

Why the Ottomans Falsified the Numbers of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire?

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Here is the reason why the [Ottoman Empire](#) began to falsify the numbers of the Armenian population.

Until the middle of the 19th century, the data on the population of [Armenians](#) in the Ottoman Empire in the documents of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and official Sultan documents did not differ from each other, which means that that [information](#) was realistic.

Thus, according to the Ottoman Population Census of 1844, there were 2,400,000 Armenians in the [Ottoman Empire](#) (for comparison, there were 1,500,000 Kurds throughout the empire according to the same census, and the entire population of Western Armenia was 10,000,000).

In this case, the report meant only the Armenians-adherents of the Armenian Apostolic Church, that is, the Armenian Catholics, the Protestant Armenians, and the Hamshenis were not included in this number. Together with them, the number of Armenians would be around 3,000,000.

In the early 19th century, the same numbers were given by the Patriarchate of Constantinople. According to the data of 1870, there were 3,000,000 Armenian adherents of the Armenian Apostolic Church in the Ottoman Empire, and the Constantinople Patriarchate estimated the total number of Armenians (including Catholics, Protestants, etc.) to be around 3,600,000.

Armenians constituted the majority of the population in the wilayahs of Van, Erzurum, Bitlis, Diarbakir (Tigranakert), Sivas, Kharberd, Cilicia (Cilicia was divided into two administrative units, the Adana Wilayah and the Marash Sanjak in the Aleppo wilayah), as well as the [Kayseri](#) Sanjak in the wilayah of Ankara and several other sanjaks of the Trebizond wilayah.

In the second half of the 19th century, the question of Christians of the Ottoman Empire was raised in Europe. The European powers demanded the granting of self-government to the Greeks, Armenians, and Slavs in those wilayahs and sanjaks where they constituted the majority of the population.

Below, the map shows the boundaries of the supposed Armenian self-government (wilayah of Ermanistan), which was presented by the European delegation headed by Professor Mandelstam.

In Europe, a number of resolutions was adopted that obliged the Ottoman Empire to grant autonomy to the “Ottoman Armenia” represented within the borders of Mandelstam.

According to the official Ottoman census, the ethnic composition of that territory was as follows:

Armenians – 64.5%

Turks – 25.7%

Kurds – 5.8%

Zazaki – 1.8%

Assyrians – 1%

[Yezidi](#) – 0.7%

Greeks – 0.2%

Gypsies – 0.1%

It was at this moment when the government of the Ottoman Empire “made it clear” that in order to save the empire from European pressure, it is necessary (purely in the style of the Turks) to falsify the number of Armenians, which would allow them to answer the “European colleagues” in this way, “In none of the wilayahs, Armenians constitute a majority, which means that your demands for autonomy are unfounded.”

In 1880, the Ottoman Empire provided “new updated data” on the numbers of Armenians, which showed only 1,300,000 Armenians in Western Armenia, of which 700,000 lived on the shores of Marmara Sea and in Constantinople, and only 600,000 lived where Europeans wanted the autonomous Armenian province to be.

But the reason for the decrease of the number of Armenians from 3,000,000 to 1,300,000 (by 1,700,000!) in the empire from 1844 to 1880 was explained by neither the authorities of the past Ottoman Empire nor the officials of modern Turkey.

After all, in the above-mentioned period in the Ottoman Empire, there were no mass killings of Armenians, massacres, and ethnic cleansings of such scales. The first mass ethnic cleansings of the 19th century began in 1894-96, that is, 14-16 years later!

The reason was the adoption of European resolutions that obliged the Ottoman Empire to grant Armenia self-government, which not only resulted in the falsification of the numbers of the Armenian population since 1880 but also the implementation of the project “Turkey without Armenians and Greeks”.

After all, Armenians and Greeks were the indigenous peoples of Western Armenia, unlike the Turks, outsiders, who moved there from Central Asia several centuries ago.

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