quantum theory»). As the author mentioned when looking on relevant documents according to the Croatian genocide of the Serbs living in the Ustase state 1941/45,<sup>31</sup> the principal concept of «the objective enemy» was also graphically applied by the murderous perpetrators and Croatian elitist political figures as a sort of «political elite of Lumpenintellectuals»<sup>32</sup> as specific sort of lumpenintelligentsia: On November 26, 1941, the Croatian government ordered that repressive measures are to be applied against those «unwanted persons who might threaten the very achievements of the Croatian Ustase Movement for liberation.»<sup>33</sup> Given this setting, the concept «objective enemy» as, at first scholarly sketched by Arendt (1951) might serve as a relevant key feature for scholars whenever analysing «modern» genocide under comparative and antigenocidal perspectives.



April 1915: Captured Armenians marching into «nothingsness». Armenian civilians, escorted by armed Ottoman soldiers, are marched through Harput – known as Kharpert by Armenians, the kaza of the Mamuret-ul Aziz – to a prison in the nearby Mezireh – Ottoman: Mazraa, present-day Elâzığ, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Marcharmenians.jpg>.

---

Dinge morgen schuldig sein konnte, wer heute vielleicht noch unschuldig war.» (I overtook the wrong German [second] «daß» of the text-version as an original source).

<sup>29</sup> Richard L. Rubinstein, *The Age of Triage. Fear and Hope in an Overcrowded World*, Boston (Mass.) 1983, 19.

<sup>30</sup> Hannah Arendt, *Elemente und Ursprünge totaler Herrschaft*, new German edition, München/Zürich 1986, 654; Albrecht, *Die politische Ideologie* (see note 1), 62–67.

<sup>31</sup> Albrecht, *Völkermord[en]* (see note 2), 71–93.

<sup>32</sup> Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, New Haven/London 2001, 37.

<sup>33</sup> Bauer, *Rethinking* (see note 32), 89.



*The invented «objective enemy»*

The intellectual political philosopher Hannah Arendt (1906–1975), a German emigré to the USA in the Second World War, sketched her basic concept of «the objective enemy» («objektiver Gegner») as part of her «diagnosis of our time» at the beginning of the 1950s. Every totalitarian regime applies an ideology due to that leading figure which the author filtered out of the fascist «juridical» writings highly powerful German politicians like Reinhard Heydrich (1904–1942)<sup>34</sup> and Werner Best (1903–1989)<sup>35</sup> did when stigmatizing humans publicly naming them as the «objective enemy» and the very «people's enemy» – «an everlasting enemy» of the German people: «the very enemy of the racial, cultural, and spiritual being, and substance, of our people».<sup>36</sup> Moreover, it is one of the main tasks of the totalitarian political police within the *nationalsozialistische Führerstaat* as a specific institution «which is thoroughly, and permanently, monitoring the body of the German people, which is timely detecting every symptom of illness, and its destructive germs, and which is eliminating all of it totally by applying effective methods» – «ferretting out and monitoring the enemies of the state for disposing of them at the right moment – that is the preventive-police task of a political police».<sup>37</sup>

*Technical, economical, and religious aspects of genocide*

The very «modernity» of the Genocide against the Armenians 1915/16 is also expressed within the forms of genocidal actions Ottoman Turks really did. Mass killing as serial killing was organised in a highly efficient manner due to the logic of economic efficiency whenever executing the genocidal business.

When during WWII in Europe gas-chambers were economically the most efficient instrument of mass-killing Jews – mass-killing Armenians during WWI in Asia Minor complied another economic rationality according to any logic of saving material: they did not involve the waste of powder and shell:

«As the Turks themselves boasted they were more economical since they did not involve the waste of powder and shell.»<sup>38</sup>

In a specific way the most destructive event during WWI, the «administrative holocaust» (Winston Churchill) called Armenocide, which began in April 24<sup>th</sup>, 1915, in Constantinople as the first «modern» genocide within 20<sup>th</sup> century, expresses, although until now not mentioned at all, what the encyclica «*Evangelium vitae*», eighty years later, emphasised as the very «value and inviolability of

<sup>34</sup> Robert Gerwarth, *Hitler's Hangman. The Life of Heydrich*, New Haven 2011.

<sup>35</sup> Ulrich Herbert Best, *Biographische Studien über Radikalismus, Weltanschauung und Vernunft. 1903–1989*, Bonn 1996.

<sup>36</sup> Reinhard Heydrich, *Die Bekämpfung der Staatsfeinde*; in: *Deutsches Recht*, 5 (1936), 7/8, 121–123.

<sup>37</sup> Werner Best, *Die Geheime Staatspolizei*; in: *Deutsches Recht*, 5 (1936), 7/8, 125–138.

<sup>38</sup> Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story* (1918), 321.

human life» in general, when characterising any «culture of death», whenever «taken as a whole», as the result of a policy of «the strong against the weak who have no choice but to submit».<sup>39</sup>

*Another «march towards Berlin» 2006*

In June 2005, the German Federal Parliament, the Bundestag made up its mind and decided a modest critique of the Turkish denial of what happened but neither used the expression «genocide» nor «Armenocide».

Like all governments of the Turkish Republic since 1923 when at first a sort of culture of impunity was legally created within «New Turkey», the current one denies not only any Turkish Genocide but also continues the official rubbish talk on «tragic events during the war». Moreover, and as far as I know, a chequered group, politically unified under the umbrella that Turkish Genocide in 1915/16 is the very fiction of a so-called plot or conspiracy of the world-wide Armenian community. This group organised a «March Towards Berlin» where the official Turkish community held a demonstration on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2006, the day Talaat was assassinated by an Armenian student executed, 85 years ago (in Berlin, 1921), demanding that the German Federal Parliaments (unanimous) declaration is to be cancelled.<sup>40</sup> Obviously these daisy bones do not at all know that Kemal Pasha («Atatürk»), the founding father of the Turkish Republic, before the Lausanne Treaty (1923), in 1920, talked several times on «the Armenian catastrophe». Moreover, in October 1920, Kemal mentioned about 800.000 killed Armenians and damned the act.<sup>41</sup>

*Searching documents: the Talat telegrams*

One of the central topics of any profound definition of genocide in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as *crimen magnum* and ultimate human crime is not only the very fact that the taking-lives-actor is a state, but also that any destructive acts like expelling, prosecuting, and killing people are undertaken by a state as the most powerful national institution executed after a central governmental plan. Although it was not the main task of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, in 1945–46, it proved, and verified, the central plan of the Nazi figures attacking Poland September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1939, as a sort of conspiracy against peace. Moreover, not only a central plan guiding the action/s undertaken is basically required, but at least one command, expressing the destructive will of the Führer

<sup>39</sup> Ioannes Paulus PP. II [Carol Woytila, 1920–2005], *Evangelium vitae* to the Bishops, Priests and Deacons, Men and Women Religious lay, Faithful and all People of Good Will, on the Value and Inviolability of Human Life (March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1995), cpt. 19: [vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_25031995\\_evangelium-vitae\\_en.html](http://vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae_en.html).

<sup>40</sup> Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ), February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2006, 39.

<sup>41</sup> Akcam, *Armenien und der Völkermord* (see note 24), 123–125.

and his intention to kill an entire social group, collective, or people, for ethnic, religious, political, economic, or ideological reasons structurally belongs to any «modern» genocidal business, too. When looking on the Armenocide, at first glance a central plan for the total annihilation of the Ottoman Armenians during WWI seems to exist: the Andonian documents, published, as evidence of «The Great Crime», in Armenian under the title *Medz Vojeeru* [The Great Crime] (1921)<sup>42</sup>, as well as in French (*Documents Officiels Concernant les Massacres Arméniens*, 1920) and in English (*The Memoirs of Naim Bey*, 1920). Some sixty years later, one of the leading scientific experts, the US-scholar Vahakn N. Dadrian, in 1986<sup>43</sup>, discussed the documents as authentic telegrams sent out by the CUP-leader and central figure within the ruling political elite, the Ottoman Minister of the Interior, Talat Pasha, in 1915, to instruct his followers within the state bureaucracy in every province how to handle their genocidal business in an efficient manner. To sum up basic results of current legitimate scholarly works very briefly – there cannot be any doubt about the fact that it was Talat Bey (1872–1921), 1913–1917 Home Secretary of the Interior of the late Ottoman State who applied the Young-Turks-motto «Only a Dead Armenian is a Good Armenian» and ordered, commanded, and instructed the genocidal actions against the Ottoman Armenians by sending various telegrams to his followers into the very provinces of the Ottoman Reich. According to genocide research, the existence of a central plan whenever expressed in orders, or commands written down is, in fact, as *conditio sine qua non* – not one of various sufficient conditions, but a necessary condition and insofar essential according to any scientific definition of genocide as such –, it is by no means surprising that «the other side», above all representatives of the Turkish state, its political elite, and its relevant institutions<sup>44</sup> do not accept this perspective but declare these documents either at best as «Armenian fiction»<sup>45</sup> or at worst as «forgeries».<sup>46</sup>

<sup>42</sup> *Aghet* [The Great Catastrophe] is another Armenian description of the Armenian Tragedy, whereas the «White Massacre» the (peaceful) destruction of the Armenian nation by assimilation means; for aspects of remembrance essentials cf. Albrecht, Richard: The Murder of Armenians – Armenocide – Genocide – Genocide Prevention: Aspects of Political and Historical Comparative Genocide Studies; in: *Remembrance & Solidarity*, 2 (2013), 91–106.

<sup>43</sup> Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The Naim-Andonian Documents of the World War I Destruction of Ottoman Armenians: The Anatomy of a Genocide*; in: *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 18 (1986), 3, 311–360.

<sup>44</sup> The Turkish Historical Society (founded in 1931) does not belong to that in contemporary Turkey small sector of the «civil society» but is part of the state apparatus, forming particularly what Louis Althusser once classified as «ideological state apparatus». To up-value history is until now part of the ideology, and policy, the founding father of the Turkish Republic, Kemal Pasha, later on Atatürk («the father of all Turks»), proclaimed in 1931: «Writing history is as important as making it.» («Tarih yazmak, tarih yapmak kadar önemlidir»). However political analysts may value basic power structures within Turkey Today, a sustainable feature is not to overlook: the «state within the state», the «deep», «parallel» or «arcane» state as having developed from oriental «secret society» (Georg Simmel). In his latest book, Rudolf J. Rummel (*The Freedom Principle*: <http://www.hawaii.edu/power->

For until now no scholar has ever seen the original telegrams sent out by Talat from Constantinople in Osmanian language (Osmanli)<sup>47</sup> it is not at all possible either to falsify or verify it: this is, indeed, a serious problem not only for anybody working scholarly but also as it opens the road to denial of the Armenocide in general, classifying what happened either as tragic war-events with mutual perpetrators and victims on both sides or as an effective «Armenian fiction» particularly created by the world-wide Armenian community plotting against Turkey and the Turks. If a central command, or order, is regarded as a necessary condition<sup>48</sup> in the strict sense of *conditio sine qua non* for any genocide at all, and if there cannot be any doubt that the Holocaust when destructing between five and six millions of the European Jewry during WWI *was* genocide – until now a written source of evidence produced by Hitler himself could not be found, and it is, indeed, doubtable whether such a document exists at all. Christian Gerlach, at that time a German student of the Holocaust, in 1996/97 thoroughly read, however, as the first historian ever, two well-known diaries of politically relevant figures of the German genocidal elite. This enabled him to work out the meaning of a secret speech Hitler gave, on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 1941, above all to some of his high-ranked party functionaries proclaiming the annihilation of the Jewish people in Europe as his basic «political decision».<sup>49</sup>

The second argument lies not in the field of comparative genocide research but has to do with the situation of official Ottoman documents and their highly selective use. Nevertheless another student of genocide in general, and especially of the Armenocide 1915/16, found when investigating the relationship between the very political centre as represented by the Ottoman Ministry of the Interior in Constantinople, and his close CUP-follower Dr. Mehmed Resid, in March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1915, freshly established as the new regional governor in the Anatolian town Diyaebekir authentic telegrams, instructing Resid by saying what is to be done with the Arminians when organizing their march to nowhere ...

---

kills/FP.PDF» (2006, chp. XXIII, 152–159) also mentioned Arcan or «the deep society» as an aggressive feature of traditional elites to be fought against.

<sup>45</sup> Sinasi Orel/Süreyya Yuca, *The Talat Pasha Telegrams. Historical Fact or Armenian Fiction?*, Levkosa 1986.

<sup>46</sup> Türkkaya Ataöv, *The Andonian «Documents» Attributed to Talat Pasha are Forgeries!* Ankara 1986; *Gefälschte und authentische Dokumente zur armenischen Frage*, Ankara 1986.

<sup>47</sup> One of the most relevant political measures to modernize every-day-life in Turkey as run by early Kemalism was, in 1928, replacing the old Arab way of writing by a new quasi Latin alphabet which, however, lead to that bizarre situation that the old language and writing – Osmanli – meanwhile, in modern Turkey, is in fact a matter of a few specialists, leading to the well-know situation of a specific expropriation process the German emigré Ernst Bloch (1939) named «Disrupted Language – Disrupted Culture»: «Zerstörte Sprache – Zerstörte Kultur».

<sup>48</sup> Gunnar Heinsohn, *Lexikon der Völkermorde*, Reinbek 1988, 350f. («Völkermordbefehl»)

<sup>49</sup> Christian Gerlach, *Die Wannsee-Konferenz, das Schicksal der deutschen Juden und Hitlers politische Grundsatzentscheidung, alle Juden Europas zu ermorden*; in: *Werkstatt Geschichte*, 18 (1997), 7–44; enlarged version: *Krieg, Ernährung, Völkermord. Forschungen zur deutschen Vernichtungspolitik im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Zürich 2001, 79–152.



*Finding documents in Diyarbekir*

Presenting an excellent scholarly piece when describing what another investigator called the «cumulative radicalization» within the murderous Armenocidal process itself,<sup>50</sup> the Turkish-Dutch junior scholar Ugur Ü. Üngör<sup>51</sup> not only identifies more than a dozen official Ottoman documents, most of them produced by Talat and sent to his vicegerent in Diyarbekir (and to the provinces of Erzurum, Bitlis, Van, and others), but also analyses the various steps on the road to Armenocide identifying the second half of March, 1915, as the crucial period leading to a certain «point of no return». Finally, after having looked into the special archive in Istanbul («Basbakanlik Osmanli Arsivi» [Ottoman Archives under the Prime Ministry]) which has got more than hundred millions of files,<sup>52</sup> Üngör presents the command as given by Talat on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1915, to all the provinces, ordering «the wholesale deportations of all Armenians to Deyr-ul Zor, starting with the northeastern provinces.»<sup>53</sup>

This official Ottoman document (as to be found in the Ottoman Archives under BOA, DH.SFR, and not within the central register BOA, MV) is, as Üngör points out, until now «the single instance in which the empire-wide nature of the deportations is reflected in one order at the most central level.»<sup>54</sup> In the very

<sup>50</sup> Donald Bloxham, *The Armenian Genocide of 1915–1916. Cumulative Radicalization and the Development of a Destruction Policy*; in: *Past & Present*, 181 (2003), 141–191.

<sup>51</sup> Ugur Ü. Üngör, *A Reign of Terror. CUP Rule in Diyarbekir Province, 1913–1923* (University of Amsterdam, Department of History, Master's Thesis, 2005: <http://home.uva.nl/uu.ungor/thesis.pdf>); *When Persecution Bleeds into Mass Murder: The Processive Nature of Genocide*; in: *Genocide Studies & Prevention*, 1 (2006), 2, 173–195; *The Making of Modern Turkey. Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia, 1913–1950*, Oxford 2011, 336 p.

<sup>52</sup> A short description in modern Turkish is online <http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ar%C5%9Fiv>; but is, like other pieces placed by the Turkish Ministry of Culture & Tourism: <http://go-turkey.turizm.gov.tr> for any student, scholar, researcher as worthless as that two volumes of «Documents on Ottoman-Armenians» (n.d., 317 [and] xi/188 p.) Turkish authorities are distributing. A systematical and critical overview on (after the armistice in 1918 «cleaned») Ottoman Archives in current Turkey, which shows the «genocidal intention» of the CUP-leadership, gives Taner Akcam: *The Ottoman Documents and the Genocidal Policies of the Committee for Union and Progress (Ittihat ve Terakki) toward the Armenians 1915*; in: *Genocide Studies & Prevention*, 1 (2006) 2, 127–148.

<sup>53</sup> I take the liberty, if I may, and give a brief insight to my own experience according to the way German authorities actually dealing with relevant sources: After having finished my latest research on Hitler's second secret speech August 22, 1939 I realized that the papers of Dr. Armin T. Wegner (1886–1978) ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armin\\_T.\\_Wegner](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armin_T._Wegner); [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armin\\_T.\\_Wegner](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armin_T._Wegner)) are kept on file at the Central German Literary Institute at Marbach, including an unpublished «war-diary» this important German eye-witness of the Armenocide, in 1916, at this time Second Lieutenant within the military staff of Major General v.d. Goltz («Goltz Pasha») (<http://www.dlamarbach.de/index.php?id=59042>), has written. But I really did not succeed in getting hold of the very text I asked for thrice: I did not get any answer. In other words, in the case of the Wegner «war-diary» (1916) as a most relevant «historically credible source» (Martin Tamcke, *Armin T. Wegner und die Armenier. Anspruch und Wirklichkeit eines Augenzeugen*, Hamburg 1996, 238) my own research was not only handicapped but completely inhibited.

<sup>54</sup> Üngör, *Mass Murder* (see note 51), 187; 195, note 131.

meaning of *quod-erad-demonstrandum*, and even when comparing to the Holocaust in 1941 without any written order from the very top, any dispute on «the Andonian documents» indeed is a yesterday discussion (in spite of the fact that the Talat telegrams were first mentioned by H.A. Gibbons in 1916.<sup>55</sup>) In his outlook Üngör reminds us of the public declaration of the three Entente powers dated May, 24<sup>th</sup>, 1915, condemning «these new crimes of Turkey against humanity and civilization», promising that «all members of the Ottoman government and those of its agents who are implicated in such massacres [...] will hold personally responsible.» Having realized their projective fate, «the CUP leaders, especially Talat, panicked», creating immediately, in order to cover the beginning genocide, an emergency decree on the deportations as a sort of pseudo-law (May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1915). Later on, in 1916 and 1917, two ideological pamphlets above all to be distributed among the diplomats at Pera,<sup>56</sup> were produced in French, denying that Armenocide had already started, using pseudo-arguments picked up by all post-Ottoman true-believers and fanatics, either militant Kemalists or not, till nowadays.

### *Serbocide – the third historical genocide during the WWI*

Whenever looking in a scholarly way on what could be named Serbocide («killing Serbs»)<sup>57</sup> as a specific way of mass killing during WWII as planned and organized serial killing by the political leadership of «Satellite Croatia» (1941–1945) which started in summer 1941 it is clear that this was not only mass slaughter at a hard-core-level of cruelty but, in fact, and *strictu sensu*, another genocide with about one million victims within nearly four years.

What might appear, at the first glance, as Balkan atrocities – or just another balkanized massacre happening – was, in fact, the murder of that part of the Serbs as a people living, in 1941, as citizens in the newly created Croatian state (about 1,5 million humans in all belonged to that ethnic, religious, and cultural minority). Remembering the very historical context of that specific genocidal syndrome, above all (i) German military occupation of the Balkan and the crimes committed by these armed forces, (ii) specific genocidal actions run by the SS and the Wehrmacht against Balkan jews, and the Gypsy, and (iii) the graphic, and active support the fascist powers Germany and Italy gave to the Croatian Ustase movement – the Croatian genocidal elite figures Jehuda Bauer stigmatized as «lumpen» intellectuals lead by a fanatic race ideology with «the Serb» as

<sup>55</sup> Herbert Adams Gibbons, *The Blackest Page in History. Events in Armenia in 1915. The Facts and the Responsibilities*, N.Y./London 1916, 19–23.

<sup>56</sup> *Vérité sur le Mouvement Révolutionnaire arménien et les mesures Gouvernementales / Journal de guerre [...] / Notes d'un officier supérieur russe [...]*, Constantinople 1916; <sup>2</sup>1919; *Aspirations et agissement révolutionnaires des Comité Arméniens avant et après la proclamation de la Constitution Ottomane*, Istanbul 1917.

<sup>57</sup> Richard Albrecht, *Serbozid, 1941–1945 – Über den Dritten Europäischen Völkermord im 20. Jahrhundert*; in: *Kultursoziologie*, 15 (2006) 2, 37–56.



the deadly enemy caught their chance and overtook not only the state power but realized the very opportunity and deprived, persecuted, and murdered the bulk of the members of the Serbian people living within that newly established Croatian state – all of what happened under the eyes of the Third Reich as the most relevant protective power the Ustase state had got. In the end about 100.000 Serbs fled the country, 250.000 were forced to convert to the Roman Catholic church, and 750.000 were killed within the country. It is a matter of fact that this genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is, until now, under-documented when compared to the Holocaust and the Armenocide. Moreover, a lot of still unresolved problems to be discussed/tackled by further scholarly work do exist, e.g. the role of the religious ideologies and the Catholic church, of priests, clergymen, and the meaning of often barbarian forms of (serial) killing humans with streams of blood like butchery in a slaughterhouse when killing the cattle. Nevertheless there is no doubt about the facts (although daisy bones and true believers like Ustase ideologists deny). Finally, from a comparative perspective, any genocidal scholar cannot overlook the common features compared to the Armenocide and the Holocaust: first of all the vital role of the Croatian Ustase state as well as the very application of a destructive racial ideology creating an «objective enemy» (Arendt) leading to this third European genocide in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, started and undertaken at the same time as the Holocaust, expressing the equally fascist, racial, annihilating, destructive, and deadly mentality of the genocidalists.

### *Genocidal totalitarianism as killing defined by social groups*

Whereas Raphael Lemkin (1944) discussed both the historical situation/s – the World War/s – and the destructive bio-political dimensions of mass slaughter and serial killing of a people for religious, ethnic, and ideological reasons, which is effective over generations, Arendt worked out the specific role the state apparatus played whenever the holocaust (1941–1945) is discussed as a specific form of «mass murder» planned and organized by a state (thus being himself subject of a capital crime). Given this setting, I will take another special feature of any genocide, as emphasized by Horowitz (1980), seriously.

The very crime later named genocide implies, from the standpoint of any relevant concept due to «sociology of killing», the basic feature of mass killings as serial killing of not only masses but of a defined social group, an entire people, like the Armenians (1915–1918) during the First World War, the Serbs living in the Ustase state founded in 1941, and the European Jews (1941–1945), during WWII. Whenever looking on both well-documented genocidal events during the World Wars through the eyes of an experienced social scientist like Horowitz, there is good reason to argue that the «Armenocide» was not only historically the first modern genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> century but also the foremost, and the most outstanding destructive genocidal event anticipating a specific new quality of lethal policy (which was defined later on by Arendt, as totalitarianism). Conse-

quently, the «Armenocide» as «the essential prototype of genocide in the twentieth century» (Horowitz) and its genocidal totalitarianism, will be the most relevant matter of future scholarly work on modern genocide, its political sociology, and its social mentality.

*Eliminationist antisemitism as racism of no return*

The very secret of any anti-genocidal «saving-lives»-policy is and means to break down a basically destructive process before mass killing and murdering people is regarded as a legitimate method for solving societal problems in the way totalitarian regimes do, using the state apparatus as a bureaucratic organised administrative machinery for mass murder producing an empirical «double-bind»-situation (Gregory Bateson) whenever giving the victims, whatsoever they will do or not do, not at all a chance to escape, likely to atrocities, riots, pogroms, mass slaughters, and massacres as pre-totalitarian methods: traditionally those who did submit and/or revoke could survive and survived, e.g. as religious convertees. The most prominent Nazi-ideologist of the Third Reich, later «Reichsminister für die besetzten Ostgebiete» since July 17, 1941, the most responsible political figure for the occupied Eastern territories – Alfred Rosenberg (1893–1946) – crossed, in autumn 1941, the Rubicon of the perpetrators, when, after a personal meeting with SS-leader Heinrich Himmler (November 18, 1941), he commanded «die biologische Ausmerzungen des gesamten Judentums in Europa» [«the biological elimination of the entire European Jewry»] as an imperative necessity of any racial fascist «eliminationist antisemitism.»<sup>58</sup> At the Main Nuremberg Trial 1945–46, NS-Reichsminister Rosenberg – both as an ideologist and the very creator of «racial hate» and a radical practitioner of what could be, as a specific manner of genocidal totalitarianism, named genocidal fascism or fascist genocidality – was accused because of (i) «participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of crime against peace», (ii) «planning, initiating and waging wars of aggression and other crime against peace», (iii) «war crimes», and (iv) «crimes against humanity», found guilty in all four topics, condemned to death, and was, consequently, executed on October 16, 1946. Plainly spoken, this *point of no return*<sup>59</sup>, allowing, and managing the Holocaust as well as the Armenocide and the Serbocide – all of them ultimate breakdowns of any humanity and civilization under the shadow and the umbrella of two World Wars – is better never – and never again – to be reached.

<sup>58</sup> Daniel J. Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*. New York 1996.

<sup>59</sup> This point was not reached in the «Romanian case» during WWU in 1941/42: Armin Heinen, *Rumänien, der Holocaust und die Logik der Gewalt*, München 2007; cf. Richard Albrecht, «Logik der Gewalt»; in: *Halbjahresschrift für südosteuropäische Geschichte, Literatur und Politik*, 20 (2008), 2, 102–108; *Völkermordforschung als/und Kulturwissenschaft. Über aktuelle Genozidstudien und ihre Konsequenzen*; in: *Zeitschrift für Weltgeschichte*, 10 (2009), 1, 149–173.

*The beginning of genocide and the technological paradigm*

If it is not only true, but moreover the very truth, and finally nothing but the only truth that genocidal action/s and genocide policy is a matter of not only one generation, but of several generations according to both sides of the genocidal coin – perpetrators and victims – it is, by no means «the last scene of all, that ends this strange and eventful history» (William Shakespeare) but an integrative part incorporated in the genocidal process itself of extraordinary relevance how humans born later («die Nachgeborenen» [Bertolt Brecht]) cope with the most destructive societal event of mankind, especially under the perspective of preventing that specific collective mass murder. Decades before Elie Wiesel publicly mentioned «the holocaust before the holocaust», Joseph Guttman, an exiled European Jew surviving the Holocaust, reminds us, some sixty years ago, that beyond all «uniqueness» of the Holocaust setting, especially given with the murderous German industry using gas chambers, several common features of Armenocide and Holocaust as successfully «organized attempt[s] to exterminate a whole ethnic group» could be detected.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, Guttman worked out not only the opportunity structures for genocidal policy as given by the historical situation/s of World War but also pointed out the meaning of plundering acts, robbery of money, goods, property, and fortunes of the (expelled and) murdered victims for sponsoring the genocidal system and its war machinery, but also stressed relevant differences between the methods applied: when comparing genocidal actions and policy – a legitimate method even in the eyes of Daniel J. Goldhagen (who was wrongly attributed a «true believer» of the uniqueness-dogma for years<sup>61</sup>) – the German genocidal business was valued as «scientific» whereas the Turks used more primitive, simple methods of traditional slaughter when executing their mass murder/s – an overwhelming aspect Michael J. Arlen<sup>62</sup> describes as a *technological paradigm*:

«Hitlers Germany was to perfect the process of railway deportation and to develop the gas chamber and the crematoria [...] But in virtuality every modern instance of mass murder, beginning, it appears with the Armenians, the key element – which has raised the numerical and physic levels of the deed above the classic terms of massacre – has been the alliance of technology and communication.»

<sup>60</sup> Joseph Guttman, *The Beginning of Genocide. A Brief Account on the Armenian Massacres in the World War I*, New York 1948, 3.

<sup>61</sup> Jürgen Elsässer/Andrei S. Markovits (Eds.), *Die Fratze der eigenen Geschichte. Von der Goldhagen-Dabatte zum Jugoslawien-Krieg*, Berlin 1999.

<sup>62</sup> Michael J. Arlen [i.e. Dikran Koyundjian], *Passage to Ararat*. New York 1975, 243, 244; cf. as a more general approach Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism: Some Ideological Origins of the Primacy of Politics in the Third Reich*; in: *Theory & Society*, 10 (1981) 6, 805–832; *Reactionary Modernism. Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich*, Cambridge 1986.

Whenever combined with a historical view which looks upon the Holocaust as «the last stage» of a process which started with the 30<sup>th</sup> of January, 1933, when the state power was given over to the Nazi gang<sup>63</sup>, not only the very lethal result – mass/serial killing in murder-factories down in the «wild» East since autumn 1941 – can be of scholarly interest but also all the steps foreshadowing and leading to the Holocaust 1941 must be: sterilization under pressure, killing living human beings (children, elderly people, gypsies, and others) arrested in clinics, and concentration camps, defined as «not worth» to live any longer. The German-American Historian of WWII, Gerhard Weinberg, stressed this aspect:

«World War II [...] was the struggle for life in the sense of who should live on this planet and who should command its very resources. At the same time the decision should be made which peoples would have been annihilated completely because they were regarded as inferior and troublesome by the winners.»<sup>64</sup>

### *Opening an anti-genocidal perspective*

What the world-wide Armenian community for nearly a century remembers as *Aghet* was, for decades, called «the forgotten genocide», too. From a certain sociological standpoint any communication on genocide is formally regarded as a «second order»-phenomenon<sup>65</sup>, basically including relevant communication strategies of either denial or apologizing genocide as the main forms of defense against any involvement in genocidal action and policy, and its consequences, applied by the perpetrator-group. Nearly thirty years ago, Richard G. Hovannisian,<sup>66</sup> a prominent US-scholar of Armenocide, sketched a historical five-step-model to describe the efforts of any Turkish state (whosoever may be its leading political figures), with scholarly historian «revisionism» created for «clouding the past» – a defensive slogan which was in the last years since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century transformed into the Turkish demand for establishing a committee formed by governmentally selected Turkish and Armenian historians (of the two states) to detect whether the Armenocide 1915/16 was genocidal policy

<sup>63</sup> Bernd Jürgen Wendt, *Moderner Machbarkeitswahn. Zum Menschenbild des Nationalsozialismus, seinen Wurzeln und Konsequenzen*, in: *Menschenrechte und Menschenbilder von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Burghart Schmidt (Geistes- und Kulturwissenschaftliche Studien 1), Hamburg 2006, 156–176.

<sup>64</sup> Gerhard L. Weinberg, *Eine Welt in Waffen. Die globale Geschichte des Zweiten Weltkriegs*, Darmstadt 1995, 16 [translation RA].

<sup>65</sup> Klaus Dammann, *Die Armenische Katastrophe – Genozid, Pogromwelle, Krieg, Bestrafung oder was sonst? Eine soziologische Untersuchung semantischer Opportunitätsstrukturen zur Leugnung von Völkermord* (Bielefelder Arbeiten zur Verwaltungssoziologie), Bielefeld 2001; «Women, Children, Older People» – Genocide, Warfare, and the Functional Differentiation of Society; in: Grazyna Skapska/Annamaria Orla-Bukowska (Ed.), *The Moral Fabric in Contemporary Societies* (Annals of the International Institute of Sociology, N.S. 9), Leiden/Boston 2003, 291–308.

<sup>66</sup> Richard Hovannisian (Ed.), *The Armenian Genocide in Perspective*; introduction Terrence des Pres; preface Israel W. Charny, New Brunswick/London 1986, 111–133.



as planned and organized by the Ottoman State. The Armeno-German researcher Mihran Dabag publicly accented that one of his own important – as scholarly as human – tasks as a student of genocide is to counter any denial of the crime<sup>67</sup>:

«This is a relevant aspect for developing effective strategies for preventing and blocking collective violence. Surprisingly, at a first glance, that potential genocidal actors will not be deterred as perpetrators from committing the crime by legal consequences. Because the crime of genocide develops its destructive effectiveness not primarily for the generation of the perpetrators but for the following generations aiming the societal future of the perpetrator-group.»

Given this matter of fact, there is still a lot to be done regarding Armenocide and Serbocide: For since the still existing «Türkiye Cumhuriyeti» was founded in October 29, 1923, every Turkish government and its respective post-Kemalist policy, and ideology, strongly denied the Armenocide as genocidal policy in the sense and meaning of the UN-convention (1948). «Hrvatska», the follower state of historical fascist Croatia (1941–45) as founded in October 8, 1991, in fact two generations after its predecessor, is also if not basically denying the fact of mass-murdered Serbs during WWII in general – particularly playing down what really happened in a manner of extreme obscurity.

#### *Denying genocide as the last stage of genocidal action*

Denying genocide is, indeed, not only «a kind of double killing»: «the physical deed» is «followed by the destruction of remembrance of the deed»<sup>68</sup>; in a way denying genocide is also the very last stage of any genocidal action and one of its structurally incorporated elements as a policy planned, and organized by a state and other fanatics, militant liars, cultural desperadoes, psychopathic *Lumpenintellektuelle*, superfluous *Mobführer*, political and war criminals, criminal underworld, white trash (with or without cash) self-fancying as *Herrenrasse*, in short: all of that rabble scum of the earth as more or less small social groups and/or societal organizations belonging to the civil sectors of every – and above all the «hidden» – society,<sup>69</sup> but the policy of denial of empirical states like Croatia and

<sup>67</sup> Mihran Dabag, *Gestaltung durch Vernichtung. Politische Visionen und generationale Selbstermächtigung in den Bewegungen der Nationalsozialisten und der Jungtürken*; in: Mihran Dabag/Kristin Platt (Hg.), *Die Machbarkeit der Welt. Wie der Mensch sich selbst als Subjekt der Geschichte entdeckt (Genozid und Gedächtnis)*, München 2006, 142–171.

<sup>68</sup> Roger W. Smith/Eric Markusen/Robert Jay Lifton, *Professional Ethics and the Denial of Armenian Genocide*; in: *Holocaust & Genocide Studies*, 9 (1995), 1, 1–22.

<sup>69</sup> A respectable description of that phenomenon of serial hard-core genocide denial naming both historical facts and ideological fictions since 1918 was worked out from, Seyhan Bayraktar/Wolfgang Seibel, *Das türkische Tätertrauma. Der Massenmord an den Armenier von 1915 bis 1917 und seine Leugnung*; in: Bernhard Giesen/Christoph Schneider (Eds.), *Tätertrauma. Nationale Erinnerungen im öffentlichen Diskurs*, Konstanz 2004, 381–400.

Turkey (independently whether classified as potential «failed states»<sup>70</sup> – or not – whenever valued by political sociologists).

Given this setting, a lot remains to be done, especially when realising that the one, a former political ally of Germany 1941–45, got its full EU-membership in July, 2013, and the other, ally of Germany 1914–18, is actually knocking on the EU's door as a potential new member without accepting, acknowledging, and recognizing the *crimina magna* Armenocide and Serbocide as genocidal policy planned and organized by their predecessor/s in state.

*Murder(ing) Armenians. The Turkish genocide against the Ottoman Armenians during the First World War and its place in the political history of the 20th century*

In this essay the author, an experienced political and social scientist, sums up his 25 years of research on the Armenocide – the Turkish genocide against the Ottoman Armenians during the First World War. He characterizes it as a *crimen magnum* and a crime against humanity. A representative of the relatively new discipline of comparative genocide, he goes on to analyze two areas for research: (i) the Armenocide in its historical context as the first modern genocide and a prototype of genocide in 20th century history; (ii) the definition of the central theoretical concept of genocide as a crime planned, and organized by a state to destroy an entire ethnic people which has been identified as an enemy, and carried out using racial discrimination and a totalitarian apparatus.

Armenocide – Genocide – crime against mankind – First World War – comparative genocide research.

*Génocide arménien. L'extermination des Arméniens par les Turcs dans l'Empire ottoman pendant la Première Guerre mondiale et sa position dans l'histoire politique du 20<sup>ème</sup> siècle*

Dans cette contribution scientifique, l'auteur, politologue et sociologue expérimenté, ne résume pas seulement ses recherches thématiques (des vingt-cinq dernières années) sur le génocide des Arméniens par les Turcs pendant la Grande Guerre, *crimen magnum* et crime contre l'humanité; mais il aborde également, en tant que représentant de la discipline scientifique relativement jeune de la recherche sur le génocide, deux problèmes de recherche: d'une part le génocide des Arméniens en tant que premier génocide «moderne» d'un point de vue historique et prototype des génocides du 20<sup>ème</sup> siècle; et d'autre part, dans un contexte systématique conceptuel, la notion clef de génocide en tant que crime étatique planifié et organisé, visant à exterminer de manière totalitaire et raciste un peuple défini en tant qu'«adversaire objectif» (synonyme d'ethnie).

Arménocide – génocide – crime contre l'humanité – Première Guerre mondiale – recherche comparative sur le génocide.

*Armeniermord(en). Der türkische Völkermord an den Armeniern im Osmanischen Staat während des ersten Weltkriegs und seine Stellung in der politischen Geschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts*

In diesem Aufsatz faßt der Autor als erfahrener politischer und Sozialwissenschaftler nicht nur seine thematisch bezogenen Forschungen (der letzten fünfundzwanzig Jahre) zum Armenozid als türkischem Völkermord an den Armeniern im ersten Großen Krieg, *crimen magnum* und Verbrechen gegen die Menschheit zusammen; sondern diskutiert auch als Vertreter der relativ jungen Wissenschaftsdisziplin international vergleichender

<sup>70</sup> For a broad understanding cf. Noam Chomsky, *Failed States. The Abuse of Power and the Assault on Democracy*, New York 2006.



Völkermordforschung (synonym Genozidforschung) zwei Forschungsprobleme: einmal den historischen Völkermord an den Armeniern als ersten «modernen» Völkermord im geschichtlichen Zusammenhang und Prototyp von Völkermord im 20. Jahrhundert überhaupt; und zweitens im systematisch-begrifflichen Kontext das Leitkonzept Völkermord (oder Genozid) als staatlich geplantes und organisiertes Verbrechen, um ein als «objektiver Gegner» definiertes Volk (synonym eine Ethnie) in rassistischer Weise mit totalitären Methoden zu vernichten.

Armenozid – Völkermord/Genozid – Verbrechen gegen die Menschheit – Erster Weltkrieg – vergleichende Völkermord Forschung.

*L'uccisione degli armeni. Il genocidio turco degli armeni nello stato ottomano durante la Prima guerra mondiale e la sua posizione nella storia politica del 20simo secolo*

In questo testo scientifico l'autore, esperto in scienze politiche e sociali, riassume non solo i suoi studi tematici (degli ultimi venticinque anni) sull'armenocidio come genocidio turco degli armeni durante la prima guerra mondiale, *crimen magnum* e crimine contro l'umanità; inoltre, in quanto rappresentante della disciplina relativamente giovane che si occupa di comparazione internazionale dei genocidi (sinonimo dello studio dei genocidi), mette in luce due questioni. La prima pone il genocidio degli armeni in un contesto storico come primo genocidio «moderno» e come prototipo dei genocidi nel 20simo secolo; la seconda situa il genocidio in un contesto sistematico-concettuale come crimine organizzato dallo stato per eliminare un popolo (sinonimo di etnia) definito come un «avversario oggettivo» in modo razzista e con metodi totalitari.

Armenocidio – genocidio – crimine contro l'umanità – Prima guerra mondiale.

*Richard Albrecht*, Dr. rer. pol. habil., PhD, Unabhängiger Sozialforscher und Freier Autor, Bad Münstereifel.

# Kriegswahrnehmung und -erfahrung

