



**ԵՊՀ Հայագիտական
Հետազոտությունների ինստիտուտ**

The Armenian Genocide and Henry Morgenthau

Aram Simonyan –NAS RA Associate Member

YSU Institute for Armenian Studies



Henry Morgenthau, U.S. Ambassador in Constantinople, 1913-1916.

(All the photos are taken from “Ambassador Morgenthau’s Story, by Henry Morgenthau,

Humanity entered the 20th century with great achievements. The progress of science and technology was accompanied by the innovations in economy, in everyday life and in other spheres as well. Mankind reached the new level of development in the terms of civilization. The progress was evident also in the fields of education and culture. Some vital progress steps occurred in the life of Armenian people too. Armenia was still divided into two parts, between Russia and Turkey. At the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century Armenian people had significant achievements in the fields of science and culture. At the same time the issue of liberation of Armenian people became more urgent.

The 20th century was marked not only with huge progress and achievements of mankind but also with destruction, cultural and human losses caused by two World Wars.

The first quarter of the 20th century was particularly tragic for the Armenian people. The perception of homeland for Armenians was the territory of Western Armenia, though Eastern Armenia was also included in it. The Genocide of the Armenian people in Ottoman Empire and in Western Armenia at the beginning of the 20th century was the first greatest tragedy of mankind. Armenian Genocide has a number of manifestations and is undeniable by a series of facts:

1. Turkish state planned policy in extermination of race.
2. The extermination of Armenians by all the levers of state apparatus (Army, administrative and police powers), by Muslim and Kurdish fanatic, retarded mob.
3. Deprivation of the Armenian people of its motherland-the main purpose of the Genocide was to deprive Armenians of their ancient homeland.
4. Any means of extermination were acceptable for Turks; the slaughter was terrible and there are numerous testimonies of foreign missionaries, representatives of the diplomatic and military officials about it.

¹ <http://net.lib.byu.edu/~rdh7/wwi/comment/morgenthau/MorgenTC.htm>

Turkish (Decrees of Talaat Pasha, Enver Pasha and others), allied countries' (Great Britain, France, Russia), German, Austrian, American State archive ratifications, etc. contain undeniable evidence about the Armenian Genocide.

The documentary testimonies by the foreigners that were engaged in diplomatic and missionary work in Turkey acquire a special significance.

Such valuable materials can be found in the famous testimonial work of U. S. Ambassador in Ottoman Empire Henry Morgenthau.

Henry Morgenthau (senior) was born on April 26, 1856 in Germany, then in 1865 his family moved to USA. In 1877 Morgenthau graduated from the Columbia University, faculty of Law. He was engaged in financial, diplomatic and public activities.

In 1899-1913 he was the head of big financial companies. In 1912-1916 he participated in the election campaign of U.S. president Woodrow Wilson and was the head of the Democratic Party's financial system².

In 1913-1916 Henry Morgenthau was the U.S. Ambassador in Turkey, where he represented the interests of allied countries that were in war with Turkey. He was the defender of Christians in Turkey at that period and took compassion on them.

Henry Morgenthau condemned the Armenian genocide and described it as a "campaign of race extermination"³. This policy was also supported by US Secretary of State Robert Lansing. On July 16, 1915 he ordered: "The Department approves your procedure to stop the Armenian persecution"⁴.

U. S. Ambassador Henry Morgenthau's testimonies are summarized in his publications:

1. Henry Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's story (memoirs)*, New York, 1918, 407 p.
2. Henry Morgenthau, *Secrets of the Bosphorus, 1913-1916*, London, 1918, 275 p.

² See <http://www.eleven.co.il/article/12839>

³ <http://www.genocide-museum.am>

⁴ <http://www.genocide-museum.am>

Before analyzing Morgenthau's memoirs, it should be noted that there are numerous documents in archive ratifications that describe the Ottoman policy of extermination of Armenians.

On July 24, 1915 the American consul of Kharberd Leslie Davis wrote to Ambassador H. Morgenthau, "It has been no secret that the plan was to destroy the Armenian race as a race, but the methods used have been more cold-blooded and barbarous, if not more effective, than I had at first supposed....I do not believe there has ever been a massacre in the history of the world so general and thorough as that which is now being perpetrated in this region or that a more fiendish, diabolical scheme has ever been conceived by the mind of man... It would be that even if all the people had been allowed to perish on the road. As the greater part of them, however, have been actually murdered and as there is no doubt that this was done by order of the government, there can be no pretense that the measure is anything else but a general massacre ⁵". This document reveals the reality. Such documents are kept also in the archives of Austria, France, Germany, Great Britain, Russia, USA, Vatican, etc.

This is described in the resolution № 106, then in № 252 passed on March, 2010 of U.S. House of Representatives on Committee on Foreign Affairs. The 8th point of the resolution records that The United States National Archives hold extensive and thorough documentation on the Armenian genocide, especially in its holdings under Record Group 59 of the United States Department of State, files 867.00 and 867.40, which are open and widely available to the public and interested institutions⁶.

<<*American Ambassador Mr. Henry Morgenthau's Memoirs and the Secrets of Armenian Genocide*>> by Henry Morgenthau was translated into Armenian in 1919, in Constantinople, and was published in 1990, in Yerevan. The same book was published in Russian titled <<Трагедия армянского народа. История посла Моргантау". (Издательство "Центрполиграф", 2009г., 336 стр.)⁷>>. The book describes memoires of USA Ambassador Henry Morgenthau in Ottoman Empire about the genocide, severe murders, torture and

⁵ <http://freebooks.do.am>

⁶ <http://NEWS.am> <http://www.genocide-museum.am>

⁷ <http://www.kniga.ru/books/313910>

deportation of the Armenians. Moreover, Morgenthau mentions that it was only the small part of what the Armenian people underwent.

The diplomat analyzed deeply the bloody events referring to the official sources and their analyses.

One of the main topics of the book refers to the genocide committed by Young Turks and the role of German imperialism during World War I.

In the 1-29 chapters of the book, studying German-Turkish policy, the diplomat reveals the intentions of the letters, shows the preparation process to the WW I, involvement of Turkey in war by German force, and reveals the nuances of their military-diplomatic policy.

In the 22nd chapter of the book he describes the retreat of the Navy of the countries of the Triple Entente from Dardanelles and the creation of the proper situation for the implementation of the Pan-Turkish program, the theoretical theses of which were the base of the governing party “Union and Progress”.

This is how Morgenthau describes the life and policy of Turks: “Turk is a bully and a coward; he is brave as a lion when things are going his way, but cringing, abject, and nerveless when reverses are overwhelming him. And now that the fortunes of war were apparently favouring the empire, I began to see an entirely new Turk unfolding before my eyes”⁸.

The 22nd chapter of Morgenthau’s memoirs named “The Turks reverts to the ancestral type” reveals the sources of Turkish conquests, the creation of huge Turkish Empire and the role it played in the bloody destiny of people of conquered countries.

⁸ <http://www.scribd.com/doc/14191778/Ambassador-Morgenthau-Story-1918>
http://manybooks.net/pages/morgenthauhothoer09ambassador_morgenthau_story/
Ambassador Morgenthau’s Story, by Henry Morgenthau, Garden City New York, Doubleday, Page & Company, 1918, p.134.

Morgenthau is of opinion that Turk has only one genetic feature, that is the qualities in military affairs. “They had no alphabet and no art of writing; no books, no poets, no art, and no architecture; they built no cities.”⁹

The author states that Turks treated the subject peoples as “dirt under their feet”.

The concepts of <<liberty>>, <<equality>>, <<constitutionalism>> were replaced by <<Panturanism>> after the revolution of Young Turks in Turkey¹⁰.



Map of the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the 20th century

According to Morgenthau, after the loss of many territories of Ottoman Empire the Armenians were the only national organized unit there. <<Bordering on Russia, there were six provinces in which the Armenians formed the largest element in the population>>¹¹.

According to the author from the time of Herodotus this portion of Asia has borne the name of Armenia. The Armenians inhabited this territory three thousand years ago. Morgenthau assures that Armenia, which was under the dictatorship of the Turks, was the tortured

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Ibid, p.136

¹¹ Ambassador Morgenthau's Story, by Henry Morgenthau, p.138:

homeland of the Armenians and the proofs of it were the cuneiform inscriptions of the largest Armenian city of Van.

The ambassador assures that the Armenians were the most civilized nation in the Eastern part of the Ottoman Empire, who adopted Christianity as a state religion in the fourth century; therefore Armenian Christian church was the most ancient one in existence¹².

Morgenthau emphasizes the fact, that the Armenians have regarded themselves as Europeans, they speak an Indo-European language, their racial origin is believed by scholars to be Aryan.



A characteristic view of the Armenian country

According to Morgenthau Abdul-Hamid decided to <<cleanse>> the country from Armenians in order to <<get rid>> of the Armenian Issue. The Ambassador testifies that Turkish policy of extermination of the Armenians was planned by the Turkish state. << The physical destruction of 2,000,000 men, women, and children by massacres, organized and directed by the state, seemed to be the one sure way of forestalling the further disruption of the Turkish Empire>>¹³:

¹² Ibid, p. 138

¹³ Ambassador Morgenthau's Story, by Henry Morgenthau, p.138:

* In reality, during these years over 300.000 Armenians were slaughtered in Turkey

According to the Ambassador during 1895-96 over 200.000 Armenians became the victims of Abdul Hamid's slaughter policy*. The Ambassador mentions through all those years the existence of the Armenians was a nightmare. Their property was stolen, their women and young girls were kidnapped and forced to live in Turkish harems. The massacres of Adana are considered to be the continuation of this policy during which 35.000 people were killed. Other sides of Turkish slaughter policy were revealed in the book as well.

In the last part of the chapter the author speaks about the role of German policy in these events, the policy, which supported the Turks to make Armenia "their homeland". Abdul Hamid's Armenian massacres were succeeded by new persecutions against Armenians. Being on the threshold of European war (here he means World War I) almost every day the Armenians were persecuted.

Just a few months after revolution the Young Turks continued to implement ideas of Abdul Hamid and more cruel massacres were held in Adana, where more than 35.000 people were murdered.¹⁴

In 1890-s the Turkish government was supported by Imperial Germany. In 1898 Emperor Wilhelm II arrived in Constantinople and encouraged Hamidian slaughter policy. World War I gave an opportunity <<to make Turkey exclusively the country of the Turks>> ¹⁵.



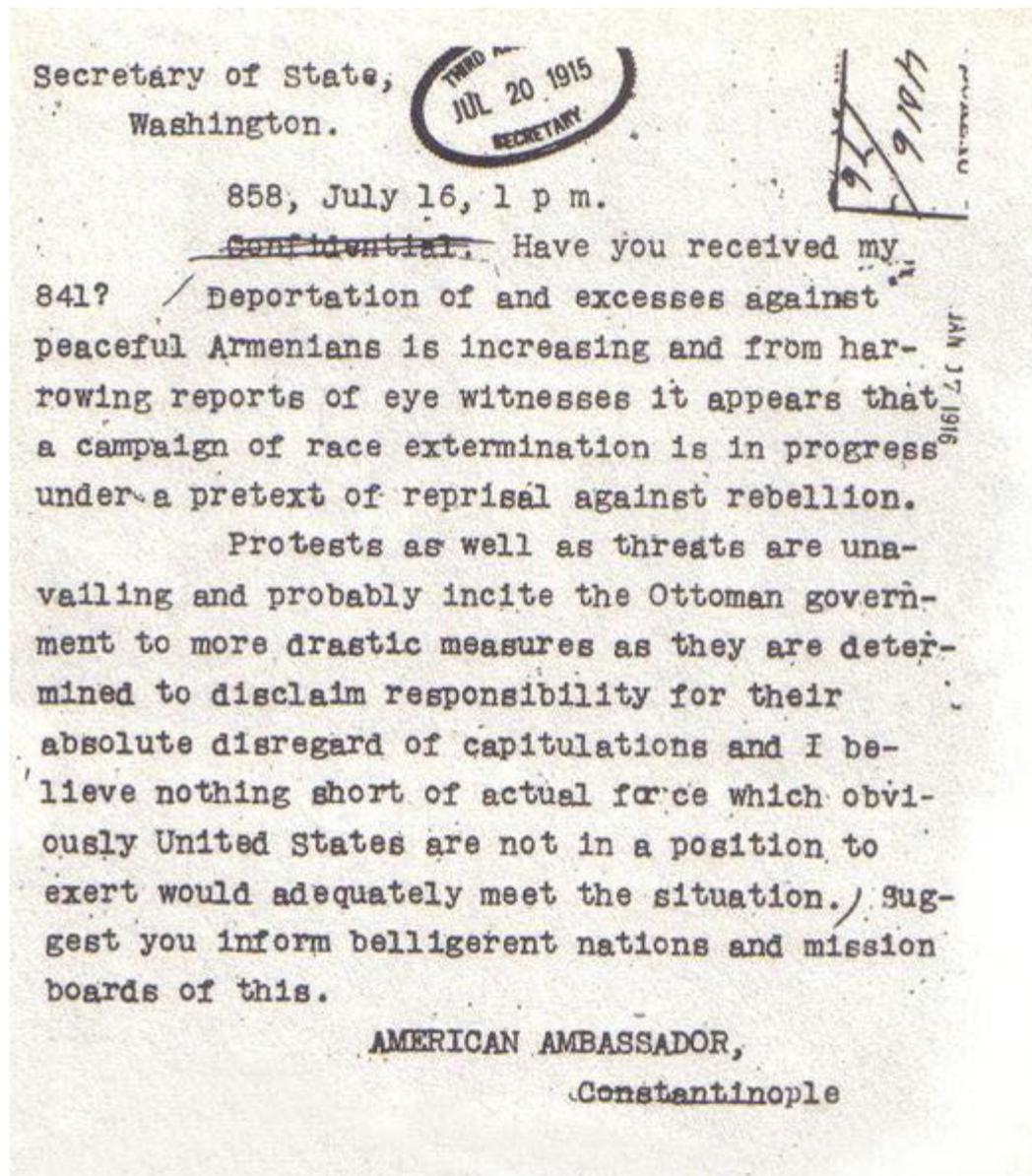
Fishing village on Lake Van. In this district about 55,000 Armenians were massacred.

¹⁴ Ambassador Morgenthau's Story, by Henry Morgenthau, p.138:

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 139:

Ambassador Morgenthau sent many letters to his state and presented the horrific atrocities during the <<campaign of race extermination>> against Armenians.¹⁶

Here is one of them.



In the 23rd chapter of the book called <<The Revolution at Van>>, Morgenthau represents the extermination of Armenians in Van province by Turkish army after the retreat of Russian troops.

¹⁶ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:AmbassadorMorgenthautelegram.jpg>

The populations of Armenian villages of Van were subjected to horrible massacre. Armenian beautiful women were kidnapped by Muslims. Four days Armenian villages were subjected to massacre and plunder.



Refugees at Van crowding around a public oven, hoping to get bread. These people were torn from their homes almost without warning, and started toward the desert. Thousands of children and women as well as men died.

This how Morgenthau represents murder of Armenian young people <<On April 15th, about 500 young Armenian men of Akantz were mustered to hear an order of the Sultan; at sunset they were marched outside the town and every man shot in cold blood. This procedure was repeated in about eighty Armenian villages in the district north of Lake Van, and in three days 24,000 Armenians were murdered in this atrocious fashion.>>¹⁷.

In the memoir actions of extermination of the Armenians in Van by Djevdet Bey's are introduced in details. The author admires self-defense of the Armenians, the entrance of Russian troops to Van after 5 weeks of fighting and the flight of Turks.

¹⁷ Ambassador Morgenthau's Story, by Henry Morgenthau, p.141:
<http://net.lib.byu.edu/~rdh7/wwi/comment/morgenthau/MorgenTC.htm>

The testimony of American missionary doctor Ussher (American medical missionary) is horrific: <<When the Russians began to collect the bodies of Armenians who had been murdered in the province, with the result that 55,000 bodies were burned>>. ¹⁸

Ambassador Morgenthau's description of the villainy against Armenians in the 24th chapter of his memoir is thrilling.

While describing in details the policy of the Ottoman Empire concerning Christians, he notes that Armenian young conscripts were disarmed and were used as manpower.

They were taken out of the city 50-100 people in each group and were slaughtered in deserts. Morgenthau's memories of Armenian's slaughter are numerous; therefore the author refuses to describe some of them. He writes about governor of Van Djevdet Bey <<horseshoer of Bashkale>> for nailing horseshoes to the feet of Armenian victims.



Dead bodies of the slaughtered Armenians on the way of deportation

Morgenthau mentions that the government of Ottoman Empire proclaimed its intention to <<transfer>> more than 2. 000. 000 Armenians from different parts of the Empire to deserts. The fact that the intention of the government was not the

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 142.

deportation but the death verdict of a whole race was described and interpreted.¹⁹ Many pages of the book describe in details horrific scenes of the deportation of the Armenians: <<*Village after village* and town *after* town was evacuated of its Armenian population in the conditions mentioned above. According to the verified data during these six months about 1,200,000 people started on this journey to the Syrian desert>>²⁰.



A relic of the Armenian massacres at Erzingan

The real intentions of the Turkish government were reflected in the following lines <<It is absurd for the Turkish Government to assert that it ever seriously intended to "deport the Armenians to new homes"; the treatment which was given the convoys clearly shows that extermination was the real purpose of Enver and Talaat>>²¹.

Morgenthau represents in details Talaat's and Enver's villainous policy towards the genocide of Armenians in the 25th and 27th chapters of his book.

¹⁹ Ambassador Morgenthau's Story, by Henry Morgenthau, p.138.
<http://net.lib.byu.edu/~rdh7/wwi/comment/morgenthau/MorgenTC.htm>

²⁰ Ibid, p. 149.

²¹ Ambassador Morgenthau's Story, by Henry Morgenthau, p.150.
<http://net.lib.byu.edu/~rdh7/wwi/comment/morgenthau/MorgenTC.htm>

Henri Morgenthau's testimonies are undeniable proofs of the Armenian genocide and confirm the fact of the planned slaughter by the government.