

"The Forgotten Genocide: Armenia Then and Now"



Debra Coram Troxell, NBCT

Current Map of Caucasus Mtn Region and Central Asia



Historic Map of Caucasus Mountain Region

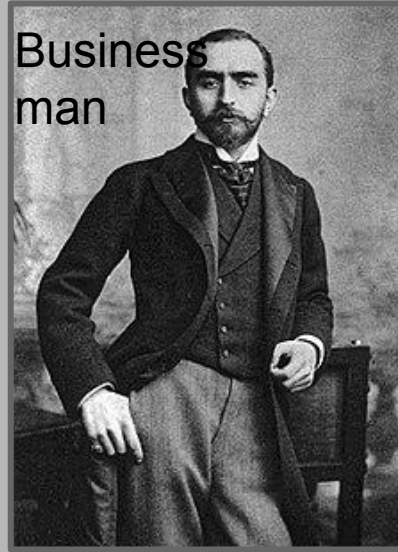


DECLINE OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE, 1774 - 1914



19th Century Armenians in the Ottoman Empire

- Christians were considered 2nd class citizens
- Chief occupations: trade, commerce, industry, agriculture
- Some had high level posts in the Ottoman government





1894-1896: Hamidian Massacres

1877-1878: Russo-Turkish War

- Fought in Balkans and Caucasus
- Increasing Balkan nationalism
- Russia increases territory

Sultan Abdul Hamid II

- Resented Armenian wealth
- Threatened by Armenians advocating for basic civil rights

“Box on the Ear”

- Response to large-scale protests for rights
- Hundreds of thousands of Armenians killed in a state-sanctioned pogrom



TEARS, IDLE TEARS!

The Weeping World—“Oh!! This is aw-ful!! Ain't it?”

—*Ram's Horn* (Chicago), Sept., 1896

Committee of Union and Progress aka Young Turks

Reform group advocating for a more modern constitutional government which Armenians initially supported.

The Sultan was overthrown.

Movement to “Turkify” the Ottoman Empire.

Initially the Armenians supported the Young Turks.



CUP Leadership

- **Three Pashas or Young Turk Triumvirate**
 - **Mehmed Talaat Pasha, Grand Vizier**
 - **Ismail Enver Pasha, Minister of War**
 - **Ahmed Djemal Pasha, Minister of the Navy (effectively ruled the Ottoman Empire)**
- **Gained support by claiming to want to restore the 1877 Constitution**
- **Promoted Pan-Turkism**



1910 Railway Construction

- **German built railway to weaken Russian influence and to contain the position of England in India.**
- **To strengthen Turkish homogeneity, Armenians (Christians) would be moved from Western Armenia.**
- **This separates the Armenians from Russia and the land would be settled by Muslims**



1911 Salonika Conference regarding Greece

Policy of Ottomanization: The bands must be wiped out by the army and flying columns organized for their pursuit. The new law must be rigorously applied, suspicious persons must be exiled, and a free hand given to the *Gendarmerie* and troops. The military tribunals should be in constant communication with the Committee and more energetic in inflicting punishment, as too many delinquents had escaped....All other religious propaganda must be suppressed, as no reliance could be placed on Christians, who were always working for the downfall of the new *régime*.

Later applied to Armenia



1912-1913 Balkan Wars

Balkan Alliance vs. Turkey

- The Ottoman Empire lost most European land.
- Russia supported the Balkan League
- Increased Turkish distrust of Russia
- The distrust of Russia cast a shadow on the Armenians



1914-1918: World War I

The Ottoman Empire joins WWI on the side of Germany and Austria-Hungary.

Eastern Armenians join the Ottoman army. (Western Armenians lived within Russia and therefore joined the Russian army.)

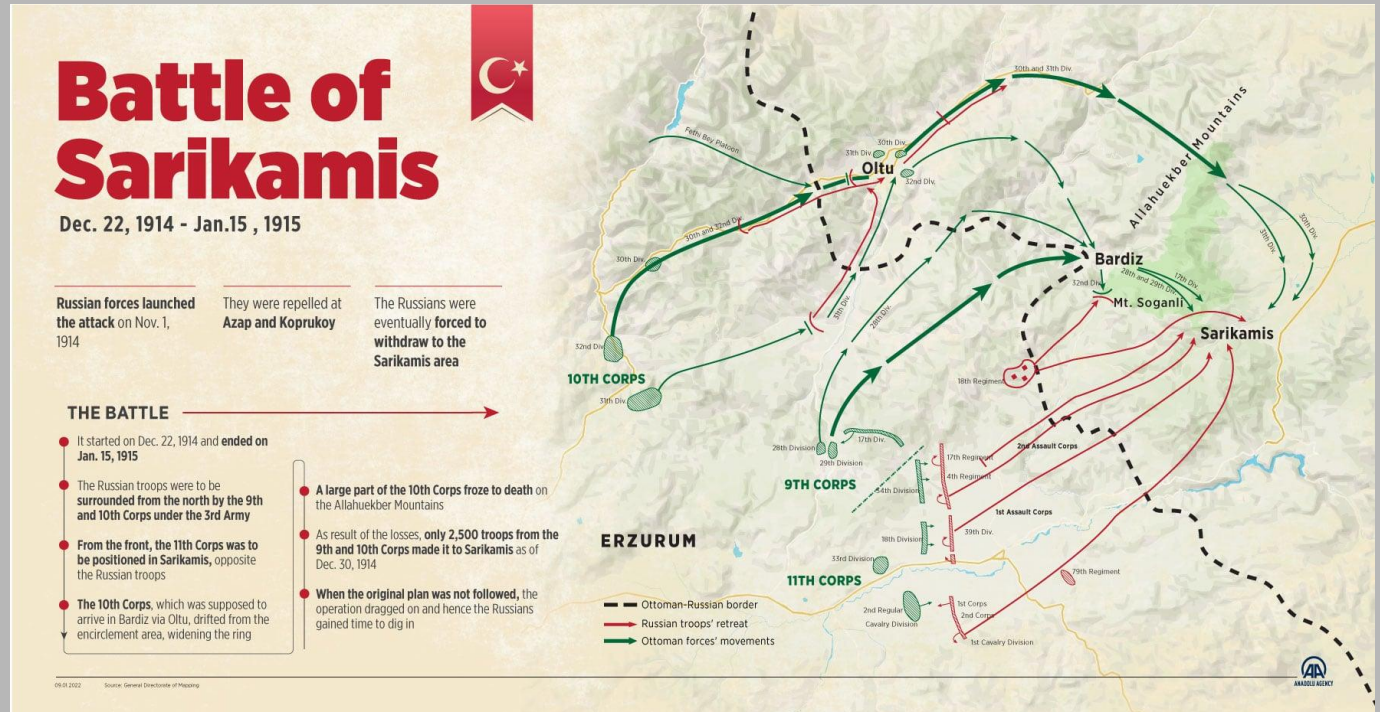


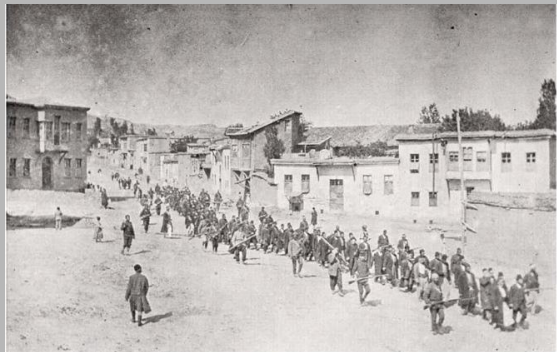
World War I. The Central Powers were in the unenviable position of fighting wars on two major fronts. The inset shows the stabilized Western Front of trench warfare in northern France and Belgium.

1914-1918: World War I

After Jan. 1915, the Russians defeat the Ottomans at the Battle of Sarikamis.

Government suspicious of Armenians supporting Russia led to a push for “removal” of the Armenians along the eastern front.





First violent acts
targeted Armenians
in the guise of WWI.

Sept. 5, 1915: The government orders all Armenian orphans to be given Turkish names.

Feb. 1919: A court martial to address war crimes is convened in Constantinople.

1922: Lausanne Conference convenes.

1900

1914

1918

1923

April 24, 1915: Selected Armenian elite arrested, deported and killed, followed by ongoing massacres and deportation across villages within Turkish territory.

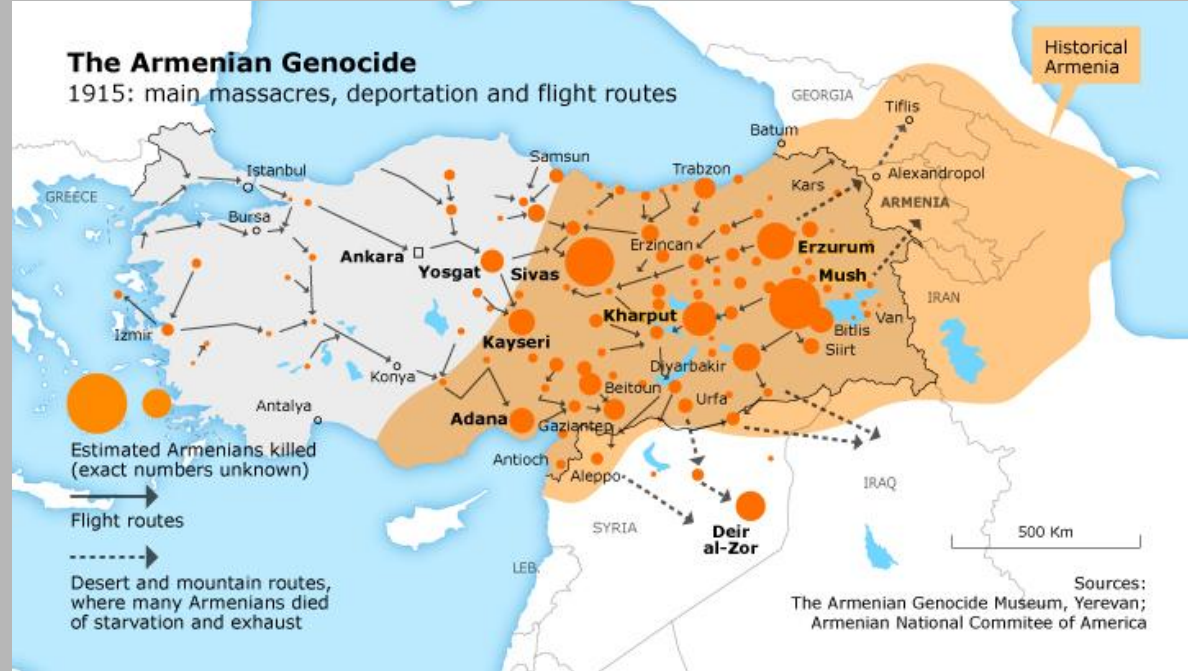
Oct. 5, 1915: The Turkish government confiscates the Armenian lands by a provisional law.

Jan. 19, 1920: The Allies formally recognize the independence of Armenia.

1914-1918: World War I

Events

- Armenian leaders and intellectuals in Constantinople arrested on Apr. 24, 1915
- Followed by thousands of Armenian notables imprisoned, executed, or deported.
- Able bodied men were disarmed, moved from homes and massacred.



Documents & Telegrams

The following telegrams were sent by Talaat Pasha to officials at Aleppo:

September 21, 1915 - To the Government of Aleppo from Talaat . . . There is no need for an orphanage. It is not the time to give way to sentiment and feed the orphans, prolonging their lives. Send them away to the desert and inform us.

November 18, 1915 - Be careful that events attracting attention shall not take place in connection with those [Armenians] who are near the cities, and other centers. From the point of view of present policy it is most important that foreigners who are in those parts shall be persuaded that the expulsion of the Armenians is in truth only deportation. For this reason it is important that, to save appearances, a show of gentle dealing shall be made for a time, and the usual measures be taken in suitable places.

December 29, 1915 - We hear that there are [foreigners] on the roads who have seen the corpses of the Armenians and are photographing them. It is recommended as very important that those corpses should be buried at once and not left exposed.

Henry Morgenthau

- US Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire
- Reported the atrocities and advocated for interventions
- Negotiated with the Ottoman leaders to alleviate the position of the Armenians
- Initiated a public fund-raising committee

MASSACRES IN ARMENIA.

OTTOMAN MINISTERS HELD PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE.

The Press Bureau issues the following:—

H.M. Government, in common with the Governments of France and Russia, make the following public declaration:—

For about the last month Kurds and the Turkish population of Armenia have been engaged in massacring the Armenians, with the cognisance and often the help of the Ottoman authorities. Such massacres took place about the middle of April at Erzeroum, Berthan, Egin, Bitlis, Sassoun, Moush, Zeitum, and in all Cilicia. The inhabitants of about a hundred villages near Van were all assassinated. In the town itself the Armenian quarter is besieged by Kurds. At the same time the Ottoman Government at Constantinople is raging against the inoffensive Armenian population.

In the face of this fresh crime committed by Turkey the Allied Governments announce publicly to the Sublime Porte that they will hold all the members of the Ottoman Government, as well as such of their agents as are implicated, personally responsible for such massacres.

Near East Relief

- American committee raised \$60,000 during its first meeting for direct relief in Armenia
- Combined with moving posters, celebrity endorsements, and regular newspaper stories, raised over \$116 million and save the lives of over a million refugees.



Operation Nemesis

- 1919: Turkish courts-martial were convened, some of the principal perpetrators of the Armenian genocide were convicted and sentenced to death
 - The UK failed to hold fair trials, and transported them to the British colony of Malta.
 - There, the Malta exiles were exchanged for British subjects detained by the Turkish government of Atatürk.
 - Since there were no international laws in place under which they could be tried, the men who orchestrated the genocide travelled freely throughout Germany, Italy, and Central Asia.
- 1920-1922: a clandestine cell of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation carried out seven killings,
 - the best-known being the assassination of Talaat Pasha, the main orchestrator of the Armenian genocide, by Armenian Soghomon Tehlirian in March 1921 in Berlin.
 - Soghomon Tehlirian was tried and found not guilty.

Raphäel Lemkin coins the word “Genocide”

“As a young law student deeply conscious of antisemitic persecution, Lemkin learned about the Ottoman empire's massacres of Armenians during World War I and was deeply disturbed by the absence of international provisions to charge Ottoman officials who carried out war crimes. Following the German invasion of Poland, Lemkin fled Europe and sought asylum in United States, where he became an academic at Duke University.” *Wikipedia*

The word “genocide” was first coined by Polish lawyer Raphäel Lemkin in 1944 in his book *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*. It consists of the Greek prefix *genos*, meaning race or tribe, and the Latin suffix *cide*, meaning killing. Lemkin developed the term partly in response to the Nazi policies of systematic murder of Jewish people during the Holocaust, but also in response to previous instances in history of targeted actions aimed at the destruction of particular groups of people. Later on, Raphäel Lemkin led the campaign to have genocide recognised and codified as an international crime. *UN Genocide Prevention*

"Who, after all, speaks today of
the annihilation of the
Armenians?"

- *Adolf Hitler, 1939*

Denial

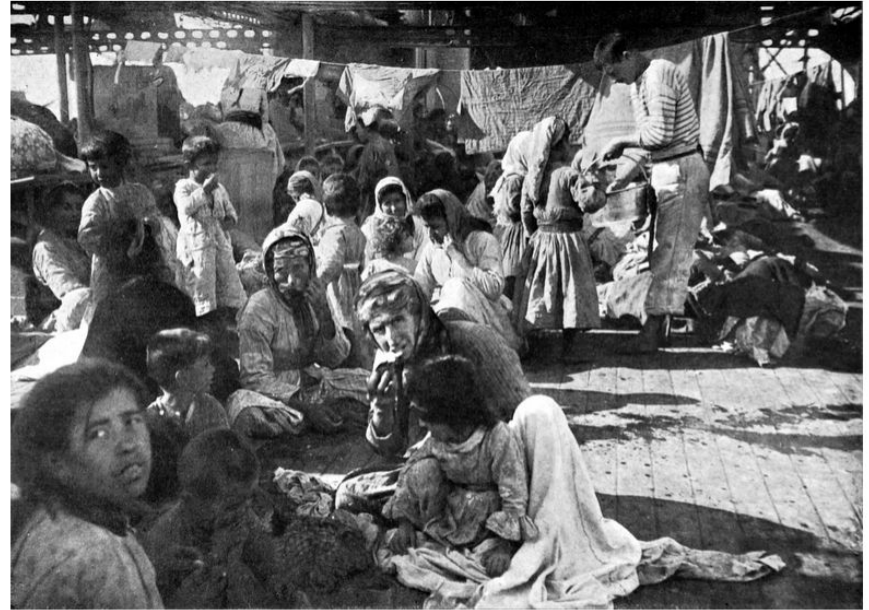
- Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Pakistan deny the Armenian deaths were the results of genocide.
- As of 2023, 34 governments, including the US, have formally recognized the Armenian genocide

ANALYSIS WORLD

Biden Calls The Massacres Of Armenians Genocide. Here's What That Means

UPDATED APRIL 24, 2021 · 12:37 PM ET

By Peter Kenyon, Krishnadev Calamur



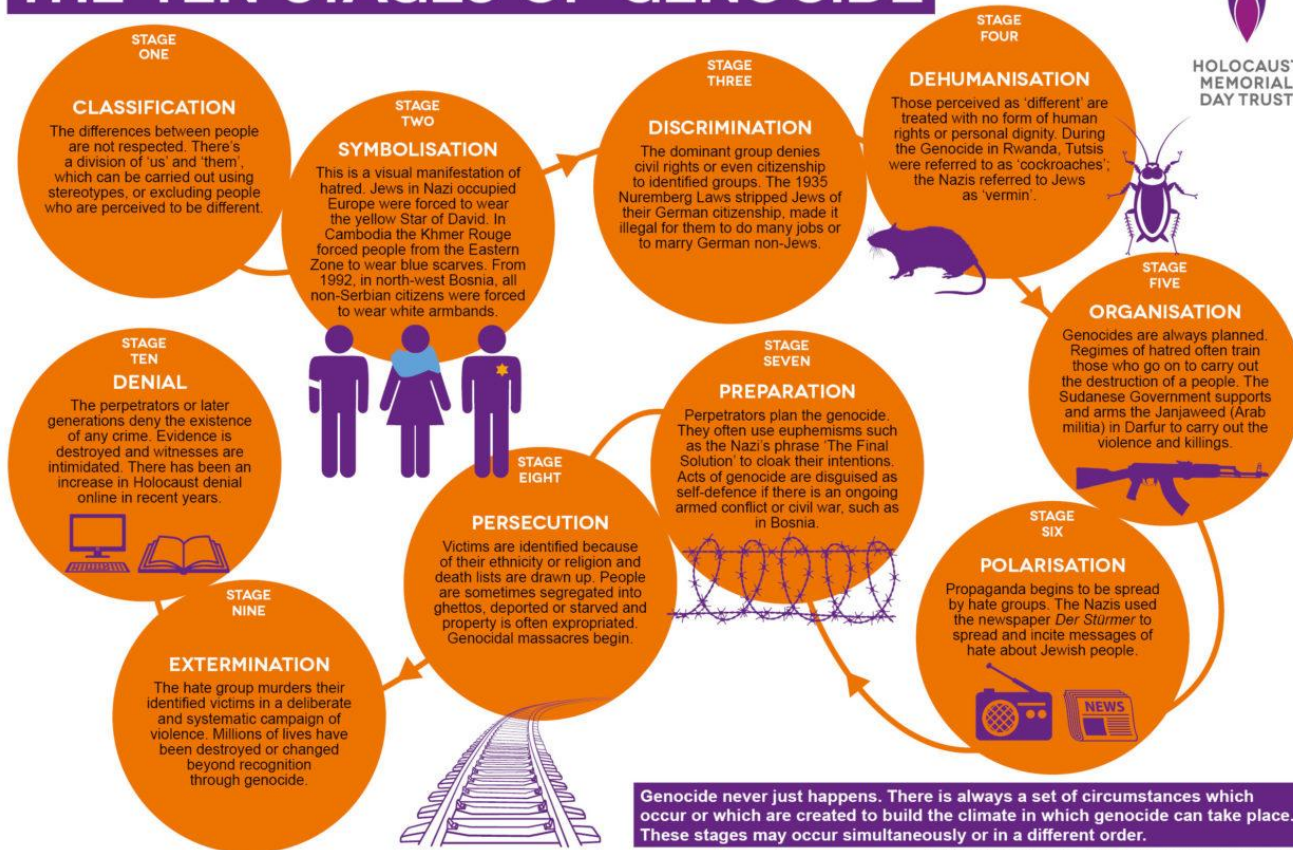
Armenian refugees on the deck of a French cruiser that rescued them in 1915 during the massacre of the Armenian populations in the Ottoman Empire.

Photo 12/Universal Images Group via Getty Images

THE TEN STAGES OF GENOCIDE



HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
DAY TRUST



Genocide never just happens. There is always a set of circumstances which occur or which are created to build the climate in which genocide can take place. These stages may occur simultaneously or in a different order.

Based on research by Dr Gregory H Stanton: genocidewatch.com

Armenia May 25, 1918 - December 1920

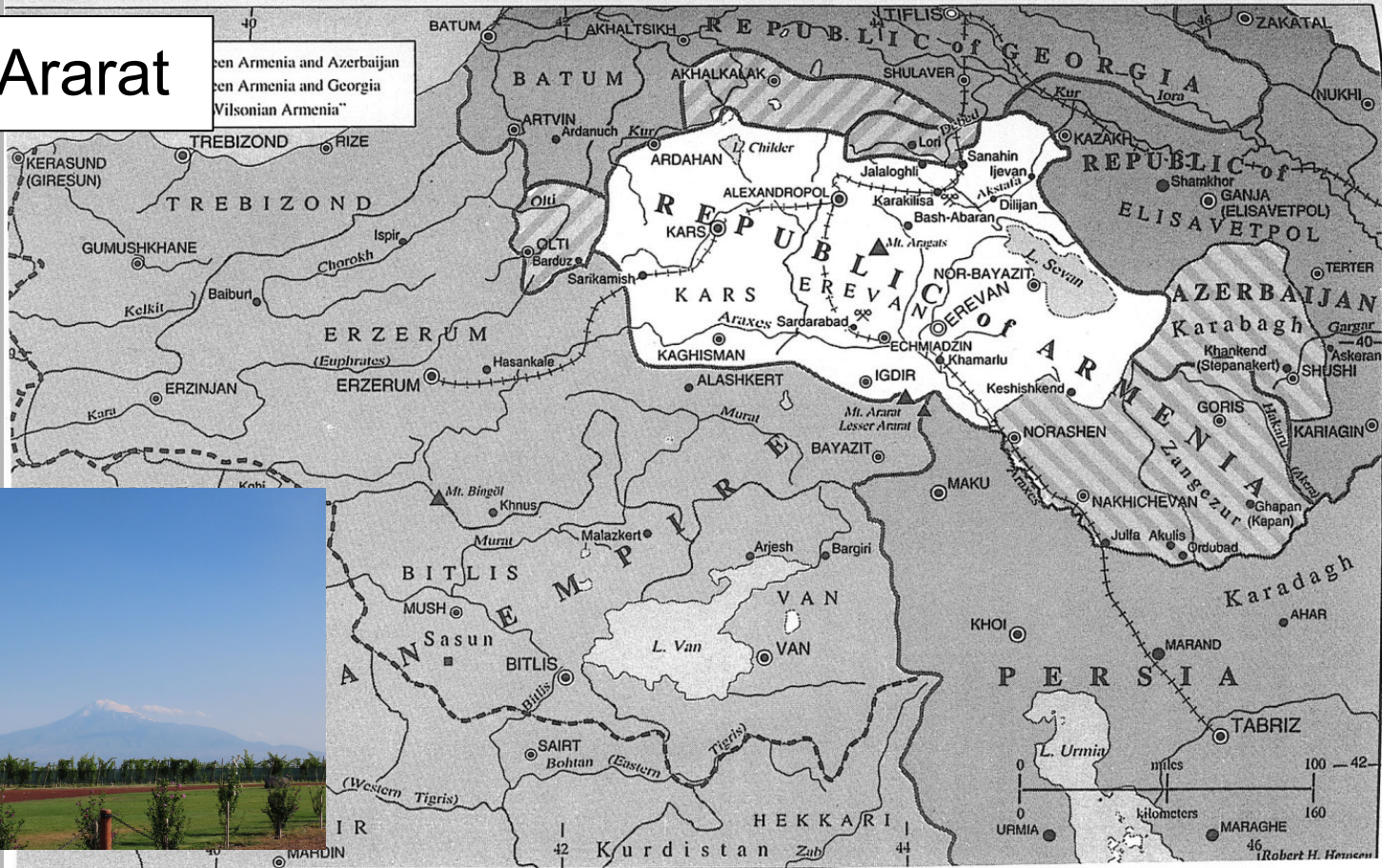
- **May 25, 1918 - Armenia declares independence.**
- **October 18, 1918 - Armeno-Georgian War**
- **1918-1920 - Armenian-Azerbaijani War**
- **March 1920 - In response to the inconclusive decision of the Paris Peace Conference, the Azerbaijani-controlled region of Nagorno-Karabakh revolted.**
- **1920 - Turkey invade Armenia, treaty forced the dissolution of “Wilsonian Armenia”**
- **November 1920 - Russia invades, Armenia becomes a Soviet Republic**
- **September 1991 - Armenia declares statehood**

Fall of the USSR



Mt. Ararat

between Armenia and Azerbaijan
between Armenia and Georgia
"Wilsonian Armenia"





The Artsakh Region & the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

- 1988-1994 1st Nagorno-Karabakh War (approx. 35,000 deaths)
- 2008-2020 Border Clashes (approx. 3,000 deaths)
- 2020 2nd Nagorno-Karabakh War (approx. 50 deaths)



The Artsakh Region & the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

- 2021-2024 Border Clashes
- 2022-2024 Blockade of the Republic of Artsakh
 - Azer. launched a blockade of the Lachin corridor trapping 120,000
 - Sep 2023 Azer. launched an offensive
 - The remaining Armenian population fled.
 - Risk of genocide declared



ARTICLES BY MEF STAFF AND FELLOWS

Turkey Threatens to Invade Greece and Armenia

by Michael Rubin

Middle East Forum Observer

February 12, 2024



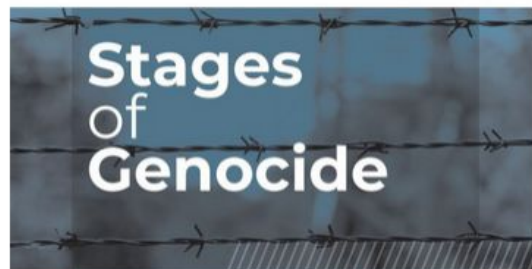
Genocide Education Project Resources

Stages of Genocide: A Toolkit for Educators

Studying genocide is a critical part of a student's understanding of both history and of current events. The **Stages of Genocide Toolkit** is designed to help teachers cover the topic in a meaningful and incisive way, introducing students to the phenomenon of genocide itself and then examining it through multiple case studies.

Using the "Ten Stages of Genocide" framework provides an opportunity to explore multiple instances of mass atrocity. The toolkit also highlights the connection between genocide and human rights. This resource encourages reflection and discussion of personal and institutional actions and responsibility, connecting these historical events to current events and to students' lives.

The Toolkit is rooted in the "Ten Stages of Genocide," a framework developed by Dr. Gregory H. Stanton, professor in Genocide Studies and Prevention, and includes resources to teach students about the causes and patterns of genocide.



A Toolkit for Educators

The Stages of Genocide Toolkit contains six case studies of historical genocide, chosen for their wide geographic range and their place in modern historical chronology:

- Armenian Genocide
- Genocide in Cambodia
- Genocide in Guatemala
- The Holocaust
- Genocide of Native Americans in the U.S.
- Genocide in Rwanda

Genocideeducation.org

Operation Nemesis: Using a murder trial to teach about the Armenian Genocide

Soghomon Tehlirian, a survivor of the Armenian Genocide, assassinated Talaat Pasha, the primary architect of the Armenian Genocide, in Berlin in 1921. Although there was no doubt Tehlirian committed the murder, the jury found him not guilty, after hearing 2 days of testimony about the genocide planned and executed by Talaat Pasha. The trial helped motivate Raphael Lemkin to coin the word "genocide."



Soghomon Tehlirian

It was later learned that the assassination of Talaat Pasha was part of a plan called "Operation Nemesis" to assassinate the leading perpetrators of the Armenian Genocide, who had been found guilty by a special criminal tribunal, but had fled to other countries to avoid their sentences.

Educators can download a the "Operation Nemesis" lesson plan, created by 2022 GenEd Teacher Fellow, Manuel Lopez, on this trial.

The lesson plan has a link to primary sources on this topic.

GenEd also offers summaries of the **Tehlirian trial testimony** that can be used alongside this lesson and/or as a mock trial activity.

Finally: Finding a New Life: The Armenians of Watertown

Finding a New Life: The Armenians of Watertown is an introductory unit providing a background to the history of the Armenian Genocide, the effects of the genocide on subsequent generations in Watertown, and universalizes the experience for other groups who have found safe haven in Watertown. **Finding a New Life** illustrates the continued pain and damage that genocide brings and the fortitude of those searching for the truth.

Published in part by a grant from the Watertown Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



THE PROMISE lesson plan: Concepts of Resistance

"Our revenge will be to survive," says the character Ana to Michael in the feature film, **The Promise**. This lesson introduces students to the efforts by genocide victim populations to respond to the violence against them. Using the feature film, **The Promise**, students are guided through readings, discussions, and exercises about the Armenian Genocide and the different forms resistance can take.

The Promise follows the lives of three people through World War I and the Armenian Genocide. Written and directed by Terry George (Hotel Rwanda), the story traces the experiences of an American journalist (Chris), his Armenian wife (Ana) who has just returned from studying in Paris, and an Armenian man (Michael), from a provincial village, recently arrived in Constantinople to attend medical school. They find themselves in the midst of the most famous moments of resistance during the Armenian Genocide—the resistance at Musa Dagh ("Mountain of Moses" in Turkish; "Musa Ler" in Armenian). During a critical scene, Ana tells Michael, "Our revenge will be to survive."



Additional Resources

- [Armenian Genocide Museum](#)
- [Yale Genocide Case Studies](#)
- [Operation Nemesis](#)
- [Choices: Never Again?](#)

