FROM THE GLORIOUS PAGES OF TURKISH HISTORY

Posted on April 22, 2020 by Keghart



Category: Opinions

By **Jirair Tutunjian,** Toronto, 2 April 2020

Photo: Mary Evans Picture Library

The *RealClear History* internet site has an article titled '10 Most Brutal Massacres in History' by writer Brandon Christensen which is instructive to people unfamiliar with Turkish mores. Among 190 or so states, Turkey has the distinction of having committed three of the ten massacres. The three massacres are testimony to the enduring Turkish ways (consider the frequent fights and filthy language in their parliament.) The three major Turkish massacres mentioned are that of Famagusta (1570), Chios (1822), and the Hamidian (1894-96). The victims of the first were Greeks, Armenians, Jews, and Venetians. Greeks were the victims in Chios. The Hamidian Massacres witnessed the slaying of approximately 250,000 Armenians.

The Famagusta massacre was preceded by the massacre in Nicosia. While in Nicosia the Turks typically indulged in the massacre of civilians (they killed 20,000 and shipped 2,000 boys to Constantinople to serve as sexual slaves) and beheaded Lieut. Gov. Nicholas Dandolo, the Famagusta massacre holds a special place in the annals of history because of the number of civilians killed, the Turkish leader's treachery, and horrendous treatment of the Venetian leader Marco Antonio Bragadin.

Bragadin had 8,500 defenders while the Turks, commanded by Mustafa Pasha, had an army of 250,000 and 1,500 cannons, backed by 350 to 400 ships. After weeks of fighting, Famagusta accepted the *pasha's* offer of peace because the defenders had been reduced to 100 fighters and the besieged were starving. The Turks had lost 52,000 men. Although Mustafa had promised to let the besieged depart without harassment, during the surrender process Mustafa pulled a knife and cut the ear of Bragadin. He then ordered his guards to cut off the other ear and nose. This was followed by the massacre of the inhabitants. The Turks killed all 56,000 civilians.

For three days the Turks tortured Bragadin and then flayed him alive. He died as the torture reached his waist. His skin was stuffed with straw and paraded around. Mustafa then sent Bragadin's severed head to Sultan Selim II.

The Turkish brutality and treachery was the impetus for European states to unite at the naval battle in Lepanto which put "fini" to Turkish ambitions to dominate the western Mediterranean.

Not on the "Ten Most Brutal Massacres" list is the massacre in Pelovo, Bulgaria. In "Close to the Bone" author David Wiltse writes: "…several centuries ago, Pelovo castle had withstood a siege by the Ottoman Turks for sixteen weeks before the inhabitants, starved and mad from thirst, had surrendered on condition that there would be no reprisals and that their women and children would be well treated.

"Upon raising the portcullis and allowing the Turks to enter, the defenders of the castle were saluted for their courage and obstinacy and gallantry in battle. Then they were slaughtered to a man by their

conquerors. The women were raped and then killed in keeping with their custom. Little girls were taken to serve as concubine in wherever they could be afforded throughout the empire, and the stronger, more promising boys were shipped off to be trained as mercenaries to serve with the janissary or the Mamlukes of Egypt where, given time and good fortune they would grow up and besiege and sack and massacre a few castles or towers of their own—perhaps right back in their native land of Bulgaria. The Ottomans Turks were democratic in that way."

These days the Turkish Airlines girdles the globe. A Turkish company owns Godiva chocolates. The Turkish GNP is $890 billion a year. The advances—fueled by European investments and cheap labor—might mislead people to assume Turkish brutality is a thing of the past. Nothing can be farther from the truth.

After the 1915 Armenian Genocide, Turkey launched the Assyrian and Pontian Greek Genocides. In the '20s, it killed thousands of Kurds and further thousands of Alevis in the '30s. Ataturk used German Heinkel aircraft to spread German-manufactured poison gas in Dersim killing thousands of civilians, including Armenians who had survived the Armenian Genocide and had sought sanctuary among Dersim Alevis. In the mid-'50s, Turkish mobs massacred Greeks and Armenians in Istanbul. In the mid-'70s Turkey invaded Cyprus. In the early '90s Turkey was about to invade Armenia (without provocation) when Ankara was warned by Russia. In addition to its suppression of the Kurds, Turkey arms Jihadist terrorists, invaded Iraq and Syria, and threatens Greece. Earlier this year its troops incited refugees to stampede into Greece. Ankara has made no secret that it wants to restore the Ottoman Empire.

Over the years public opinion polls have shown the military is the most respected class in Turkey. The military is at the top of the heap because it does what the vagabond and plundering Turkish culture most admires: domination through violence. For more than a thousand years violence has been the definitive descriptor of that culture. It's not a racial characteristic but one of cultural inclination which was born in Central Asia where, Turks say, the Grey Wolf nurtured their forefathers.

During the Genocide of Armenians Spanish writer Julio Camba said Turks boasted they had shown the world how to be superlative barbarian. Turks were able to shake the world when it seemed that human sensibility was exhausted and when it was impossible to do something original in barbarism, Camba said adding he was struck by the attitude of the Turks towards women and children. "The Turks found new entertainment—to rape Armenian women in front of their parents and husbands," he wrote.

The *sharwal* and the Turkish *yataghan* sword have been replaced by suit-and-tie and missiles. The Grey Wolf's cubs haven't changed. The culture of violence is alive and well and flourishing in Erdogan's Turkey. As we commemorate the Genocide of Armenians a century ago, let's not assume Turkey's leaders are different from the Young Turks and Sultan Abdul Hamid II.

Comments



Marcus – 2020-04-28 20:51:30
In your previous issue, the article about the Turkish national anthem pointed out the psychotic rah-rah had 18 exclamation marks which, in my book, is an admission of failure to communicate. I looked at the Azeri national anthem and discovered it had almost as many exclamation marks as that of the Azeris'older brother. In effect, 17 exclamation marks. Armenia's national anthem has no exclamation mark. We trust our words and don't rely on shrill support to communicate



Manuel – 2020-04-28 20:43:05
Thank you Mr. Tutunjian for exposing Ottoman atrocities that occured before the Genocide. Let Turkey look at itself in the mirror. I have no illusions as to Turks and Turkey acknowledging their crimes, but we need to show people their bloody past whenever there is an opportunity. Keep up the good work and thank you also to Keghart.