

TURKEY: A PERMANENT THREAT TO ARMENIA

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David Boyajian, 29 July 2012

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Why? Because Turkey's belligerent policies towards Armenians, its pan-Turkic goals (PDF- [Pan-Turkist Dreams and Post-Soviet Realities](#)) in the Caucasus and Central Asia, and its [neo-Ottoman ambitions](#) pose essentially the same dangers today as at the time of the genocide. And they show no sign of ever changing.

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Aside from a general awareness of the genocide and present-day Turkish hostility, however, many Armenians and others are unfamiliar with key details of past and present Turkish policies. Consequently, they underestimate the dangers that Armenia faces.

Even the commonly held view that "in 1915 the Young Turk regime committed genocide against Armenians in Turkey" is dangerously misleading.

The genocide actually [lasted through 1923](#), five years after Turkey's defeat in WWI. Two regimes conducted the genocide: [Ottoman Young Turk](#) and [Kemalist](#). The latter, of course, founded today's allegedly "modern" Turkey. And the genocide took place not only in "Turkey" but also, ominously, on [what was](#) and is today the territory of the Republic of Armenia.

Endless Genocide

[Turkifying](#) and Islamizing the remnants of its empire was a key reason that Turkey [destroyed](#) its indigenous Armenian, [Assyrian](#), and [Greek](#) Christians during WWI (1914-18). But Armenians and Armenian soil also lay just across the border, in the Caucasus region of the Russian empire, directly in the path of Turkey's genocidal [pan-Turkic jihad](#). Turkey committed genocide against those Armenians too, and ripped large chunks of [territory](#) from the new Armenian Republic, which had just been reborn from Russian Armenia.

Azeris -- Turkey's blood brothers then and now -- also conducted large-scale massacres of Armenians in the Caucasus in WWI and through 1920.

After Turkey's defeat in 1918, Turkish forces under Kemal (known later as [Atatürk](#)) continued the genocide in the [Armenian Republic](#) through 1920 and in Turkey through 1923.

Like Turkish leaders today who lie and deceive, Kemal publicly professed peaceful intentions toward Armenia. [Secretly, however, he told his commanders that it is "of the utmost necessity that Armenia be both politically and physically eliminated."](#) Kemal, too, lopped off chunks of Armenia. Though it resisted heroically, only a [Soviet takeover](#) in December of 1920 saved Armenia from annihilation.

These facts are relevant to the perils that Armenia faces today because of Turkey's pan-Turkic and neo-Ottoman foreign policies.

Pan-Turkism

Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, Turkey has established ongoing relationships with Azerbaijan and Central Asia's new "Turkic-speaking" countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. [Turkey has invested billions of dollars](#) and established Turkish schools and universities in these countries. Turkey's President Gül declared that ["Kyrgyzstan is our ancestral homeland"](#) while visiting that country's International Atatürk-Alatoo University.

Turkey hosts major [gas](#) and [oil](#) pipelines originating in Baku, [coproduces weapons with Azerbaijan](#), and [trains Azeri troops](#). In Turkic solidarity with Azerbaijan, Turkey has injected itself into the Artsakh/Karabagh conflict by [closing its border with Armenia](#) for two decades. The Turkish-Azeri axis -- termed ["one nation, two states"](#)-- harks back to its assault on Armenia during the genocide. One hundred years has changed nothing. Turkey remains enamored of Turkic blood bonds.

In the former Armenian province of Nakhichevan -- now part of Azerbaijan and [emptied of its Armenians](#) -- Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan recently [signed a treaty](#) creating the [Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States](#).

Let's be clear. Only Soviet control of the Caucasus and Central Asia from the 1920's to 1991, and Russian and Chinese dominance since then, have thwarted Turkey's pan-Turkic goals.

For several decades, of course, Russia and China have possessed nuclear weapons. Turkey has

not. Imagine what an arrogant, genocidal Turkey would have perpetrated by now had it possessed nuclear weapons. Turkey could still, unfortunately, [acquire nuclear weapons](#) or other WMDs.

Turkey's dangerous imperial goals today also include "neo-Ottomanism."

Neo-Ottomanism

Turkey regards itself as the leader of not only its former colonies in [the Middle East](#) and [Balkans](#) but also the [entire Muslim world](#). Turkey is investing heavily in those regions.

Its Education Ministry recently released multi-media material that shows Armenia, Cyprus, and parts of Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Iraq, and Syria as being [part of Turkey](#). Turkey claimed it was just a mistake.

["You are the grandchildren of the Ottomans. It will be the Ottomans who will make the world tremble again. If the Ottomans do not come back, the unbelievers will never be brought down to their knees."](#) A Turkish clergyman thundered those words to a frenzied Turkish rally in Belgium two decades ago.

In attendance were his admirers: [Necmettin Erbakan](#), soon to be Turkey's Prime Minister and [the latter's protégés, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Abdullah Gül](#), Turkey's current Prime Minister and President.

Far from renouncing its bloody Ottoman past, such examples illustrate that Turkey embraces and wants to recreate it. Consequently, its threats against Armenia must never be taken lightly.

Turkish Threats

During the Artsakh/Karabagh war, Turkish President Turgut Özal repeatedly threatened Armenia. Armenians, he warned, ["had not learned the lessons"](#) of WWI -- that is, the genocide.

According to Leonidas Chrysanthopoulos, former Greek ambassador to Armenia, U.S. and French intelligence sources confirm that [Turkey was poised to invade Armenia in 1993](#). Ruslan Khasbulatov, a Chechen who was Speaker of the Russian Supreme Soviet and an opponent of Russian President Yeltsin, had secretly given Turkey the go-ahead to invade Armenia if he toppled Yelstin. Fortunately, Yelstin survived the challenge.

If not for the Armenian-Russian alliance of these past two decades, Turkey and Azerbaijan would have jointly attacked Armenia, with catastrophic consequences.

Despite Turkey's hostile record, some Armenians have fallen victim to the constant drumbeat of propaganda that Turkey is "reforming."

Turkish non-Reforms

Some even believe that acknowledgement of the Armenian genocide would be tantamount to

Turkey's having "reformed." That's absurd and a serious mistake.

[An acknowledgment](#), which would almost certainly be incomplete, insincere, or reversible, could psychologically disarm Armenians into letting down their guard. By not owning up to the genocide, therefore, Turkey may unwittingly be doing Armenians a favor.

Turkey's actual record is one of repression, followed by mass violence, interspersed with so-called "reforms."

In the 19th century, large-scale massacres of Armenians, [particularly those of the 1890s](#), followed Ottoman "reforms" such as the [Tanzimat](#) (anti-discrimination decrees). The [Young Turk "reform" revolution of 1908](#) -- cheered in the beginning by Armenians, Greeks, and other national groups -- was followed by the [1909 Adana massacres](#), the 1915-23 extermination, and genocidal attacks on Russian Armenia and the Republic of Armenia.

Then along came the new "reformed, modern" Turkey of 1923. It confiscated [Armenian property](#), [destroyed Armenian churches](#), and [Turkified Armenian city and village names](#). In 1943, Turkey unleashed its [malicious Capital Tax program against Armenians, Greeks, and Jews](#).

Later came the devastating [Istanbul riots of 1955](#). Did we mention Turkey's massacre of Greek Cypriot civilians and ongoing occupation of northern Cyprus? The [death squads](#) and [torture chambers](#)? The repression, deportation, and massacre of Kurds and other minorities, and the [jailing of dissidents and journalists](#)?

All the while, we are told that Turkey is "reforming."

Turkish Syndrome

In addition to Turkey's policies, its political leaders pose a danger because of what one may term Turkish Political Personality Syndrome.

[This syndrome is on full display today in "modern" Turkey's constant threats, chest-beating, belligerence, malignant narcissism, hypocrisy, extortion, despotism, cruelty, crudeness, lies, broken pledges, and, of course, the use of violence.](#)

One cannot think of even one positive Turkish political quality.

The countless victims of Turkish violence down through the centuries are proof of Turkish leaders' disordered state of mind.

There is little indication that either Turkey's policies toward Armenians or their leaders' disorder will ever change. Indeed, they may grow more threatening.

Yet, Armenians still hope that Turkey will change. How to make them aware that the Turkish threat is here to stay?

Education

Young people will, of course, become the adults who conduct the political, economic, cultural, and military affairs of Armenia. They must be equipped intellectually and psychologically to deal with Turkey.

From a young age, Armenian students must study -- but not in Turkish schools -- Turkish history, geo-politics, and language, and their application to present-day Armenian-Turkish relations.

The Turkish political personality and its violent and deceitful tendencies must be dissected and understood.

This is not easy, for two reasons. First, Armenians are bombarded by pro-Turkish and "reconciliation" propaganda from around the world and even by some Armenians. Second, we Armenians are unlike Turks and often have difficulty understanding their political culture.

Ultimately, future generations of Armenians will have to choose whom to believe. Will it be the allegedly "reformed, modern" Turkey? The international media that kowtows to Turkey? Countries that historically have betrayed Armenia?

Or will Armenians learn from the past and the hard-earned wisdom of their forebears?

Their decision may determine whether Armenia lives or dies.

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David Boyajian is a freelance journalist. Many of his articles are archived on Armeniapedia.org.

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