

CITIZENSHIP DOESN'T IDENTIFY ETHNICITY

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Perouz, Toronto, 16 July 2013

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Many Armenians, myself included, have original documents which show that their parents or grandparents were born in Turkey and their country of origin when they came to Canada was Ottoman Turkey. Try telling the descendants of those Armenians that their parents were Turks! Citizenship does not define ethnicity.

So, the important question is this: Did the Alevi-Kizilbash Kurds in Canada, at the turn of the century, self-identify as Turks, or as Alevi-Kizilbash who were previously citizens of Ottoman Turkey? There is primary documentation from 1918 which indicates that many Alevi-Kizilbash Kurds identified with their Christian neighbours in Turkey and not with the Turks. Many even revered certain Christian saints, in common with Armenians. This primary source documentation was published in the 1930s, was distributed internationally, and is archived in the Library of Congress in Washington.

Ms. Skrypuch tells us that she has donated to the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Association fund. Does this fund include payment for the Turkish burial rituals of these unfortunate Alevis, or for cemetery stones identifying them as Turks? Even a cursory Internet search will reveal the vast religious differences between Turkish and Alevis-Kizilbash burial ceremonies of the time.

Mr. Antourian raises an important question: "So why do the Turkish consul general and his Canadian cohorts continue this farce?" Why indeed, particularly when the internees were no longer citizens of Ottoman Turkey once they settled in Canada, and, of course, were not ethnic Turks. If Turkey is attempting to accuse Canada of ethnic-based hate crime so as to demand silence from Canada on the Armenian Genocide, then Turkey underestimates the integrity of this country's position on the Genocide. The Keghart editorial notes: "The Dominion of Canada considered the Turks dangerous

aliens." Well, just ask the Armenians if they were dangerous aliens. Ask the Greeks and Assyrians. Ask the Dersim Kurds.

Ms. Skrypuch states that her children's fiction are the "key means non-Armenians have become aware of the Genocide of Armenians," as if the Genocide was an obscure event until she exposed it with her novels. The historical facts of the Armenian Genocide have been disseminated to non-Armenians for a century. Highly-regarded international associations continue to disseminate information on the Armenian Genocide. Television documentaries, movies, countless fiction and non-fiction books and websites, magazine and newspaper articles, reports by Armenian and non-Armenian eyewitnesses, paintings, and photographs have documented the Genocide of Armenians. It is impossible for Turkey to succeed in burying this historical truth. The world already knows.

