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Associated with
The Armenian Issue

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Continued use of Wartime Propaganda as Historical sources

Armenian Propagandists often cite two sources in particular: "Ambassador Morgenthau's Story" and the British "Blue Book" prepared by the young graduate student Arnold Toynbee. To the uninformed layman these documents have the appearance of reliable historical sources. But from the point of view of competent historians there are several problems with these sources.

- The most glaring problem with the continued use of these two sources is that it violates a fundamental principle of historical research: single sources cannot be viewed out of the context of all primary documentation available on the subject. In other words, if overwhelming evidence from other known facts and documents throws one or two sources in doubt, the discrepancy must be reconciled. Both of these documents are known -on the testimony of the authors themselves- to have been intended as wartime propaganda to secure the entry of the U.S. into the war. This fact -by itself- does not necessarily impeach them, but when viewed in conjunction with all the remaining evidence it becomes clear that they have little value as historical records and are instead to be regarded as primarily wartime propaganda. .
- Those who have seen war first hand describe its cruelty, inhumanity and injustice. Almost any war, when viewed through the eyes of one side only, can look like a genocide. Both Morgenthau's story and the British Blue Book are clear examples of one-sided documents. Reputable historians view them as having, at best, very limited value for understanding the events of 1915, but when presented to the uninitiated public they produce an extremely distorted and misleading picture of those events.

Morgenthau's Story

U.S. Ambassador Morgenthau - though he lived long before President Nixon - had a similar habit of keeping a scrupulous record of his daily activities; not on tape but in writing. We have his diaries and extensive documentation of so many events of his daily life. His book -which appeared in what was then one of America's best-known magazines, "The World's Work" (circ. 120,000) read like an adventure novel and was such a sensation that not only did it play a major role in securing America's entry into the war, but it even received a movie offer from Hollywood which Morgenthau rejected only at the urging of President Wilson himself. But when the "stories" in his book are checked against the records in his diary and other personal records, the value of the work as an historical source is destroyed completely. Furthermore, the book itself is characterized by a significant number of anti-Turkish clauses which are nothing less than racist; an element that was necessary for propaganda value. Turks are portrayed as an inferior race. One of the main themes of the book is a series of stories portraying the Central Government as having had a conspiracy to exterminate the Armenians. But even if we were to disregard the other obvious problems with Morgenthau's book, there are irreconcilable problems with these stories. For example:

- Why is it that there are so many communications -still extant in the original- coming from this same government warning that anyone who molested the deported Armenians or who failed to protect them adequately would be punished severely?
- Why did this same government pass a law authorizing the Armenians to return just a year later (1916) after the extreme danger had dissipated ?

- If the government had a conspiracy to exterminate the Armenians, why is there so much documentation showing that this same government punished and even executed in many cases persons whom it considered guilty of massacring innocent Armenians?
- If the government wanted to exterminate the Armenians, why did it offer them Autonomy in August 1914, in Erzurum- an offer which they promptly rejected ?

In summary, Morgenthau's diary is generally regarded as a reliable primary historical source by both sides but this diary clearly exposes his book, *Morgenthau's Story* as a propaganda piece.

The British Blue Book

A second source that is continually used by Armenian Propagandists is the British Blue Book, published in 1916 mostly through the efforts of Arnold Toynbee who was at the time a graduate Student. Abundant evidence exists to show that the intention of the British Government in producing the Blue Book was to bring about the entry of the U.S. into the war; not to deliver a comprehensive portrayal of what was happening in Eastern Anatolia at the time. Again, by itself this fact does not necessarily impeach the work. However there are several problems with the use of this document as an historical source authenticating a label of "genocide":

- Contrary to the assertions of Armenian Propagandists, the Blue Book contains no evidence proving that the Turkish government was responsible for the massacres¹ described therein and the atmosphere of near-anarchy and local animosity stemming from the depravity of the Armenian Revolutionaries, would tend to militate against such a conclusion in any case.
- Contrary to the assurances of co-Author Lord Bryce, that most of the stories in the Blue book came from "eye-witnesses", most of the evidence presented in the work is hearsay evidence, not first hand.
- Five years after compiling it, Toynbee would visit Turkey, report his deep shock at the instances of cruelty and barbarity he saw perpetrated by Greeks against Moslem Turks in Western Anatolia, and then later reveal that he had -all along- been ignorant of Armenian provocation in Eastern Anatolia².

Intentional omission of key parts of the story

The Relocation of the Armenians -the event which witnessed such great suffering and loss of life- occurred in 1915. The year 1908 was the year of the "Young Turk" revolution. As a result of this revolution, there was a breakdown of law and order in many parts of Anatolia. Later, in 1914 when World War 1 broke out, conditions became so desperate that not only able-bodied men but even policemen were called to the front to defend the country as Turks were dying by the thousands in a conflict of apocalyptic proportions at Gallipoli. This added to the breakdown of law and order and brought Eastern Anatolia to a near-anarchic condition. By this time Armenian Revolutionary activity - complete with internal attacks on non-combatant civilians - had been going on not for years but for decades. And it was at this time that Armenian Revolutionary leaders felt so confident in Allied help that they decided to risk everything and

¹ For an excellent discussion of the problems with use of the Blue Book see p137-139 Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey. A Disputed Genocide*, Salt Lake City, University of Utah Press, 2005

² This confession appears on page 276 of Toynbee's 1922 work "The Western Question in Greece and Turkey".

refuse to enter the war on the side of their country - even the best Armenian primary sources admit this. They openly recruited Armenian men from within the borders of the country to side with "Holy Russia", the hereditary enemy of the Ottomans. It was in this desperate atmosphere that the Central Government decided on the Relocation Order, which had such dire consequences. Extensive documentary evidence is still extant showing that the Central Turkish Government not only sent out messages warning that the relocated Armenians were to be protected, but later carried through on threats to punish -even with execution- responsible parties who were negligent in their duty to protect the Armenians on their journey. Contrary to claims of Armenian Propagandists who omit all this important information from the story, this relocation order did not amount to a death sentence for the Armenians. It was a desperate last-ditch effort to solve a seemingly impossible problem precipitated by the Armenian Revolutionaries themselves and the meddling of the "Great Powers" in the internal affairs of the crumbling Ottoman Empire. Although there were many deaths in this relocation:

- Many survived in their new location or emigrated to various locations.
- Many returned after a law was passed ending the relocation .
- Food was scarce and Non-Armenians (Turks especially) were dying of starvation everywhere.
- Many of the deaths resulted from an atmosphere of anarchy; outlaws roamed the countryside with impunity.

Finally, the intent here is not to absolve the 1915 Central Turkish Leadership from all blame but to show that use of the "genocide" label in this case is not only wholly unjustified, but in most cases deliberately deceitful.

Continued use of Ancestral War Stories

Armenian Propagandists make continued use of stories of the deaths of their ancestors many of whom died in truly deplorable circumstances. The stories are repeatedly told in conjunction with Armenian attempts to have the events of 1915 labeled a "genocide". What can one say when confronted with these stories many of which are undoubtedly true? On the one hand, one does not wish to show disrespect for these individuals or negate the seriousness of the situations, however there are several serious problems with this continued use of these Ancestral war-stories:

- Many Moslem Turkish Civilians died at the hands of Armenian Revolutionaries under circumstances that were as bad -and often worse- than the circumstances under which the Armenian deaths occurred. The Turks are only too well aware of these stories because their families were affected for generations but the consequences. However the Armenians make it quite clear that it is the life of a Christian Armenian that should count and stories of the tragic deaths of so many Moslem Turks are rigidly suppressed by the Armenians.
- The implication of innocence is clear in the telling of these stories by the Armenians. It is true that many of the dead were non-combatant civilians but it is also true that the whole episode was precipitated by the actions of Armenian Revolutionaries who brutally massacred Moslem Turks in a widespread campaign to establish a "Western Armenia" and "take back" lands that they regarded as hereditarily theirs - lands in which they constituted at that time only a very small minority.

Using False Documents

One of the most common "proofs" used by Armenian activists in support of their claim of "genocide" is a book known as *The Memoirs of Naim Bey*. This book is represented as proof that the Ottoman Government deliberately exterminated the Armenian population of Anatolia. The source of the book was a certain Armenian man named Aram Andonian who translated it into Armenian. He claimed that he came into the possession of official Ottoman documents, telegrams and decrees, many of which were supposedly signed by Ottoman Interior Minister Talat Pasha. Briefly, the list of authentication problems with this Book and with Andonian's story of how he came into possession of the "documents" contained therein is very long. And so is the list of reputable historians -specialists in this field- who reject them outright as forgeries. Even the British Authorities charged with prosecuting Ottoman rulers after the First World War refused to use them at that time. But the Armenian Propagandists continue to pass them off on an unsuspecting public as authentic proof of a program to exterminate the Armenians. See these websites for critical discussion of this forged work:

<http://www.meforum.org/article/748>

<http://www.eraren.org/index.php?Lisan=en&Page=YayinIcerik&SayiNo=15>

The Hitler Quote

Armenian activists often claim that Hitler said that he could get away with exterminating European Jewry because no one "remembers today the extermination of the Armenians". This "statement" appears (in more or less these words) in the leaflets handed out by groups of demonstrating young Armenians, on the cover of books and in articles written by Armenian authors. Furthermore, the "statement" is written at the Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C., where millions of visitors every year read it, many believing that Hitler felt confident he could exterminate the Jews because the Ottomans had been successful in Armenians.

There is just one problem with the quote: Hitler never said it (Lowry, Heath, "The U.S. Congress and Adolf Hitler on the Armenians." Institute of Turkish Studies, Inc. Washington, D.C. Political Communication and Persuasion, Volume 3, Number 2 (1985)). Armenian activists have him saying it in a meeting with his General staff. This was, they claim, brought to light in the Nuremberg trials. The problem is that actual transcripts of this meeting, (Hitler's speeches and recollections of leading Nazis accepted as authentic by the Nuremberg court) do not contain any such reference to Armenians; they only have him calling them "unreliable" and "dangerous". Instead, the quote was taken from a book, written in 1942, by someone who was never able to authenticate his claim. It was later reproduced in an article by an unnamed writer for Times of London on Saturday, November 24, 1945, but it was most definitely not used by the Nuremberg prosecutors. In short; Hitler never said it, yet Armenians continue to use it to back up their case against the Turks.