

## Armenian Atrocities And Genocide in and around Trabzon

Following the October 1917 Revolution, Russians evacuated Trabzon and its environs. Before and after the evacuation, armed Armenian bands massacred innocent and defenceless people, corpses were thrown into wells, corpses with mutilated arms, hands and feet were thrown onto abandoned houses and gardens, mosques were filled with dirt with the intention of insulting holy places, even the fruit trees were cut down so as to prevent people from benefiting from them. (The atrocities were reported in detail by Captain Ahmet Refik, Officer in the Second Section, General Headquarters in the message dated 1 May 1918. See the Archives of the Department of Military History and Strategic Studies, General Staff (ATASE), No. 1/2, carton 359, File 1023, Index 3-36.)

The Armenian atrocities and genocide were well documented by the official investigation conducted by the Kaimakam of the district of Vakfikebir as follows: "Numerous women and children who, following the entry of Armenians in Viche, had taken refuge in the house of the tax collector Osman Effendi were savagely killed; an armed band comprising some 30 Armenians blockaded several houses, chose women and children, took them to a stream and slaughtered them all; the two women who survived this disaster with wounds that healed afterwards told the disaster in deep grief; a group of five Armenians from the village of Gül Ali, district of, attempted to rape a woman in front of gendarmes and killed one of the gendarmes who attempted to defend the woman and bit savagely a piece from her cheek after trampling the honour of the poor woman; the barbarous band killed a number of scholars under various insults and torture and plundered all their goods and foods and took them away and committed lots of atrocities and meanness, the story of which would fill many volumes of books.

According to sworn statements given by various eyewitnesses on the brutalities committed by Armenian bands who guided Russian soldiers, the Armenians entering the village of Kalfaka rounded up many women and children, including the wife, Ulviye, and daughter in law, Hüsniye, of Kulakoglu Hüseyin and the wife, Züleyha, of Kulakoglu Ali, who had hid together in several houses and waited anxiously for what to happen, and took them away to a brook at the foot of a nearby hill and slaughtered them all like sheep. They violated and then killed the 18 year old daughter, Emine, of Paslioglu Ali who had remained in the village and brutally killed a new born baby, daughter of her sister, Hatice, by throwing her into the air and holding a bayonet under her while falling." (*Aspirations and revolutionary movements of the Armenian parties*, pp. 319-321.)

Another document (BOA. HR. SYS. HU, kr. 110, dos. 12-3, nr. 12-14, 16, 18-26, 28-39, 41-44 (See: Annex-13) recounting the atrocities perpetrated against the people living in the regions of Trabzon and Van by Armenians in company with Russians

"is an official letter written and forwarded by the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the reports received from the provinces of Trabzon, Van and Diyarbakir relating to atrocities and evil deeds committed by Armenians, in company with Russians, against muslim population and muslim women in particular."

Yet another document (BOA. HR. SYS. HU, kr. 110, dos. 12-4, nr. 125-126 (See: Annex-14)

embodying the sworn testimonies of Fatima (daughter of Ali Osman), wife of Salimoglu Mehmet from the village of Kalafka, and that of Besim bin Mehmet from the village of İpsil shows that "Armenians and Russians rounded up

muslims from their houses living in the village of Kalafka, district of Yomra, Trabzon, separated men from women, sent men to an unknown place, violated little girls and women and killed a new born baby by throwing it into the air and holding a bayonet under it while falling and they committed similar crimes in the villages of Ipsil, Hachavra and Soldoy in the district of Machka, violated women and maids, killed many people and burnt their corpses and Russians encouraged Armenians to do so. The testimonies also include the names of victims."