

## From The Book Shelf

### Chronology Of The Armenian Genocide: (Three Books The Turks Would Not Like To Read)

By Sarkis Y. Karayan M.D.

Although much has been published in Armenian as well as in foreign languages about the Turkish genocide perpetrated on the Armenians during 1914-1923, authoritative and scholarly books did not start to appear until 1960ies, namely fifty years after the Great Crime. Starting 1960ies, the following authors, Vahakn Dadrian, Richard Hovannisian, Robert Nelson Leo Kuper and Israel Charny published well researched, scholarly, multivolume books in English on the genocide.

In the French language works by, Armenian clerics Mgr. Naslian, Mgr. Mecerian, the late famous Lebanese lawyer Moussa Prince, Yves Ternon and Gerard Chaliand and recently. Raymond Kevorkian's "Le Genocide des Armeniens" fully satisfies the francophone students and scholars who are interested in the subject. [An appreciative review by me about R. Kevorkian's book mentioned appeared in the English section of "Massis: weekly", of Los Angeles, Feb.8, 2008; and also in "Nor Gyank Weekly", of Los Angeles, Feb. 14, 2008, and "The Armenian Observer", April, 23 and 30, 2008]

An important aspect of the documentation of the Genocide was lacking until 1976. This missing aspect was a chronology of the deportation and massacres of the Armenians from numerous cities, towns and villages living in Turkey in 1914.

In 1914, at the start of World War I, two and a half million Armenians used to live in over 4,000 cities, towns and villages.- (for the last 4,000 years in these lands, called Armenian Highlands).. At the end of World War I, and due to the genocide by the Turks, Armenians have been living in only two places, Istanbul city, and the village of Vakifly near Moussa Dagh. The total number of Armenians now, in Republican Turkey has been estimated as about 80,000 persons in Istanbul and Vakifly. (For a researched article on the present number of Armenians in Turkey, see this writer's recent article. "On the Number of Armenians in the Turkish Republic 1927-2000". "In the Armenian Observer", March 22, 2006; "Nor Gyank" March 30, 2006 and "The Armenian Reporter" April, 1, 2006.

#### Three Books Are Available About The Chronology Of The Armenian Genocide

The first book available to me about the Chronology of the Armenian genocide, is in Armenian by Levon Vartan [Bedirian], titled "Zhamanagakrutian Hayagan Dasnhinki 1915-1923". Atlas Press, Beirut, 1975. 292 pages. Translation of the title into English would be "Chronology of Armenian Fifteen 1915-1923". The term "Armenian Fifteen" refers to the year 1915, when the genocide was started by the Ottoman government, headed by Talaat-Enver and Jemal triumvirate, and with the

tacit approval of the Kaiser Willhelms' Germany. The Kaiser was so enthusiastic about the Jihad declared by the Ottoman government against the Christian Armenians that, the Turks nicknamed him Haji Willhelm.

Vartan's book was published during the early part of 1975, in Beirut, at the beginning of the Lebanese civil strife. It is probably for this reason that it had not been reviewed by the Armenian diasporan press. I do not know if it was reviewed or commented upon by Armenian historians in Armenia. I reviewed Vartan's book in "The Armenian Observer", 23 March, 1983'.

The late Levon Vartan, the nominee-plum of Levon Bedirian, - passed away in 2002 - was a writer, poet and teacher of History and Armenian studies at Haigazian College, Armenian Evangelical Schools and Husisian Armenological Institute and at the Armenological section of Jesuit Fathers' St. Joseph University in Beirut. The main axis of Vartan's historical writings comprises Turkish-Armenian relations, specially the genocide of 1915-1918. Thus he has published, all in Armenian, the following books, "The Armenian Fifteen and Armenians' Abandoned Properties (1970); "Let the Turk Talk, 1975); "On the Economic Relations of Western Armenians, 1977): "We, The Armenian Fifteen in Turkish books and the Press. (1998); "Taxes in Ottoman and Persian Empires, from 15<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries" Yerevan, 2004.

#### Sources for Vartan's Chronology of the Genocide

In writing of the chronology of the genocide, he has drawn upon almost all available published books, survivor memories in Armenian, English, French, Turkish and German, dealing with the events of 1914-1923 in Turkey. He has also used US Department of State's published volumes Foreign Relations of USA, 1914-1946.

#### A Word About Finding Documents About The Genocide

1. The most important fist hand source for the genocide are the memoirs of the survivors. This is in addition sources mentioned in the above paragraph. It is often said or written that the Armenian generation that survived the genocide did not publish - with few exceptions - their experiences, so all the world would know what had happened. Since 1965, we have seen many survivor stories printed or recorded on tape. The most important stories or documents on massacres/deportations are in the books published by the Armenian Compatriotic Unions. Each compatriotic union published books devoted to the city or village of their parents. Up to now, these are 130 volumes, comprising about 75,000 pages. Almost all are in Armenian, a few have been translated into English, and some volumes have summaries in English or French, at the end of the book. (For a list of these books, see my article "Histories of Armenian Communities in Turkey". in

## 80th Anniversary Of His Death Stepan Sapah-Gulian 1861-1928

Stepan Sapah-Gulian was born in Djahri, a village just north of Nakhichevan on 14th of February, 1861. Sapah-Gulian attended the Nersesian academy in Tiflis for his primary and secondary education and was later appointed director of Nakhichevan schools.

As an Armenian activist Sapah-Gulian met with renowned Hunchak activist Matteos Sarkissian "Paramaz" in Nakhichevan and Meghri, and discussed revolutionary ideas. Sapah-Gulian was later briefly in Jerusalem, as a director of the Armenian school then traveled to Paris for continuation of higher education and subsequently graduated from the École Libre des Sciences Politiques with future French Prime Minister Raymond Poincaré.

As an ardent activist for the Armenian cause Sapah-Gulian became a leader within the Hunchak party. Sapah-Gulian founded and edited several journals, including Yeritasard Hayastan ('Armenian Youth', 1903), Hunchak, Veradsnound ('Revival'),



Stepan Sapah-Gulian

along with other Hunchak party members in 1915 by the Ittihad government.

Sapah-Gulian later traveled to the USA to recruit for the volunteer units and to obtain assistance for the Armenians in the war. In the States he edited



Stepan Sapah-Gulian's Tombstone (Union City, New Jersey)

Nor Ashkharh.

After the Ottoman constitution he along with Social Democrat Hunchak Party declared opposition to the Young Turk led Committee of Union and Progress, and urged other Armenian political parties to join the Hunchaks in opposition to the racist Ittihad movement. While in Cairo, Sapah-Gulian would be condemned to death (in absentia)

"The Armenian Review, March, 1980" or an updated version in "The Armenian Observer, March 27, 2002", or in "Nor Gyank Weekly. Jan. 21, 2002".)

Vartan makes good use of these histories of Armenian communities.

2. Ottoman Turkish Archives. Since officially Turkey denies committing the genocide, I do not think one will find any documentation in their archives. These archives, or "black holes" have been cleaned of any orders for genocide. However, if you read the book published by the Turkish Government in 1995 "Armenians in Ottoman Documents- 1915-1920" you will be convinced that the Ottoman government had planned a systematic genocide in 1915. (A review of this, book was written by me in the "The Armenian Observer", July 25 and Aug.

Yeritasard Hayastan in New York and fundamentally disagreed on dissolution of the Social Democrat Hunchak Party in favor of the Russian Social Democrats, showing determination to maintain independence and integrity of the Armenian Social Democrat Hunchak party. Stepan Sapah-Gulian passed away in New Jersey on the 28th of April, 1928.

5, 1998 or "Nor Gyank" Aug, 6 and 13, 1998.)

Once in a while I see an article about Ottoman archives. Of course the Turkish writers speak highly of the richness of the archives about past information. During last two years I have written two articles about Ottoman archives, about events that happened in towards the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, but printed only during last two decades. I have concluded that these newly written books about Ottoman Archives about the events in period of 1894-1895 are written to justify the Genocidal events of 1915, and they are not worth the paper on which they are printed.

In this connection, I wrote two

Continued on page 4