
THE ECHOES OF THE ARMENIAN MASSACRES OF CILICIA IN 1909 IN THE *TIMES*

The Armenian massacres in Cilicia in 1909, organized by the Young Turks government in April, are an integral part of the Armenian Genocide (1894-1922). In the historiography of this theme the Cilician massacres have not been studied on a high level. Sometimes they missed the attention of the representatives of different generations of scholars not only in Armenia, but also in foreign countries, even in the second half of the XX century, when more scholars became interested in the issues of the Armenian Genocide. Therefore, the Cilician massacres need to be studied completely, as there are only three serious studies on this subject¹.

The historians have not made a careful study of the sources of these massacres. Certainly, some of the contemporary scholars, both French and Armenian, have recently republished the most important and as to day the only collection of documents², as well as some other important books³. One of my Armenian colleagues has published some Armenian documents⁴; others have concentrated on some articles on the interpretation of Armenian and Danish sources⁵.

In each case, the historians of the Cilician massacres have focused mainly on the Armenian sources. Only the French historian R.H. Kevorkian has studied the German and Austrian archival documents. But the English sources have been unfortunately omitted by my predecessors. As far as the *Times* is concerned, it has never been referred to by my colleagues.

While, this newspaper, which had its correspondents in Asia Minor, periodically received from them reliable information about the events which were taking place in

¹ **Kévorkian R.H.**, Les massacres de Cilicie d'avril 1909 // La Cilicie (1909-1921). Des massacres d'Adana au mandat français. Volume préparé par Raymond H. Kévorkian, Paris, 1999; **Simonyan H.**, The Destruction of Armenians in Cilicia, April 1909, Erevan, 2009 (in Armenian); see also its English translation: London, 2012; **Poghosyan V.**, The Armenian Massacres of 1909 in Cilicia in the light of the prism of French historiography, Yerevan, 2009 (in Armenian).

² **Brézol G.** Les Turcs ont passé là... Recueil de documents, dossiers, rapports, requêtes, protestations, suppliques et enquêtes établissant la vérité sur les massacres d'Adana en 1909. Préparé à la publication par Varoujean Poghosyan, Erevan, 2009 ; Chamigny, 2009.

³ **Duckett Ferriman.** Les Jeunes Turcs et la vérité sur l'Holocauste d'Adana en Asie Mineure en avril 1909. Chamigny, 2008 ; Turkish Atrocities. The Young Turks and the Truth about the Holocaust at Adana, in Asia Minor, during April, 1909. Written and compiled in April, 1911, by Ferriman Duckett. Yerevan, 2009; **Adossidès A.**, Arméniens et Jeunes-Turcs. Les massacres de Cilicie. Le texte d'autotypie est préparé à la publication par Varoujean Poghosyan, Erevan, 2011 ; Chamigny, 2009 ; **Essayan Z.**, Dans les ruines, Paris, 2011.

⁴ **Avagyan G.**, The Echoes of the Massacres of the Cilician Armenians, "VEM", 2009, N 1, pp. 173-182, (in Armenian).

⁵ **Kharatyan A.**, The Elucidation of Adana's Massacre of 1909 in the Western Armenian Press, "Patmabanasirakan Handes", 2009, N 1, pp. 3-14 (in Armenian); **Khaltaktchyan T.**, The First Echoes of Adana's Massacre of 1909 in the Western Armenian Press, "Lraber", 2009, N 1, pp. 3-13 (in Armenian); **Bjørnlund M.**, Adana and Beyond: Revolution and Massacre in the Ottoman Empire seen through Danish Eyes, 1908/9, "Haykazian Hayagitakan Handes", 2010, pp. 125-156.

this region. Therefore, they are not only interesting, but also one of the most reliable sources. This is also true of the other stages of the Armenian Genocide. Some documents on the Massacres of 1915 were included in the collection of documents on the Armenian Genocide, published by Mkrtich Nersisyan in 1966¹. Several information's of the *Times* were published in a collection of documents on the Armenian massacres in Marash in 1920².

Nevertheless, the publications of the *Times* about the Cilician vespers of 1909 are very interesting and that's why worth being published. The publications of this newspaper are frequently based on the information of British and American diplomats and foreign missionaries, the eyewitnesses of these massacres. Several circumstances were reflected in these publications, refer to two stages of the Cilician massacres, which took place at the beginning and in the middle of April throughout the region. They elucidate also some important details of these massacres. According to one of the publications over 30.000 Armenian victims were mentioned. This question should be properly investigated by the historians³.

VAROUJEAN POGHOSYAN

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Attack on the Armenians

Constantinople, April 15.

Consular telegrams from Mersina (Asia Minor) state that, owing to the murder there of the two Moslems by an Armenian, and the non-discovery of the assassin, the Moslems have attacked the Armenians.

Later

The first news from Mersina was happily exaggerated. The disturbance really occurred at Adana and only ten Armenians were killed.

Times. 16. IV. 1909.

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Further Resignations (Extract)

Constantinople, April 16.

The Disturbances in Asia Minor

The latest advices from Adana and Mersina state that a large number of Christians have been killed at the former place, and that the Moslem attacks were continuing last night.

Times. 17. IV. 1909.

¹ The Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire. Collection of documents and materials. Compiled by Mkrtich Nersisyan and Rouben Sahakyan. Yerevan, 1966.

² Poghosyan V., Les massacres des Arméniens de Marache en 1920, Yerevan, 2010 (in English and in French).

³ For example, according to the figures of V. Dadrian and R.H. Kevorkian 25.000 Armenians were killed (Dadrian V., Histoire du génocide arménien. Conflits nationaux des Balkans au Caucase, Paris, 1996, p. 305; Kévorkian R.H., Le génocide des Arméniens, Paris, 2006, p. 100). H. Simonyan estimate the number of victims approximately over 40.000 (Simonyan H., op. cit., p. 206).

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Moslems Outbreaks in Asia Minor

The situation in Cilicia is grave. Telegrams of yesterday's date from Adana describe the situation as desperate. A large part of the town has been burnt, including the quarter inhabited by the Armenians, who made a desperate resistance and inflicted heavy loss on their assailants before they were overpowered. The British Vice-Consul received slight injuries. Two American missionaries were killed and the mission is in great danger.

The town of Tarsus is on fire. The Christians are peaceable, but the Moslems murdering and looting.

At Mersina the situation is threatening owing to the paucity of troops and the activity of the Moslem agitators. The disturbances have spread to Ayas and the neighborhood of Alexandretta. As it is evident that the local authorities are quite unable to cope with the situation the commanders of the British war vessels which were ordered to Mersina have received instructions to act on their own initiative. It is hoped that the approaching concentration of eight European warships at Mersina may save the town from the horrors which have overtaken Adana.

Times. 19. IV. 1909.

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Constantinople, April 18.

The names of the American missionaries killed in the massacres at Adana are Maurer and Rogers. The other members of the missions are safe, as is M[iste]r Christie, who is at Tarsus.

A British war vessel has been ordered to Alexandretta, which town is now threatened by the surrounding Moslems. Several Armenian farms in the neighborhood of the town have been destroyed. There is great apprehension and excitement at Kharput owing to the depredations of the Kurds in the neighboring villages. So far there have been no disturbances in the town itself.

Times. 19. IV. 1909

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The Outbreaks in Asia Minor

(From our own correspondent)
Constantinople, April 18.

The disturbances in Cilicia have spread to the Tarsus. I understand that the French Embassy is informed that a massacre of Christians has occurred at Marash.

Constantinople, April 18, Midnight.

A telegram from the British Vice-Consul at Adana, dispatched this afternoon, states that he has apprehensions of further trouble at that place. There is no further

news from Tarsus or Mersina, while there is increased apprehension in regard to Alexandretta. A British warship is expected at Alexandretta to-night and a French warship at Mersina to-morrow.

The American Vice-Consul at Mersina telegraphs that things are quieting down.

The American missionaries, M[iste]r Rogers and M[iste]r Maurer, were killed at Adana on Thursday afternoon while attempting to extinguish a fire at the house of an aged Turkish woman. Both of them were shot dead. The missions at Adana and Tarsus have now received adequate protection and are safe.

The number of killed in the fighting between Turks and Armenians at Adana is estimated at over 1.000.

April 19.

Consular telegrams from Aleppo report that 20 persons have been killed and wounded at Marash, in the province of Aleppo, 80 miles north of the town of Aleppo. The authorities are behaving well and the disturbance has been stopped.

The Sheik-ul-Islam and the Armenian Patriarch have telegraphed to the ecclesiastical authorities in the vilayet of Adana urging the naibs, bishops, and priests to exert themselves with a view to stopping bloodshed and to counsel peace and concord.

Times. 20. IV. 1909.

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The Outbreaks in Asia Minor

(From our own correspondent)

Constantinople, April 20, 12 35 a[n]te m[eridiem].

The Vali of Adana and the Mutessarif of Tarsus have been dismissed. According to the latest telegrams, all is quiet at Adana, though disorder persists in some neighboring villages. Over 3.000 persons are homeless. Order has been restored at Tarsus.

The Press echoes the hope, already expressed amid general by one of the Armenian Deputies in Parliament yesterday, that all persons found guilty of complicity in the massacres should be severely punished, and remarks that the failure to punish the authors of former outrages has led the worst elements of the population of Asia Minor to believe that crimes against the Armenians can be perpetrated with impunity.

Times. 21. IV. 1909.

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Thousands Killed

Constantinople, April 20.

The latest Consular telegram from Adana estimates the number of killed at 2,000, including over 200 Moslems, at Adana itself, and at about 5,000 throughout the vilayet. Quiet prevails at Adana at present.

A Consular telegram from Marash, in the province of Aleppo, reports a renewal of the attacks, and adds that the situation is exceedingly precarious, while the excitement at Alexandretta is still very grave, though the presence of his Majesty's cruiser *Diana* will prove to have a tranquillizing effect.

Disturbances are reported from Hadjin, in the northern extremity of the vilayet of Adana, a large Armenian centre.

Times. 21. IV. 1909.

The Outbreaks in Asia Minor (Extract)

(From our own correspondent)

Constantinople, April 21.

The disturbances in Cilicia are spreading eastwards. Affrays between Christians and Moslems are reported in the neighborhood of Antioch, Alexandretta, and Aleppo. A massacre is believed to have occurred at Biredjik. Orders have been issued to the local authorities to check disturbances of all kinds, and the Sheik-ul-Islam and the Armenian Patriarch have issued strict injunctions to the *mufitis* and clergy to abstain from provocative language.

But there is reason to fear that a wave of reactionary fanaticism and turbulence is spreading rapidly eastwards; and reports of the state of feeling in Angora and Konia indicate the possibility of dangerous outbreaks in Asia Minor. Fighting between Armenians and Moslems is reported in the Marash and Hajin districts; but no details are known.

Times. 22. IV. 1909.

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The Outbreak in Asia Minor (Extract)

(From our own correspondent)

Constantinople, April 22.

The news from Asia Minor causes considerable anxiety. Fighting between Moslems and Armenians is reported from the Jebel Bereket district, north-east of Adana. Telegrams from Sivas complain of the pillage of the settled inhabitants by bands of Kurds and Circassians and Hajin is surrounded by armed Moslems.

Times. 23. IV. 1909.

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The Outbreaks in Asia Minor

(From our own correspondent)
Constantinople, April 23.

Massacre at Antioch

The *Turquie* announces a massacre of Christians at Antioch by criminals escaped from the Payas prison near Alexandretta.

Constantinople, April 23.

According to the latest Consular reports, massacres are continuing in the district of Antioch, and the people are fleeing in all directions.

The French Vice-Consul at Marash telegraphs that order has been restored in that town. Two Englishmen named Gunter and Proctor have reached Adana safely from Osmanieh and Bagtcheh respectively. Both places are situated in the Adana vilayet.

The cruiser *Medjidieh* left this morning for the Syrian coast.

Fugitives who have arrived at Alexandretta relate that all the Armenian villages and settlements in the Alexandretta district are being destroyed. All, or nearly all, dwellings have been destroyed, and the Christian inhabitants who have escaped massacre are living in the open, half starving and panic-stricken.

A British warship, which went to the relief of Dortyol, returned to Alexandretta after accomplishing nothing. The Commander applied to the Governor of the district for permission to land a relief party, but his application was refused.

The following telegram, dated yesterday, has been received from an American missionary at Adana who witnessed the massacre:—

The immediate pretext for the massacre was the action of an Armenian who shot three Turks, one of whom died, on April 10. On the evening of the following day a large Moslem crowd beat the Armenian to death. As the unrest was greatly increased by this event, the Armenian notables urgently demanded that the Governor should take adequate measures to preserve order.

On the morning of the 14th the situation became critical. The Armenians closed their shops, and later on the Turks followed their example. The Armenian notables thereupon repeated their demands for adequate precautionary measures, and the Governor assured them that perfect order would be maintained. The Moslem and Armenian notables walked through the streets and urged their coreligionists to reopen their shops. However, a Moslem crowd, armed with clubs, filled the market place and the other streets, and near noon began massacring, looting, and burning the shops and houses of the Armenians. The conflict raged fiercely until Friday morning. Two American missionaries were killed, and the British Vice-Consul, while riding through the streets in an attempt to restore order, was wounded. The Armenians defended themselves stoutly and killed some of the Moslems.

On Friday morning the Armenians, through a friendly mullah, begged for Government protection, and troops paraded the streets and guard were posted at various points. Order was slowly restored. At night time extensive conflagrations threatened the whole city. Thousands of Armenians have been killed and thousands more are homeless, penniless, and hungry. The devastation in the outskirts of the city

is inconceivable. Extensive relief measures have been undertaken by the four hospitals, but enormous efforts will be necessary to give adequate relief.

Times. 24. IV. 1909.

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Distress in Adana Vilayet

Adana, April 23.

Appalling distress has resulted from the recent massacres in the vilayet. Some 15.000 people are homeless and starving, and there are thousands of orphans to be provided for. A committee of Moslems and Christians, presided over by M[iste]r Chambers, a Canadian missionary, who gained much experience in relief work during the former Armenian massacres, and organized under the suppression of Major Doughty-Wylie, Vice-Consul, is doing what it can to provide shelter and food, but foreign help is urgently needed to prevent further loss of life from starvation. It is hoped that the public in Great Britain and America will make a charitable response to this appeal for subscriptions. Which are to be sent to the American Bible House in Constantinople.

Times. 26. IV. 1909.

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Massacres still Proceeding

Constantinople, April 25.

A telegram from Adana reports that Hajin is in flames. According to information from Aleppo a massacre is proceeding at Latakia, while 10.000 Christians are surrounded at Dortyol, near Bayas, and that there is no means of reaching them. A French battleship which has arrived at Beirut has since proceeded to Latakia.

Times. 27. IV. 1909.

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The Adana Massacres (Extract)

Constantinople, April 27.

A telegram from Adana reports that a fresh outbreak, accompanied by looting and incendiarism, occurred there during the night. The situation is described as critical.

In an account of the massacres of Christians at Adana, M[iste]r Gibbons, the missionary, says:—

On Friday afternoon (after the Adana outbreak) 250 so-called reserves, without officers, seized a train at Adana and compelled the engineer to convey them to Tarsus, where they contributed to the complete destruction of the Armenian quarter, the best part of Tarsus. The great historic Armenian church, the most important building in the city, was sacked, the marble statues demolished, the historic tablets shattered, and

everything portable carried off; but the building resisted the attempt to burn it. Fortunately few were killed, owing to the proximity of the American college, where 4.000 refugees, destitute and homeless, took shelter.

The Reformed Presbyterian Churches of Ireland and Scotland have a joint mission at Antioch, Aleppo, Idlib, and Alexandretta, in Syria, and the secretary of the mission board at Belfast has received from the missionary in charge at Alexandretta, the Rev[erend] S.H. Kennedy, the following telegram:—

“At Antioch Armenians have been massacred. There are hundreds of widows and orphans. D[octo]r Martin and his family are safe. Here the situation is most serious. The churches are filled with refugees. Two hundred are in my house; foreigners are protected”.

Times. 28. IV. 1909.

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The Massacres in Asia Minor (Extract)

(From our own correspondent)
Constantinople, April 28.

Miss Rose Lambert, an American missionary, telegraphing from Hajin, Asia Minor, on April 26, states that the rising against the Christians began there nine days before. The Government sent troops to stop the fighting between Mahomedans [sic] and Christians, but they were not sufficient to restore order. There were many killed and wounded on both sides. The desperadoes occupied the Armenian Cloister on April 21, firing on the people without interruption. Although white flags have since been flown on the Armenian churches to show that no further resistance will be offered, shooting and plundering continue. The population of Hajin numbers 15.000. Many shops have been robbed, while others will probably share the same fate. The Armenian settlements and villages in the province have been burned, and many persons have been killed. There is almost no food in the town, and animals are dying of starvation. The provincial authorities have vainly appealed for more troops both in writing and orally. Miss Lambert adds that the messenger who was first given the foregoing telegram to take to the telegraph office was killed on the way.

Times. 29. IV. 1909.

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***The Massacres in Asia Minor
Relief Voted by the Chamber***

Constantinople, May 1.

In the Chamber today, a lively debate took place on the massacres at Adana. The late vali and the Assistant Minister of the Interior were violently attacked and stigmatized as creatures of the Hamidian *régime*. Finally, after an agitated sitting, a

resolution was adopted almost unanimously in favor of the formation of a Court-martial at Adana to try guilty parties of dispatching a Parliamentary commission of inquiry and sending immediately a sum of £T20.000 to relieve the distress at Adana.

The Chamber also unanimously adopted a proposal to pension the families of the killed and wounded in the recent fighting at Constantinople.

Times. 3. V. 1909.

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The Massacres in Asia Minor
Narrative by D[octo]r Chambers

Reuter's Agency has received a telegram from D[octo]r W.N. Chambers, the head missionary at Adana. It is dated Mersina, May 1, and says:—

“A terrible massacre began on Wednesday, the 14th, but was somewhat mitigated on the 16th in Adana, but continued in the out-district. The following week arrangements were begun for the relief of 15.000 destitute. Over 300 wounded were crowded into the emergency hospital. The massacre was furiously renewed on Sunday. On the 25th the soldiers and Bashi-Bozouks turned a terrible fusillade on the Armenian school harboring nearly 2.000 refugees. It was soon ablaze and the refugees escaping were shot at as they showed themselves. Many also perished in the flames. Then followed a devastating conflagration continuing unabated till Tuesday morning, destroying four churches and their schools and hundreds of houses in the most populous parts, leaving thousands of people homeless and penniless. Goods escaping the flames were stolen.

On Monday the British Consul, his arm in a sling, was active in including the Government to restore order and rescue the refugees from the burning district. The American mission house and school and the Jesuit Sister's school were in imminent danger from fire, but are so far safe. The Jesuit fathers' church and school were burnt. On Monday evening over 20.000 people took refuge in a couple of large factors. ... On Wednesday morning ... rations were issued, one-third of a pound of rice and a quarter of a pound of bread each to the crowds who had had nothing to eat for three days. The Government relief measures are absolutely inadequate, and the measures for protecting life and property are inefficient. Some troops are engaging in pillage. ... Over £ 250 sterling is needed daily to feed the people now starving”.

Times. 4. V. 1909.

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The Massacres at Adana

Larnaca, May 3.

The following telegram of yesterday's date has been received here from Adana:—

Turkish letters and telegrams have been censored. The city is still lawless; the estimate of the number of killed in Adana is now 6.500, more having been killed yesterday. In the entire province 30.000 have been killed and 35.000 are penniless, homeless refugees. Adana is being terrorized by 4.000 soldiers, who are looting,

shooting, and burning. No respect is being shown for the property of foreigners; both the French schools have been destroyed. Fears are felt regarding the American school, while commercial and missionary interests are totally ruined. Confidence in the authorities is still lacking, and further massacres of Christians are feared. The troops, instead of pouring water on the fires, feed the flames with kerosene. Fears are entertained regarding the American missions at Hadjin and Tarsus.

Times. 5. V. 1909.

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The Cilician Outbreak

(From our own correspondent)
Constantinople, May 17.

A Parliamentary Commission will shortly start for Adana, where the Court-martial has opened an inquiry. It is hoped that its presence and that of the Macedonian officers will guarantee the infliction of exemplary punishment on the reactionaries guilty of the massacre of Armenians and Greeks.

Details which have reached Constantinople show that the outbreak in Cilicia was marked above all others by the perpetration of infamous and hideous outrages upon women and children. It is therefore the more to be regretted that there are signs of a tendency in certain Turkish official circles to minimize both the extent and the horror of the massacres. The presence of Adana Deputies and officers of strong antireactionary tendencies should, however, prevent local influences from interfering with the course of justice.

Times. 18. V. 1909.

Վարուժան Ղողոսյան – 1909 թ. Կիլիկյան կոտորածների արձագանքները «Թայմս» թերթում

Սույն հրապարակումն ամփոփում է անգլիական հեղինակավոր «Թայմզ» լրագրում տպագրված՝ 1909 թ. Կիլիկիայում և հարակից տարածաշրջաններում տեղի ունեցած հայկական կոտորածների երկու փուլերն անկողմնակալորեն լուսաբանող հաղորդումները: Հարկ է նշել, որ թերթն ունեցել է իր թղթակիցներն Օսմանյան կայսրությունում, որոնց հաղորդումների արժանահավատությունը կասկած չի կարող հարուցել, առավել ևս որ դրանց մի մասն ընդգրկում է օտար ականատեսների վկայությունները: Սույն հրապարակումները կարևոր են այն առումով, որ 1909 թ. կիլիկյան կոտորածների պատմությանն անդրադարձած պատմաբաններն առ այսօր չեն օգտագործել անգլիական մամուլի նյութերը: