

Ignoring the Armenian genocide by the last Islamic caliphate

The genocide of Armenian Christians by Ottoman Muslims was very real, so was the appalling torture. Women were raped and crucified, people had horseshoes nailed to their feet as they were marched through the streets. Unspeakable atrocities were perpetrated. Yet almost no-one in the Islamic world, and too few in the West will acknowledge it even happened.



As the world continues to look on in dismay at the barbaric atrocities committed against Christian minorities by the Islamic State -- the self-proclaimed new "caliphate" -- today, April 24, marks the genocide of Armenian and other Christian minorities by Turkey's Islamic Ottoman Empire, the last caliphate.

Most American historians who have examined the question agree that what the Armenians experienced was a deliberate, calculated genocide:

More than one million Armenians perished as the result of execution, starvation, disease, the harsh environment, and physical abuse. A people who lived in eastern Turkey for nearly 3,000 years [that is, 2,500 years before the Islamic Turks invaded and occupied Anatolia, now known as "Turkey"] lost its homeland

and was profoundly decimated in the first large-scale genocide of the twentieth century. At the beginning of 1915 there were some two million Armenians within Turkey; today there are fewer than 60,000.

One-and-a-half million Armenians were eradicated. If early 20th century Turkey had had the apparatuses and technology to execute in mass -- such as 1940s Germany's gas chambers -- the entire Armenian population could well have been annihilated.

The atrocities suffered by Armenian and other Christian minorities are too long to list. As occurs under the current caliphate -- the Islamic State -- the Muslims of the Ottoman caliphate abducted, raped, and slaughtered or sold countless Christian women and children on the Muslim slave markets.

Armenian Christians were also sadistically tortured -- as Christians are today under the Islamic State. On FrontPage Magazine, Lloyd Billingsley writes:

Torture squads would apply red-hot irons, tear off flesh with hot pincers, then pour boiled butter into the wounds. The soles of the feet would be beaten, slashed, and laced with salt. Dr. Mehmed Reshid tortured Armenians by nailing horseshoes to their feet and marching them through the streets. He also crucified them on makeshift crosses.

The Muslims hacked Armenians to pieces and dashed infants on the rocks before their mothers. They burned bodies not for sanitary reasons but in search of gold coins they believed the Armenians had swallowed. The Muslims also tore apart the victims' feces in the search for gold. U.S. consul Leslie Davis, a former attorney and journalist, documented the Islamic zeal. "We could all hear them piously calling upon Allah to bless them in their efforts to kill the hated Christians," Davis wrote. "Night after night this same chant went up to heaven and day after day these Turks carried on their bloody work." Around Lake Goeljik, Davis wrote, "thousands and thousands of Armenians, mostly innocent and helpless women and children, were butchered on its shores and barbarously mutilated."

In her memoir, *Ravished Armenia*, Aurora Mardiganian described being raped and thrown into a harem -- akin to the experiences of today's non-Muslims under Islamic State authority.

Unlike thousands of other Armenian girls who were killed after being defiled, she managed to escape. She recalls seeing 16 Christian girls crucified in Malatia: "Each girl had been nailed alive upon her cross, spikes through her feet and hands, only their hair blown by the wind, covered their bodies." Because there is no dearth of evidence concerning the historical reality of the Armenian Genocide, 44 U.S. States have recognized it. South Dakota, which recently joined the

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list, passed a resolution in February 2015 calling on Congress and the president of the United States to formally and consistently recognize and reaffirm the historical truth that the atrocities committed against the Armenian, Greek, and other Christians living in their historical homelands in Anatolia constituted genocide and to work towards equitable, stable, and durable Armenian-Turkish relations.

Turkey, of course, continues to deny that its forbears ever committed any genocide. As a group of American academics wrote back in 1995

Despite the vast amount of evidence that points to the historical reality of the Armenian Genocide -- eyewitness accounts, official archives, photographic evidence, the reports of diplomats, and the testimony of survivors -- denial of the Armenian Genocide by successive regimes in Turkey has gone on from 1915 to the present.

Nor is the Islamic government of Turkey alone in denying the genocide. President Obama still refuses to acknowledge it -- even though when he was running for office in 2008 he professed his:

firmly held conviction that the Armenian Genocide is not an allegation, a personal opinion, or a point of view, but rather a widely documented fact supported by an overwhelming body of historical evidence. The facts are undeniable.... [A]s President I will recognize the Armenian Genocide.... America deserves a leader who speaks truthfully about the Armenian Genocide and responds forcefully to all genocides. I intend to be that president.

After taking office, Obama has refused to stand by his word. On Tuesday, April 21, the White House announced that it would again, for the seventh year since Obama's pledge, not use the word "genocide," thereby disappointing many human rights activists.

Writes the New York Times of Obama:

The president's continued resistance to the word stood in contrast to a stance by Pope Francis, who recently called the massacres "the first genocide of the 20th century" and equated them to mass killings by the Nazis and Soviets. The European Parliament, which first recognized the genocide in 1987, passed a resolution last week calling on Turkey to "come to terms with its past."

The Armenian National Committee of America responded by saying: "The president's surrender represents a national disgrace. It is a betrayal of the truth, and it is a betrayal of trust." The Armenian Assembly of America said "His failure to use the term genocide represents a major blow for human rights advocates."

But the president's actions are consistent in other ways. Put differently, it is no marvel that Obama denies the genocide of Armenian and other Christian minorities at the hands of Muslims from a century ago, when one considers that he denies the rampant Muslim persecution of Christians taking place under -- and often partly because of -- his leadership today.

President Trump prides himself on speaking bluntly on the international stage and, at times, breaking with diplomatic norms. But he continued a tradition that has infuriated many Armenian Americans -- refusing to use the word "genocide" in describing the killings of more than 1 million Armenians at the hands of Ottoman Turks. Trump won't even consider it and has instead cozied up to the new Turkish dictator Erdogan (even turning a blind eye to his treatment of the Kurds). In fact, recently Trump cut off weapons to the Kurds who have been our most effective allies in the war against Isis. The decision to stop arming the Kurds will remove a major source of tension between the United States and Turkey, a NATO ally. But it is likely to further anger the Kurds, who already feel betrayed since the United States told them to hand over hard-won territory to the Syrian government.

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