

# GENOCIDE IN INCREMENTS

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 **Editorial**, 15 February 2016

To the chagrin and anger of millions of people people around the world, a century after the 1915 Genocide of Armenians obdurate and cynical Turkey continues not only to deny it committed genocide but also minimizes the number of Armenian dead and alleges that Armenians were "deported" for their safety, because they sided with the Russians, because they wanted to tear apart the country, because...



The fact is the Genocide of Armenians wasn't a one-time event. There were five Genocides of the Armenians. The first was the slow and prolonged Genocide which started in the early days of the Ottoman Empire and continued until Sultan Abdul Hamid II rose to the throne in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. During the centuries prior to the Abominable Sultan's misrule, the Ottomans practiced a demographic engineering of their Armenian minority through massacres, forced Turkification, and other harassment policies which drove many Armenians away from their homeland. For example, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century Dersim (now tagged Tunceli by Turkey) was 70% Armenian. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century that percentage had shrunk to 30% through various modes of persecution.

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The second Genocide was in 1895. The sultan's Hamidiyeh brigands killed anywhere from 200,000 to 300,000 Armenians. The third Genocide was in Adana (1909) when 25,000 to 30,000 Armenians were killed. The fifth Genocide stretched from 1916 to 1923. In other words, what the Young Turks did in 1915 was consistent with the traditional Ottoman policy of eliminating the Armenians.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century there were a number of studies of the Ottoman Empire's Armenians. Some were conducted by the government, others by the Armenians and by Europeans. One of the earlier studies was the Ottoman 1844 census which reported there were 2.4 million Armenians in the empire. French historian Jean-Henri-Abdolonyme Ubcini, author of the two-volume "Letters from Turkey" (1856) accused the government of understating the number of Armenians.

The next major study came from senior Ottoman official Mgrdich Bey Dadian. According to him there were 3.4 million Armenians in the Ottoman Empire in 1867. The government did not contradict the statistics.

In 1878—the year of the Berlin Congress—there were several census reports: G.G. Ghazarian of "Universal Annual" said the most-recent count was 2.5 million. About the same time Karekin Vartabed Srantsiants stated the figure was 2 million plus. The 1878 Armenian Patriarchate's census reported there were 1.3 million Armenians in the Six Villayets for a total of 2,600,000 in the whole country. Others said the number was between 2.5 to 3 million. Two years later (1880) identical numbers (2.5 to 3 million) were the accepted figures.

A 1914 government census said there were 1,300,000 Armenians. The Armenian population, according to the authorities, had declined from 2.4 million to 1.3 million between 1844 and 1914. An impossible 46% decline, even when the 1895 killings are taken into account.

While it would be understandable that Armenians might have inflated their numbers, the surprising fact is that the Armenian communities often minimized their numbers. They did so fearing increased taxes. German sources are also suspect because of their government's pro-Ottoman policies. Thus German historian Herman Wambery (1896) reported there were 1,130,000 Armenians and the *German Reich Post* gave the figure as 1.8 million. British and French sources should be considered more objective because the United Kingdom and France were still friendly with the Ottomans. Scholars and observers from the two countries reported numbers which were close to what Armenians claimed. British geographer Henry Lynch said the Ottoman government undercounted the Armenians while Gen. Charles Wilson, who had lived in the Ottoman Empire for many years, said there were 2,500,000 Armenians in the country. In 1880 *The Times of London*, the unofficial voice of 10 Downing Street, said there were 3 million Armenians. Let's not forget that two years earlier, at the Berlin Congress, the British government had forced Russia to give up its gains in the Russo-Turkish War and thus had hurt the Armenian drive for justice. French historian Jacque Morgan ("History of the Armenian People in Turkey") said there were 2,300,000 Armenians while French journalist Maurice Berno calculated the Armenian population to be around 2.5 million. These are close to

Armenian parliamentarian/writer Krikor Zohrab's estimates of 2,380,000.

To go along the Turkish sources, let's halve the Armenian population figures and say there were only 1.3 million Armenians in the Ottoman Empire in 1915. Let's also agree that only 300,000 to 600,000 died, not forgetting that they were killed during "inter-communal fighting and war conditions" which saw "millions of Turks killed by the Armenians," according to Ankara.

Deduct 600,000 (Turkish figures) Armenian dead from the 1.3 million (Turkish figures) Armenian population.

The result? 700,000 unaccounted for Armenians.

Where did the 700,000 Armenians vanish?

We know, through usually reliable source Recep Tayyip Erdogan that in the 17<sup>th</sup> century a wiz Turkish astronomer soared to the moon from his space centre along the Bosphorus. Perhaps the 700,000 unaccounted for Armenians took a similar vertical route and ascended to the Heavens, en masse, riding a Turkish dirigible commanded by the intrepid Capt. Nassredin Hoja.

