

HISTORY



✘ **The armenian genocide** ✘

✘ **The extermination (1/3)** ✘

[Excerpt from the article published in [Le Monde](#)]

Le Monde.fr

The 1915 genocide was preceded by another wave of massacres twenty years earlier. In 2006, you edited a speech given by Jean Jaurès in the Chamber of Deputies on December 3, 1896, when massacres were raging in the Ottoman Empire (We must save the Armenians, One Thousand and One Nights). The socialist leader stressed that the killings were accompanied by the desire to hide what was happening. How was it unique ?

Vincent Duclert

The desire to conceal the massacres in the 19th century, in particular those committed by the Turks against the Greeks in the war of independence

(1822-1830), is recurrent. But the new fact here is the organized character of this concealment. The power of Sultan Abdulhamid II (1876-1909) comes to pay the European press not to talk about these massacres. This is what Jaurès also denounces at the podium.

✖ **Memory and oblivion (2/3)** ✔

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How is the memory of the genocide structured in Turkey ?

Vincent Duclert

The main leaders fled to Germany in the fall of 1918 when the Ottoman Empire collapsed. A government resulting from the Liberal Entente is installed. Its members are determined to try those responsible for the genocide. Very strong statements are made, and trials are launched. But this phase of justice will be defeated after the gradual isolation of the liberals in the face of Mustapha Kemal's nationalist crusade.

Originally, the founder of the new Turkey had shown himself to be very severe towards those responsible for the defeat and the genocide, judging that a clear position on the subject could allow an honorable peace. Then its position evolves, because it needs cadres for its new power, and because the territorial claims of the Allies threaten national sovereignty. The conquest of Smyrna by the Greeks is a point of no return. Therefore, the objective of judging those responsible for the Unionist genocide is abandoned. Added to this are the reprisals committed by the Armenians against the Turks on the Russian front, the starting point for the thesis of certain Holocaust deniers of a genocide against the Turks perpetrated by the Armenians...

✖ **Turkish state denial (3/3)** ✔

[Excerpt from the article published in [Le Monde](#)]

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How is research on the Armenian genocide progressing, despite everything, in Turkey?

Vincent Duclert

There is a very high quality intellectual elite, who understood that there was a

duty both scientific and civic to seize the repressed, to consider the forbidden questions: the Armenian genocide, the nature of the Kemalist, presented in Turkey as the unsurpassable model while it is also akin to forms of dictatorship, the war against the Kurds, the situation of the "deep state", military power, religious networks...

They want to open these files, and are ready to take considerable risks: Taner Akçam was imprisoned, before having to go into exile; Hrant Dink, who also carried out very important work with his bilingual Armenian-Turkish magazine, was assassinated in 2007 in the context of a manhunt. Hrant Dink was targeted because his work tended to remind us how much Turkish society is actually mixed, complex, and that it is taking into account this - often tragic - weaving that would make it possible to make peace with the past and to prepare for the future. And then there are not only ethnic and religious problems, there is the place of gender, women, homosexuals...

For the Turkish government, the fact that academics decide to study these parts of the past constitutes a threat to the integrity of the nation, to the memory of Mustafa Kemal. They can no longer incriminate a conspiracy from abroad, even if they try by all means to discredit this research and to impose silence on researchers, including by resorting to imprisonment and arbitrary trials. It is certain that the passage of the law will make their work even more difficult by making them look even more like internal enemies.

✘ ***The Armenian calendar*** ✘