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### Armenian Genocide Argument

I intend to prove that the Armenian genocide occurred in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and it was not a civil war, just as the Turkish government denies it, and claims there was no genocide. The Armenians were one of the most ancient people living in the near east of the southern Caucasus region for about 3,000 years. They were the first nation to accept Christianity as their religion in A. D. 290. This was forty years before the emperor Constantine instated Christianity for the Roman Empire. (Soghoian, 2). The actual date when Armenia accepted Christianity was in 301. It was proclaimed by King Tridates the Great, who was the King of Armenia at the time. (Nersoyan, 67).

The Turks are Muslim and they are a Eurasian country that is located in western Asia. The Turkish government, which was the Ottoman Empire into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was going to battle with Britain, France, and Russia in World War I. Before the war started, the Ottoman Empire intended to help the Armenians relocate to a further location so they would not be murdered in the war zones. Unfortunately, the Turkish Soldiers who are called The Young Turks started to kill the Armenians as they were leaving their homes. It was called the Armenian Genocide. It occurred from 1915 through 1923. This slaughter was one of the most deadliest massacres that the Armenians went through, and the first ever witnessed genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. One and a half million Armenians were killed. They murdered mostly mothers, children, and pregnant woman, as well. For example, they would rip the baby out of the mother's stomach and leave it there to suffer. They killed Armenian educators, doctors, lawyers, writers, artists, and clergymen, as well. The Armenians were forced to march through the deserts of Lebanon, Syria, and Arabia which is now Iraq. The soldiers did not allow them to have any food or water. If they did, they would either take them away or kill them. They murdered ethnic groups like the Assyrians and Greeks. This deadly genocide was planned out by a small group of fanatical nationalists called The Triumvirate of Enver Pasha, Cemal Pasha, and Trio Pasha. Also, it was planned by the Turkish officers and soldiers, The Young Turks. (Jones)

The Turkish government, for years has denied the Armenian Genocide occurred and says that it was a Civil war between them and the Armenians. It was Genocide and not a war, as the Turkish government has denied it.

The Armenians, who fled away from the death march of the Turks, were living in several places in the continents. For example, a number of them lived in orphanages in Greece, and various places in the Middle East, Germany and the new Republic of Armenia, as well. (Hovanissian,165). After the genocide, the Ottoman Empire was defeated in World War I against Britain, France, and Russia. They lost most of their land. As a result, this became a good opportunity for the Armenians to regain their land. Woodrow Wilson, who was the president of the United States in the 1900's had the right to give those boundaries for Armenia. It was called the Treaty of Services which was in 1920. Unexpectedly, The Turkish government had renounced the treaty taking Armenia's land and six of the former western Ottoman provinces. This was all planned out by Nationalist leader, Kemal Ataturk. (Jones) ANCA (Armenian National Committee of America) is one of the largest grassroots organizations. This organization works on issues like the Armenian Genocide. (Jones)

ANCA has always held an Armenian Genocide observance at the Armenian Assembly in Washington D.C. Congressmen, clergymen and survivors of the Armenian genocide have spoken at these conventions. (Contributor)

Also, 21 other countries have recognized the Armenian Genocide. France made a law making it illegal to deny the Armenian genocide and the punishment is a year in jail and a fine of \$58,000, as well. The senate approved the bill 127 to 86 votes. It was forwarded by President Sarkozy UMP party. (Head)

The Turkish Government still to this day denies the Armenian Genocide ever occurred in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They say that the Armenians who were murdered were victims of the civil war. (Sidduiui)

Ever since the 1920's the government has had silence on the issue of Genocide. For instance, a Turkish ambassador to the U.S. dismissed the holocaust as being a civil war sparked the Armenian nationalists. Also, they devoted millions of dollars to the propaganda campaign intended for western universities and scholars as well. (Jones) Recently in Turkey there was an unexpected death of an individual Armenian. It shocked turkey and the whole Armenian nation. The victim who was murdered, his name was Hrant Dink. He was a citizen in Turkey and chief editor for the Turkish-Armenian newspaper. He was shot by 17-year old Ongun Samalt a

Turkish nationalist on January 19, 2007 because Hrant thought that people in Turkey should talk more about what happened in 1915. (Ozay) Adolf Hitler who was the leader of the Nazi party had mentioned the Genocide of the Armenians on August, 1939 saying “Who after all speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?” (Soghoian, 1)

According to the Turkish government, The Armenians are the ones, who killed the Muslim population, and they even started the civil war because they were trying to assist the Russian army’s eastern front, and to conquer the Ottoman Government. (Hilmar)

I completely and utterly disagree with the governments input and here is why: The Armenians did assist the Russian army, many Armenians that were from the Ottoman army left to join the Russian army. They offered to help Russia attack the Ottoman Empire. This was happening before the Armenian genocide had occurred. When they arrived at the battlefield, the Russians decided to retreat because of their revolution, leaving the Armenian Soldiers to fight the Turks on their own. Eventually, they retreated as well because they were depending on aide from Britain, France, and Russia, but they were not trained. As 1915 came around the corner, the Turkish soldiers started to relocate the Armenians to further locations and eventually they started murdering them one by one. This proves that it was genocide and not a civil war because the Armenians did not know they were going to be massacred, and they needed weapons. As a result, they were defenseless. (Mihailov)

Consequently, there were many survivors of the Armenian Genocide that proved it occurred in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. If I were to ask a survivor if it was genocide or a war, most likely their answer will be Genocide and not war. According to a book about a survivor of the Armenian genocide which is called Portrait of a Survivor, it was about a survivor and what she had to go through to survive the deadly massacre. Her name was Shnorhig Keshishian born in Zeiton town which is in eastern Turkey and formerly part of central ancient Armenia having a population of less than 25,000. Shnorhig and her mother Vartouhi were the only survivors of their family. Shnorhig lost her grandpa and grandma by the Turkish soldiers. She suffered and had to see her baby brother die in front of her. Eventually, they killed her blind aunt and her other aunt and her three kids. They even killed two of her uncles. One of them was Hagop Kerigian. He was hung in the church and his body was found in front of his home the following morning. The other uncle was Setrag Kerigian a student at the Armenian seminary studying for the priesthood and he was murdered as well. Lastly, they took the father away from her. Furthermore, they took the mother away to heal the injured Turkish soldiers because she was an educated

nurse. After the horrible massacre ended, they let Vartouhi go. She managed to find her daughter Shnorhig. She decided to take her and fourteen other orphans to an orphanage in Marsh. Vartoui became the hospital nurse. She had watched over her daughter and to make sure she was healthy and in good condition. (Soghoian, 23-34).

In conclusion, the Turkish government claims that from 1915 through 1923 it was a civil war, and not the Armenian genocide. On the other hand, the Armenians recognize it as the Armenian Genocide of losing one and a half million of their population in 1915. Also, 21 other countries have recognized it. France made a law, forbidding it to deny the Armenian genocide. The Armenians were defenseless in 1915. Furthermore, there were survivors to prove that the Genocide occurred and was not war.