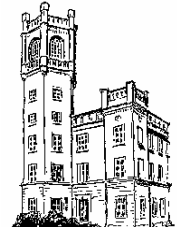




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The Armenian Genocide 1915

From a Neutral Small State's Perspective: Sweden

by Vahagn Avedian

Master Thesis Paper in History

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Abstract

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The aim of this study is to find out how the Armenian massacres in the Ottoman Turkey during World War I were perceived by a neutral small state, namely Sweden, what options did Sweden have to take, what the response was and why. The Swedish reaction should be of special interest since, Sweden, as a neutral state during the entire conflict, had no immediate involvement or interest in the ongoing conflict, thus, any subsequent reaction to the massacres would have been from a humanitarian perspective. The overall issue to be addressed is what a small neutral state such as Sweden was capable of doing when faced with a humanitarian crisis during wartime, how did they choose to react, and how can this reaction be explained. In order to answer this issue one must first chart 1) the amount of information in regard to the Armenian massacres and their nature available to the Swedish governmental and non-governmental actors 2) what kind of a response this information resulted in? 3) how can that reaction be explained and does it correlate with the response needed to cope with similar issues?

However, surveying the full amount of information needed for understanding and analysing the response to the massacres in order to exhaustively answer the central issue is beyond the scope of a master thesis paper and requires a larger study. Thus, this paper attends to the first part, namely charting the information at hand, while the analysis of the response, especially a neutral small state's during an ongoing global conflict will be left for future studies. Through studying published news articles, books, and brochures authored by Swedish and other missionaries and field workers and reports from the Swedish Diplomatic and Military missions in Ottoman Turkey, this paper has attempted to clarify the amount and the nature of the information about the WWI massacres in the Ottoman Empire. Essential for such study, besides the theory regarding humanitarian intervention, is the theory stipulating that the behaviour of small states, such as Sweden, differs from that of major powers in the international relations. While major powers rely on their financial resources and strength as forcible means, small states tend to advocate a foreign policy which is of brief duration, more local and inclined to support international cooperation organisations such as the League of Nations and the United Nations.

The surveyed information in this study shows that the amount of information about the Armenian massacres in Ottoman Turkey were replete. Although the studied material does not cover the full scope of the required data needed to complete the study, this paper will show that the Swedish Foreign Ministry and Government was fully aware of the ongoing annihilation of the Armenian Nation and the need of a humanitarian intervention.

Keywords: Armenian, genocide, massacres, 1915, Turkey, Ottoman, Sweden, international relations, foreign policy, small state policy, humanitarian intervention

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1 Introduction

“And look what it says here. The first who were called wogs [svartskallar] were Armenian beggars. They were thrown out from Sweden since it was forbidden to beg.”¹ The beggars in question were Armenian survivors from the massacres in Ottoman Turkey.

The genocide of 1915 is sometimes also referred to as the “forgotten genocide”. It claimed the lives of approximately 1.5 million Armenians, leaving an Armenia without Armenians, but also claimed the lives of several hundred thousand Assyrians, Chaldeans and Pontic Greeks.² In the present-day debate about Turkish membership in the EU and Turkey’s responsibility to acknowledge its past, some, especially politicians, who wish to evade the question of a recognition, refer to a lack of knowledge about the issue and the need of more research in the area. The research is essential, they argue, to substantiate what really happened during the years of the First World War when almost the entire Europe was either entangled in the armed conflict or tried its best to pursue a non-alignment policy. These are, however, ill-founded arguments. The Armenian genocide has, thus, become much more than just a historical issue. The phrase “a matter for historians, not parliaments,” is used frequently by those who wish to avoid the subject, but parliaments and governments do most certainly address the issue. On June 12, 2008, the Swedish Parliament rejected four motions calling upon Sweden to officially recognize the 1915 genocide. The argumentation for the rejection was partly based upon “disagreement among scholars” and “the need of further research.”³ The foremost user of the phrase, the Turkish Government, has introduced the infamous Paragraph 301 of the Turkish Penal code, according to which, among other things, the mentioning of the Armenian genocide is regarded as “insulting the Turkishness and the Turkish State”, thus punishable by law.⁴ On the other hand, the French and Swiss Parliaments have included the Armenian genocide in the same penal code which forbids denial of the Holocaust.⁵

Today, the Republic of Turkey dismisses almost every historic document presented by the Entente Powers of the First World War as war propaganda, serving the sole purpose of blackening Turkish reputation. Turkish documents on the subject, on the other hand, are accused to be Turkish Government’s falsification and a cover up.⁶ Having said that, it should be

¹ Bakhtiari, 2007, p. 9. In the Swedish text “wogs” translates to “svartskalle”, verbatim “black head”, referring to the dark color of the foreigners, which contrasts to the light brown hair-color of the native Swedes. Also see Hammar, 1964, p. 69-71.

² The number of the Armenian victims is a disputed issue, and while the 1.5 million is the generally accepted figure, the researchers rather talk about a span between 1.2 and 1.5. This will be discussed further down in the text. The impact on the non-Armenian Christian population in the Ottoman Empire could be compared with the Jewish genocide and the impact on the Romany and other victim groups during the Second World War.

³ Sveriges riksdag, UU9, 2008.

⁴ For the English text of the law see Haraszti, 2005, p. 10.

⁵ For the texts see Armenian National Institute, Affirmations, 2008.

⁶ One argument used by present-day Turkey to avoid recognition of the 1915 genocide is referring to the alleged difference between “Ottoman” and “Turkey”, asserting that Turkey did not exist before 1923, nor is the present state responsible for any actions committed by the Ottoman Government. However, when

mentioned that research on German and Austrian documents, allies of Turkey during the Great War, rather confirm the version of the Entente Power's than that of Turkey.⁷ A neutral nation's observation of the event, however, should be clear from any allegations from either side in the conflict. One such nation was the United States of America, which remained neutral in the conflict until April 1917. The reports and observations made by the US Embassy and American missionaries and relief workers throughout Turkey constitute an important part of the data about the Armenian massacres, since the Americans were the only major power (except Turkey's allies Germany and Austria) left within Turkey after the outbreak of the war. Their presence in Turkey, as well as their impartiality, ended when they, in April 1917, entered the war on the Entente's side. Sweden, on the other hand, remained neutral during the entire conflict and its reports and subsequent actions can not be ascribed to Swedish involvement in a specific war camp. Furthermore, the neutrality of Sweden would also suggest that any subsequent actions as a reaction to the received information about the ongoing massacres would have been of a humanitarian nature.

The Swedish-Turkish relations go back to the seventeenth century and the time of King Charles XII's sojourn in the Ottoman Empire. This venture ended with close ties between the two nations and boosted the trade and diplomatic exchange between Sweden and the Ottoman Empire. The close relations between the two nations is noticeable even in our days, where Sweden continues to harbour close economic ties with Turkey, has a considerable Turkish minority, and is one of the most ardent advocates of Turkish membership in the European Union.⁸ As late as in October 26, 2007, the Swedish Foreign Minister, Carl Bildt, refrained complying with the request in an interpellation regarding an official recognition of the Armenian genocide by the Swedish Government. His main argument was then, as during the debate on June 11, 2008, the need for further research on the subject.⁹ At the same time, Sweden has affirmed its international reputation as a peace-loving nation and champion of human rights during the past century. Swedish initiatives and involvement in the League of Nations, as well as its successor, the United Nations, have added to this notion. A small state in international scale, Sweden is often mentioned and regarded as the ideal model for a neutral state and a reliable arbitrator in conflicts. Therefore, it should be interesting to view the Armenian genocide from a neutral and small state's point of view, such as Sweden's.¹⁰

studying the period in question it becomes evident that this transformation from Ottoman to Turkey was already ongoing. Several foreign states, in their diplomatic letters, reports and documents, do use "Turkey" or "Ottoman Turkey" for designating the state. Thus, this paper will use Turkey when referring to the Ottoman Empire. For further discussion see Dadrian, 1999, p. 5-6.

⁷ For further information see Dadrian, 2002; Dadrian, 2004; Also see Dussen, 1999.

⁸ According to statistic figures, there are over 100,000 people of Turkish origin currently living in Sweden. See SCB, 2007. Swedish-Turkish trade exchange for Jan-Jun 2007 amounted to over 8,5 billion SEK. See Swedish Trade Council statistics, 2007. There are over 80 Swedish companies preset in Turkey, among others ABB, AstraZeneca, Electrolux, Ericsson, H&M, IKEA, KappAhl, SKF, SSAB, Tele2 and TeliaSonera.

⁹ Swedish Parliament, 2007/08:41.

¹⁰ For a correlative study of the Danish knowledge see Bjørnlund, 2006, p. 197-224.

1.1 Aim and Questions

This paper should be considered as a part of a larger and more comprehensive study regarding small states policy making in times of humanitarian crisis, what choices of reaction do such states have, and finally, how do they choose to respond and why. This study aims to provide the grounds for answering these issues by initially charting the amount of information which the Swedish Foreign Department and Government had in regard to the Armenian massacres and the response they resulted in. As discussed further ahead, the intelligence at hand is one of the key elements in forming a state's decision making. Thus, in order to be able to address the overall issue, it is essential to investigate the amount of knowledge that different governmental and non-governmental bodies possessed in regard to the situation in Turkey and Turkish Armenia during and immediately after WWI. Subsequently, the main question this paper will answer is:

- What amount of information in regard to the Armenian massacres in Turkey was available in Sweden and what did they contain?

The sources investigated in this paper are the Swedish Press coverage, Swedish missionary reports and publications, the Swedish military and diplomatic intelligence reports, and to some extent, the Swedish Foreign Ministry and Government discussions, debates, directives and decisions.

In order to complete the study and analyse the alternatives at hand for responding to a humanitarian crisis of this magnitude which the massacres and the deportations implied, three additional questions must be analysed, namely:

1. Based upon the information at hand, what kind of actions was Sweden capable of respective chose to do?
2. How can the subsequent reaction be explained in the context of small state foreign policy?
3. How do the small state policy and humanitarian crisis correlate?

However, these three questions will not be considered within the scope of this study and are subject to a larger study which has to address the argumentation of the government in regard to the received information as well as the prevailing circumstances, locally as well as globally, in order to describe how a small neutral state such as Sweden based its decision making in regard to the received information about the humanitarian catastrophe in Ottoman Turkey.

1.2 Limitations

As already indicated earlier, the full scope of such a study would be to find out how much the small neutral Sweden knew about the massacres, what alternative actions were there to take, what

alternatives did Sweden chose and why. However, in order to be able to conduct this study within the limitations of a master thesis, this paper will concentrate on the contents of the reports and the information which reached Sweden in regard to the Armenian massacres, while the three subsequent questions will be left to future studies.

The foreign ministry and military dispatches were those from Constantinople, reporting the intelligence gathered by Swedish representatives in the Ottoman Empire. The scope for the material was limited to the information from the Ottoman Empire, but the information field could be broadened further. Looking at the information dispatched by Swedish representatives in other capitals, especially Berlin and Vienna, but also those stationed in Paris, London, Moscow, and Washington D.C. could reveal additional insight regarding the amount and the nature of the Swedish knowledge in regard to the Armenian massacres.

Needless to say, the search included a much larger data and material than those files alone containing the bulk of the presented study. Most of the material here was, however, concentrated within the above mentioned categories. But, in order to eliminate the risk of missing any important information, the search was extended to all immediate file categories. Such an example was the study of the twelve volumes entitled *Inkomna skrifter från underrättelsebyrån* ("Received Letters from the Intelligence Bureau"). Nevertheless, it showed that in those cases where there was any relevant data, the information had already been included into the investigated categories. Having said that, the Foreign Department files are scattered over several different volumes and categories and an extended search could reveal additional documents.

Concerning the protocols of the Swedish Parliament, especially that of the Foreign Committee, very little was found mentioning the Armenian question. A possible explanation could be the fact that the Swedish Foreign Committee during the investigated period was a closed session and its discussions were kept secret even from the Parliament. Thus, there has not been as much information as one might have wished to find. Nevertheless, the collected information is regarded to be more than sufficient to plot Swedish knowledge on the matter, while more information is needed to fully comprehend the subsequent decision making in regard to the issue.

Another limitation in this study is the issue regarding the definition of the term *genocide* and its relation to the 1915 massacres. The conceptual discussion regarding the term of genocide could encompass volumes and is worthy of an entire study of its own. This paper presupposes that the reality of the Armenian genocide is already established and indisputable. Thus, this paper will not devote further research and discussion on whether the Armenian massacres in the Ottoman Turkey were an act of genocide or not.¹¹ Notwithstanding, it should be mentioned that the data and the information as well as observations and statements presented in this paper will illustrate the genocidal aspects of the massacres and the deportations in question, confirming the existing consensus among a majority of scholars on this subject.

¹¹ For such a study, see Rosenbaum, 1996 and Garner and Karlsson, 2005. Also see Avedian, 2007.

1.3 Previous Research

As already mentioned, this paper does not intend to review the question of genocidal nature of the Armenian massacres, but emanates from that the reality of the Armenian genocide is already established. Nevertheless, a short summary would be appropriate. A quick overview of the research done in regard to genocide in general and the Armenian case in particular reveals that the study of genocide is quite substantial and truly an interdisciplinary matter.¹² After the Holocaust, the Armenian genocide is today the most studied case of genocide.¹³ Regarding the academic view on the Armenian massacres, an overwhelming majority of the researchers regard the massacres as genocide. In fact, while the Holocaust is entitled “the paradigm of genocide,” the Armenian case is referred to as “the prototype of genocide.”¹⁴ The surveyed data in this paper will reconfirm this consensus, why no further comment is needed on the issue.

The research regarding the Armenian genocide and Swedish reactions is quite limited. The only known literature containing a review of Swedish knowledge about the Armenian massacres are the books *Längtan till Ararat* (“Longing for Ararat”) and *Svärdets år* (“The Year of the Sword”).¹⁵ The focus of the first book is, however, mainly the Armenian nation, its traditions and the Armenian community in Sweden. The book also touches briefly upon the issue of the Armenian genocide and the publications regarding the Armenian massacres which appeared in Swedish newspapers, missionary reports and in some later reports from the Swedish Embassy in Constantinople. Even though the book refers to known documents and publications on the subject, it lacks some fundamental aspects. First, there is no mentioning of any diplomatic reports or letters from the period prior to 1920, which could indicate that the Swedish Government had or had not been informed about the situation in Ottoman Turkey. Secondly, the book is descriptive rather than analytic in its review of the data at hand and does not contain any deeper study of the contents of the documents. Neither is there a proper source reference to the presented data. And finally, the discussion about the Armenian genocide and the Swedish subsequent reaction, or more correctly, lack of reaction, is not based on a scientific model or theory. Nevertheless, the book renders a sufficient description of the problem, some of the known information, and rough rendering of the Swedish argumentation and reaction. It is worth to mention that the author, Göran Gunner, is at the time of the writing of this paper working on a new book about the Swedish knowledge of the Armenian massacres, covering the period

¹² Here I content myself to name only the most renowned scholars in the subject, even though the list could be made much longer: **Historians** Yehuda Bauer, Yair Auron, Henry Huttenbach, Eric Weitz, Kurt Jonassohn, Yves Ternon, Richard Hovannisian and Ronald Suny; **Political Scientists** Robert Melson, Roger Smith and Colin Tatz; **Sociologists** Helen Fein, Vahakn N. Dadrian, Eric Markusen, and Israel Charny (also **psychologist**); **Lawyers** Raphael Lemkin, William Schabas, Alfred de Zayas, Roger W. Smith and Gregory Stanton.

¹³ Magnusson, 1999, p. 24.

¹⁴ Gerner and Karlsson, 2005, p. 117, 145. Also see Bauer, 2001, p. 58; Melson 1992, p. 252.

¹⁵ Gunner and Lindberg, 1985 and Bengtsson, 2004.

between 1894 and 1923. The book, however, has yet not been published. The second book, *Svärdets år*, is, on the other hand, entirely about the massacres of the Christians in the Ottoman Empire and covers the period between 1894 and 1922. Its rendering of the events is more detailed than that in *Längtan till Ararat*, and it does mention some of the diplomatic documents presented in this paper, even though in a much limited extent. But, like the former book, this too presents rather a descriptive than an analytic and scientific discussion of the issue. Nevertheless, there are some analytic discussions in regard to the presented information and possible interpretation of the Swedish reaction and its underlying causes.

As for the international relations and particularly in regard to the behaviour of the small states such as Sweden, the research is quite scarce. The bulk of the research regarding international relations and foreign policy has been done from the perspective of major powers; the smaller nations have not been considered in the existing theoretical models. However, Uppsala historian, John Rogers, has written an illuminative article on the subject in regard to Sweden's role in the so-called Mosul Crisis during 1924-1925.¹⁶ In his article, Rogers points out the relative scarcity of works on Swedish foreign policy during the inter-war period, even though it was, not least in regard to the "policy of neutrality", quite similar to that of the policy during the Cold War era.¹⁷ Using present-day theoretical models for international relations, Rogers has tested these on archive material concerning Swedish policy making during the period immediately after the First World War. In his case study about Sweden's role in the commission appointed by the League of Nations to arbitrate a solution between Turkey and Great Britain in their dispute over the oil-rich area of Mosul in Northern Iraq, Rogers concludes that the decisions taken by Sweden were quite understandable and in line with the presented theoretical premises.

The issue of humanitarian intervention is yet another relatively young field of science, but more importantly, it almost entirely encompasses the post WWII period and addresses the UN Charter and the modern humanitarian laws and recent military interventions in Rwanda, Yugoslavia, Iraq etc.¹⁸ Thus, the majority of the existing research in regard to humanitarian intervention bases its argumentation on the existing UN conventions and international laws and institutions such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and does not quite fit the constraints in affect at the time when the Armenian genocide was committed. Another limitation, common with the existing research on international relations, is that humanitarian intervention has mostly been studied from major power's perspective, thereby excluding the decision making and the behaviour of the small states.

Nevertheless, actual cases of humanitarian intervention are nothing new and did actually occurred as early as in the 19th century when European powers intervened in the Turkish maltreatment of the Balkan people. The rules of engagement and war date back to the 16th and

¹⁶ Rogers, 2007.

¹⁷ Rogers, 2007, p. 350.

¹⁸ For definitions of humanitarian intervention see Bagnoli, 2006, p. 117; Heidenrich, 2001, p. 131; Lawson, 2003, p. 92.

the 17th centuries and the Treaty of Westphalia which made the war an interstate affair rather than a personal feud between monarchs.¹⁹ Among others, King Gustavus II Adolphus of Sweden's Article's of "Military Laws" of 1621, was such a document, delineating one's conduct in armed conflict.²⁰ The 1907 Hague Convention IV (Martens clause) can be viewed as the first modern international law, aimed to extend additional protection to combatants and civilian population.²¹

But the changes in international relations and international laws and cooperation, especially since WWI and WWII, have redefined the constraints of such principles as the rights of states, their sovereignty, and the responsibility of the international community. The main debate concerning humanitarian intervention is the division of the field in two main camps: those who advocate for the philosophical aspects and the moral responsibility (but also international security aspects) of interfering in committed crimes against humanity and those who oppose this view and instead champion the realistic interpretation of the international law, the sovereignty of states and the doctrine of non-intervention. Thus, the debate on humanitarian intervention can also been seen as a debate on whether or not such an action poses a dangerous breach of an international order based on sovereignty and non-intervention.²² Nevertheless, there seems to be a clear shift in the international politics, where the protection of human rights is gaining more terrain at the expense of the issue of sovereignty.²³

But regardless to the main debate about the humanitarian intervention, the existing theory has two major shortcomings in regard to the issue of the present study: 1) humanitarian intervention is mostly based on armed and military operations, confined to a state which could or could not be experiencing an internal armed conflict (e.g. Rwanda, Yugoslavia, Darfur). But, what can be done when the humanitarian intervention is needed during an ongoing international or global armed conflict such as WWI? The perpetrator (Ottoman Turkey) is already at war with several of the nations which usually are capable to participate in a humanitarian intervention (in this case UK, France and Russia), while other major powers (Germany) are in alliance with the perpetrator, thus less inclined to criticise the ongoing crimes for the sake of the war efforts, while the neutral states try their best for not being entangled in the ongoing world war. 2) Military intervention implies the participation of either major powers or that of e.g. UN or NATO (thereby the participation of small nations) which did not exist at the time of the Armenian genocide. Thus, the existing research presents a challenge for this study to further illuminate how small states do behave when faced with a humanitarian crisis of such a magnitude as the annihilation of an entire nation and how can a humanitarian intervention look like and function.

¹⁹ Bantekas, 2002, p. 5. Also see Lawson, 2003, p. 92.

²⁰ Bantekas, 2002, p. 5.

²¹ Bantekas, 2002, p. 41.

²² Welsh, 2006, p. 176.

²³ Lawson, 2003, p. 92.

1.4 Theory and Hypothesis

1.4.1 *Humanitarian Intervention*

The concept of humanitarian intervention dates back to the 16th and 17th centuries and “Hugo Grotius who aspired to regulate international relations by introducing new political and moral standards, among others provisions concerning respect for sovereignty and contracted agreements.”²⁴ However, what Grotius talked about was the right – not the duty – of humanitarian intervention.²⁵ The change in the international relations and laws since the time of the “Grotian doctrine” has redrawn the landscape of international politics and responsibility, thereby implying, not only the right, but also the duty of the international community towards suppressed and violated individuals. The state considering to implement or to participate in such an action, must weigh in the risks involved and the danger its own citizens will be exposed to. Further, Grotius also provisioned for the possibility for suppressed subjects asking for foreign intervention as a refined form of “just war.”²⁶ It is here that the two major principles collide, namely the protection of human rights versus the state sovereignty. The Gordian knot to be solved is the prioritising between order and justice: “On one hand it can be argued that order is a prerequisite for justice... On the other hand it can be argued that justice is a precondition for order.”²⁷

The modern doctrine of the humanitarian intervention is usually traced back to the 19th century. Parallel with the emergence of the modern nation-states, there was a need for justifying use of force based on moral and political grounds, whereby In legal theory, a doctrine of intervention for humanity emerged, according to which states had the right to intervene by the use of force ‘in case in which a State maltreats its subjects in a manner which shocks the conscience of mankind.’”²⁸ Prior to 1945 and the establishment of the modern UN conventions, humanitarian intervention has been implemented in at least five occasions, all directed against Turkey for safeguarding the security of, among others Greeks, Christian Maronites in Lebanon, and other minorities in the Balkans.²⁹

The debate on the arguments for and against the justification of humanitarian intervention is a heated and quite topical even in our days.³⁰ Terms of deciding upon humanitarian intervention are numerous and include issues such as a just cause, the fact that only a legitimate authority can decide when the intervention is necessary, a necessity of military intervention as the absolute last resort, its proportions to the arisen crisis etc., all are factors which play an important role in its

²⁴ Danish Institute of International Affairs, 1999, p. 11.

²⁵ Holzgrefe, 2003, p. 26.

²⁶ Heidenrich, 2001, p. 135. Also see Tan, 2006, p. 89.

²⁷ Danish Institute of International Affairs, 1999, p. 15. Also see Weiss, 2007, p. 21.

²⁸ Danish Institute of International Affairs, 1999, p. 78. Also see Wiess, 2007, p. 33.

²⁹ Danish Institute of International Affairs, 1999, p. 79; Weiss, 2007, p. 32.

³⁰ Holzgrefe, 2003, p. 18-19; von Tigerstrom, 2007, p. 91.

initiation and implementation.³¹ It is the interpretation of these certain key principles which decides whether human security or state sovereignty prevail over the other and it is this debate which does not have an absolute nature but is quite relative and does not seem to have reached a quite mature state yet.³²

While the state sovereignty remains to be a cornerstone in the international legal and political order, there is a clear shift towards the protection of the human rights.³³ Sovereignty is, however not a *carte blanche*.³⁴ Many argue that, even though the sovereignty is highly important in international relations and laws, it should not be abused as a shield by states who commit crimes against humanity. “Tyranny and anarchy cause the moral collapse of sovereignty.”³⁵ Political philosopher Kok-Chor Tan contends that “The universality of human rights means that state borders provide no immunity from international moral action when the violations of rights within a country are severe enough.” He concludes “The idea that state have *absolute* sovereignty and that they may do whatever they want to their own citizens is rapidly becoming an outmoded one.”³⁶ The American legal academic Fernando Tesón argues that while the interference of the central government in a federative state for stopping atrocities committed against an domestic ethnic minority would be approved and praised by the citizens, the same action, once it must cross an international border, suddenly is not an humanitarian intervention, but an act o war.³⁷ Political scientist and law expert Barbara von Tigerstrom argues, however, that using the concept of human security for justifying humanitarian intervention is problematic, since the underlying framework is insufficient and misleading. In her opinion, since this action involves military intervention, it is subject to a distinct set of rules which are not necessarily affected by privileging human rights over state sovereignty.³⁸ Furthermore, the moral obligation does not necessary mean that there is a legal obligation for intervention.³⁹ Political philosopher Allen Buchanan emphasises this important observation by saying that “there exists an unacceptable gap between what international law allows and what morality requires.”⁴⁰ In addition, humanitarian intervention could also be interpreted as a paradox, since military actions would result in human violence and life, thus some would like to exclude the “humanitarian” label.⁴¹

Even though there are different views about what circumstances justify a humanitarian intervention, a majority agree that gross violation of human rights and loss of life (e.g. in case of

³¹ Franck, 2006, p. 148; Heindrich, 2001, p. 135; Lawson, 2003, p. 93. Also see Engdahl and Hellman, 2007, p. 55; von Tigerstrom, 2007, p. 108.

³² von Tigerstrom, 2007, p. 200.

³³ Danish Institute of International Affairs, 1999, p. 17.

³⁴ Weiss, 2007, p. 16.

³⁵ Tesón, 2003, p. 93 and 108. Also see von Tigerstrom, 2007, p. 98-99; Weiss, 2007, p. 16.

³⁶ Tan, 2006, p. 90.

³⁷ Tesón, 2003, p. 103.

³⁸ von Tigerstrom, 2007, p. 99.

³⁹ Bagnoli, 2006, p. 119.

⁴⁰ Buchanan, 2003, p. 131.

⁴¹ Tesón, 2003, p. 95; von Tigerstrom, 2007, p. 111; Weiss, 2007, p. 10.

genocide) constitute such one occasion.⁴² Gross human rights violations raise the question of “whether it is morally right for a state *not* to intervene when such violations occur”, thus posing the subsequent question of whether such an action is, beside a moral question, also the duty and the obligation of world community to intervene and when and how does this intervention become an obligation?⁴³ Gross human rights violations often occur within states that have undergone a radical change (e.g. a revolution) or are entangled in an armed conflict.⁴⁴ In this view, one could speak of “failed states” in which the structure and the norms for safeguarding the human rights of the citizens have been suspended or ignored. If the humanitarian intervention regards cases of “failed states”, then the argumentation of state sovereignty is redundant, since the state in question has obviously ceased to function or even to exist.⁴⁵ The rule of non-intervention helps maintaining international peace and security, and thereby indirectly individuals from the consequences of war. But, when a state fails to protect the safety and the human rights of its own individuals, the protection of the human rights and life becomes the base for international interference. That is why humanitarian intervention can also be interpreted, not as punishment of the perpetrator, but as protection of the victim.⁴⁶ Humanitarian intervention does not stop at safeguarding the human security, but “when a State will not or cannot provide for the security of its citizens, it loses the presumption of exclusive jurisdiction over criminal matters”.⁴⁷ The UN Convention on Prevention and Punishment of Genocide, and the creation of International Court of Justice are illustrative examples for this argumentation. That Ottoman Turkey constituted such a “failed state” is illustrated in the five occasions of humanitarian intervention the empire was subjected to during late 19th and early 20th century.

According the naturalist doctrine, humanitarian intervention is a common moral sense and the duty of human beings by virtue of their common humanity.⁴⁸ However, humanitarian intervention is far from moral issues alone and affects political and economical security as well. Thereby, some suggest that attempts to separate legal issues from moral are doomed to fail.⁴⁹ Humanitarian intervention can involve calculations of national interest as well as possible negative impacts on international security and economy.⁵⁰ This is why the realist school emphasises of the importance of persuading the decision makers that an intervention is in their national interest to act.⁵¹ And “although the international community has sufficient will to intervene in many conflicts, it rarely has sufficient will to devote the resources necessary to

⁴² von Tigerstrom, 2007, p. 95. Also see Khatchadourian, 2004, p. 45; Weiss, 2007, p. 6.

⁴³ Tan, 2006, p. 85.

⁴⁴ Compare with the discussion regarding the causes for genocide in modern era in Melson, 1992.

⁴⁵ von Tigerstrom, 2007, p. 96, 102-103. Also see Lu, 2006, p. 197; Weiss, 2007, p. 18.

⁴⁶ Tan, 2006, 92.

⁴⁷ May, 2007, p. 14.

⁴⁸ Holzgrefe, 2003, p. 25.

⁴⁹ Franck, 2006, p. 144; Holzgrefe, 2003, p. 49.

⁵⁰ Weiss, 2007, p. 6.

⁵¹ Weiss, 2007, p. 7.

intervene effectively.”⁵² This very observation will be readily illustrated in the empirical data about the discussion among the members of the League of Nations regarding the situation in Armenia.

When comparing human rights and moral issues versus sovereignty, it is contended that the former is an imperfect duty, while the states have the perfect duty of non-intervention.⁵³ The claimed shift in the favour of the human rights and the issue of an intervention for defending these rights being rather an obligation than a right is well illustrated in the following argumentation:

[I]n constructing a moral case for humanitarian intervention based on the defense of human rights, we are bound to recognise it as a duty rather than permission, and as a perfect duty rather than an imperfect one – a duty that proceeds from respect for humanity rather than from charity.⁵⁴

This shift in the international area also suggests a need for revising the concept of sovereignty. One alternative would be that “sovereignty as responsibility” reconceptualises its purpose to protect the state’s people, thus implying the international community’s responsibility to interfere when the state fails to fulfil its obligations.⁵⁵ For this reason, instead of basing the argumentation on moral issues alone, more real principles can be put in the equation, namely human security.⁵⁶

Humanitarian intervention is, however, seldom the single cause for going to war.⁵⁷ Military interventions have seldom been launched solemnly for preventing genocide, and often it only comes in second place, thus, the genocide can continue as the intervention operation goes on. Only after the accomplishment of the primary target, the issue of genocide is addressed.⁵⁸ That “governments are notoriously unreliable as rescuers” seems therefore as a valid assumption.⁵⁹ A review of the Armenian case suggests that humanitarian intervention only realises when it is backed up with political and/or economical interests.

Humanitarian intervention, as isolated and limited actions, does not offer a long-term solution, but can only temporarily halt an ongoing breach of human rights. Thus, some argue that the side effects of a military intervention are actually far worse and therefore non-military solutions and alternatives are to be preferred.⁶⁰ Therefore, even though intervention most commonly means military interference, non-violent actions such as economic sanctions or political measures may

⁵² Kuperman, 2001, p. 116. Also see Andreopoulos, 2002, p. 108-109.

⁵³ Holzgrefe, 2003, p. 27. Also see Bagnoli, 2006, p. 121; Tan, 2006, p. 94.

⁵⁴ Bagnoli, 2006, p. 135.

⁵⁵ von Tigerstrom, 2007, p. 200. Also see Tan, 2006, p. 91; Weiss, 2007, p. 17-19, 23.

⁵⁶ von Tigerstrom, 2007, p. 211. Also see Danish Institute of International Affairs, 1999, p. 56; Mehta, 2006, p. 282-283. For an illustration of this assertion on the specific case of the Armenian genocide see Avedian, 2006.

⁵⁷ Boyle, 2006, p. 46.

⁵⁸ Heidenrich, 2001, p. 164

⁵⁹ Mehta, 2006, p. 283.

⁶⁰ Seybolt, 2007, p. 277.

also be regarded as intervention.⁶¹ As already mentioned, humanitarian intervention, when applicable as discussed above, usually does not consider being implemented during times of international conflicts, let alone global conflicts such as WWI. Thereby, non-military actions seem to be even more congenial alternatives when a humanitarian intervention during an ongoing global war. One should also bear in mind that intervention is no substitute for prevention.⁶² Once genocidal measures have been initiated, an intervention can, at best, only confine the damage. The following are some applicable tools for attempting to halt or, at least, reduce an ongoing genocide:

- a) Quiet diplomacy is often insufficient. Genocide hardly leaves a window of time for diplomatic solutions based on negotiations. And even if the perpetrator agrees upon participating in negotiations, what guaranties are there that the genocidal acts halt during the talks?⁶³ A genocidal regime is unlikely inclined to halt its actions due to quiet diplomacy.
- b) Friendly warning delivered by a powerful ally could affect the genocidal regime to cease its actions. In the Turkish case, Germany could have played this role. However, a friendly ally during an ongoing war is keener of the war efforts and more likely to be willing to overlook the atrocities committed by its ally for the sake of the war.
- c) An unfriendly warning from a state whose relationship is valued could be considered as a more serious threat. An ultimatum from neutral states, whose relations are valued by the genocidal regime might be of some effect for at least curtailing the genocidal actions.
- d) Support to the opposition might be possible during peacetime, but similar actions during an ongoing global war will be considered as an act of treason, thus further justifying the genocidal actions.
- e) Breaking diplomatic relations could be regarded as a step short of declaring war. If the severed relations concern the ties with an important state (or group of states) it could persuade the genocidal regime to halt its atrocities. But, breaking the diplomatic relations could worsen the genocidal act even more since, now when the foreign embassy and their presence is gone altogether, the genocidal regime will have free hands to complete its plans.
- f) Publishing the horrors in order to encourage a popular outcry against the genocide could be an effective measure since it not only puts pressure on the genocidal regime, but also entices the domestic opinion to force its government to take action. It worth mentioning that, in case of genocide, the domestic media where the atrocities are implemented are used as means for agitating hate campaigns against the victim group and winning the

⁶¹ Danish Institute of International Affairs, 1999, p. 46; Weiss, 2007, p. 21.

⁶² Kuperman, 2001, p. 109.

⁶³ Heidenrich, 2001, p. 93.

sympathy of the nation for approving the regime's actions. Furthermore, early warnings do not always trigger the wanted effect, since the world community often considers the act of genocide so immoral that it is difficult to comprehend and imagine.

- g) Economic pressure where the trade is during peacetime perhaps the most important relationship between nations. However, sometimes the state exerting the embargo might suffer huge economical losses in imposing sanctions against a genocidal regime, why the Realpolitik dictates refraining from such actions. Often they only make the genocide less convenient to continue, but do not stop them. Additionally, diplomatic and economical sanctions, if not followed through, might actually worsen the situation by provoking even graver reaction from the perpetrator.⁶⁴

In order to understand the constraints of a possible humanitarian intervention and being able to relate to its debate, one must also understand the dynamics of international relations and foreign policy making.

1.4.2 International Relations and the Foreign Policy of Small States

The scientific study of international politics in general and of small states in particular deals with the period after the Second World War. While the initial studies focused on the role of major powers, the theoretical development in the field of international relations and politics has broadened its perspective, thus including the role of small states in the international dynamics.⁶⁵ Taking into account that the decision-making of a small state and its options for actions differ from those of a larger, more powerful state, one needs to first establish some patterns and models for the former.

The state is defined as a moral community (internally) and the same rule applies to the international arena, where states form an international moral community, governed by international laws of conduct among “civilised” nations.⁶⁶

The international politics are the result of the deliberate choices made by the actors. The actors are often faced with several different alternatives and they have to weigh in the consequences, the probability for each consequence and the pros and cons of each alternative. It is the sum of the probability and the benefit of each alternative that forms the decision calculations. Therefore, interpreting international politics is a reconstruction of the decision making of the actors.⁶⁷ Humanitarian intervention is a well-known concept which all states and organisations claim to support. But, a study of the history in general and the Armenian genocide in particular clearly, as asserted earlier in this paper in regard to the humanitarian intervention,

⁶⁴ Heidenrich, 2001, p. 94-103. Also see Kuperman, 2001, p. 79, 110-111. For the eight stages of genocide see Stanton, 1996.

⁶⁵ Rogers, 2007, p. 351-2.

⁶⁶ Mansbach and Wilmer, 2001, p. 51-52 and 69-70.

⁶⁷ Goldmann, 1978, p. 25

shows that no state or organisation was willing to intervene in an ongoing foreign conflict in the name of humanity, unless there were underlying economical and political gains.⁶⁸ Marjorie Housepian Dobkin writes: “Those who underestimate the power of commerce in the history of the Middle East cannot have studied the post-war situation in Turkey between 1918 and 1923.”⁶⁹

The traditional theory of political relations had its shortcomings, since it did not pay much attention to such factors as economical conditions and interests and assumed that only states and governments were international actors.⁷⁰ Economic actors such as companies, international inter-governmental organization (IGO) and international non-governmental organization (INGO) have increasingly become much more important actors in the international political arena than military resources and security issues.⁷¹ Alert leaders can see the beneficial opportunities presented by crisis situations, whereby the policy making is affected accordingly. Prevailing goals, policies, and commitments are then subject to revision and adjustment to the presented opportunities.⁷² Thus, even though humanitarian intervention has often been justified on basis of morality, balance of power, or the newer concept of the defence of human rights, it is hardly the entire truth. Political scientist Stephen Gill argues that similar decisions are increasingly shifting over to the market and its interests.⁷³ This was certainly the case in regard to the decaying Ottoman Empire, the situation of the oppressed minorities and the intervention of Major Powers, sometimes using the defence of the rights of these minorities as a cover up for their own strategic agenda. On several occasions these strategic agendas meant the abandonment of the minorities at the height of the ongoing conflict, among others that of the Armenian question discussed in this paper.

Sanctions or threat of sanctions play an important role in the anarchy model.⁷⁴ Sanctions are tools “to affect a policy change by the target.”⁷⁵ This suggests that a direct intervention would in most cases be unnecessary if the perpetrator is simply faced with the threat of sanctions from the world community. They are also seen as tools for resolving conflicts.⁷⁶ Furthermore, it is argued that “targets are more likely to concede and to make greater concessions when faced with the prospect or reality of sanctions from friendly quarters.”⁷⁷ Peter Wallensteen’s study of ten cases of economic sanctions between 1930s and 1960s shows that there are not any correlations between the rank of the nation imposing the sanctions (major versus small states), and the result of the sanctions. Furthermore, the sanctions hardly have any negative effect on the imposer

⁶⁸ Avedian, 2006.

⁶⁹ Simpson, 1995, p. 35.

⁷⁰ Goldmann, 1978, p. 112.

⁷¹ Goldmann, 1978, p. 166.

⁷² Oneal, 1982, p. 41-42.

⁷³ Lipschutz, 2001, p. 86. Also see Shaw, 1994, p. 182.

⁷⁴ Goldmann, 1978, p. 43, 49-53.

⁷⁵ Chan and Drury, 2000, p. 2, 8.

⁷⁶ Wallensteen, 1971, p. 60.

⁷⁷ Chan and Drury, 2000, p. 12.

nation's economy. Nevertheless, it is often major powers that impose these sanctions.⁷⁸ The economic sanctions, however, do not seem to have any substantial negative effects on the imposed state's trade, or its political system. But, the state under sanction will regard the action as aimed at its fundamental values.⁷⁹ However, it is also argued that sanctions might impose more suffering on ordinary people, while the regime remains unaffected.⁸⁰

John Rawls argues that the rules for maintaining the theory of justice on domestic level do not extend to that among nation-states. Instead, he argues, that a new set of rules, set between the representatives of "peoples", is needed to safeguard the principles of justice on an international level.⁸¹ The League of Nations, its successor, the United Nations and the European Union are example of such forums. Small states, such as the Scandinavian states, soon realised that a proper solution to their lack of power in the international arena was to act through a larger international organisation, e.g. the League of Nations, which championed the international laws and orders.⁸² This idealistic internationalism was, however, replaced by realism as the League of Nations proved to be unable to cope with aggression.⁸³

Morgenthau and Thompson assert that the shift towards the democratic elected governments, answering to the general public, which replaced those consisting of aristocrats, often answering to one single monarch, also moved to destroy the international morality. According to Morgenthau and Thompson, the rules of morality require the involvement of the individual conscience, persons who can be held responsible for their actions. But when the power of government is distributed among a large group of individuals with a wide range of perceptions (or no perception at all) about wrong and right in international relations, the focus will instead be concentrated on national interests. The American legal scholar and educator Dean Roscoe Pound confirmed this in 1923 by saying: "It might be maintained plausibly, that a moral...order among states, was nearer attainment in the middle of the eighteenth century than it is today."⁸⁴ Andrew Hurrell concurs to this view:

John Row's famous claim that 'Justice is the first virtue of social institutions' has, when applied to international relations, faced the perennial realist rejoinder that international life has never had very much to do with the pursuit of virtue or justice. As Gilpin puts it, 'Anarchy is the rule, order, justice, and morality are the exceptions.'⁸⁵

⁷⁸ Wallensteen, 1971, p. 74, 77-79, 87-88. Also see Ellings, 1985, p. 41.

⁷⁹ Wallensteen, 1971, p. 125.

⁸⁰ Danish Institute of International Affairs, 1999, p. 33.

⁸¹ Nicoladis and Lacroix, 2003, p. 128-129.

⁸² William and Groom, 1991, p. 57.

⁸³ William and Groom, 1991, p. 79.

⁸⁴ Morgenthau and Thompson, 1985, p. 264-266.

⁸⁵ Hurrell, 2003, p. 24.

Furthermore, Morgenthau and Thompson claim that the independence of small states have been sustained due to either the balance of power, the protection of a larger power or simply due to their unattractiveness for imperialistic schemes.⁸⁶

Institutions such as neutrality do not only constrain the boundaries of how states can behave, but also empower them to “expand their authority and control over even such powerful actors as the mercantile companies.”⁸⁷ In regard to the question of humanitarian intervention Tan argues that:

In asking whether there is a duty to protect, we are in effect asking whether a state in fact has the sovereign right to remain neutral in the face of a humanitarian crisis, even if military engagement is a necessary means of combating the crisis...if serious human rights violations can overrule a state's sovereignty and its right to non-intervention, it can, it seems, also overrule a state's sovereign right to remain neutral.⁸⁸

The above presented theory, as mentioned earlier, is modelled mainly in accordance to major powers and the constraints applying to them. Small states, however, deviate in their behaviour due to the fact that they have to adopt their foreign policy making in accordance to a set of rules which differ from those for larger and stronger states. To model a new basis for the foreign policy making of the small states, Rogers uses, among others, the research done by Bo Huldt, in which the result is summarised in seven categories:

1. Small states tend to behave in an anti-balance manner, often siding with the side which is seen as the stronger or the winning side.
2. Their foreign policy is often short-termed and local in contrast to the global and long-term policy of the major powers.
3. Small states adopt a legalistic-moralistic attitude towards international affairs, since they cannot afford to behave immorally.
4. International organisations (e.g. League of Nations) are very important to small states.
5. Small states are often viewed as good mediators and arbitrators in international conflicts.
6. Their foreign policy is often related to security issues.
7. Small states are more vulnerable and have fewer alternatives than major powers.⁸⁹

Rogers emphasises that the above mentioned results are merely a starting point and lack general validity. He points out that the behaviour of small states in specific cases is dependant on the prevailing circumstances and constraints rather than the above mentioned grounds. For instance, Rogers mentions that the first four points depend directly on whether the nation in question feels

⁸⁶ Morgenthau and Thompson, 1985, p. 196.

⁸⁷ Mansbach and Wilmer, 2001, p. 60.

⁸⁸ Tan, 2006, p. 91-94.

⁸⁹ Rogers, 2007, p. 353-4.

externally threatened or not.⁹⁰ This in mind, Rogers then presents his model, asserting that “a small state can base its foreign policy on one of the four strategic options; realism, isolationism, idealism or expansionism.”⁹¹ The realistic path would suggest an anti-balance policy, while the isolationism would mean a withdrawal from active participation and following the development passively. A policy based on idealism would instead indicate a striving for fulfilment of specific goals by using international laws to provide protection. And finally, expansionism would serve as means to increase the nation’s role and influence in the international arena in order to fulfil its own goals.⁹² Furthermore, Rogers writes that particular ideological, political and economical goals might influence the decision making of the foreign policy.⁹³ The economic circumstances as well as “domestic actors such as companies and corporations, trade organisations and unions are fully capable of influencing foreign-policy decisions.”⁹⁴ The amount of information at hand is a factor that clearly plays a decisive role in shaping the policy and the response of a state. “Reports from embassies and consulates, intelligence gathering, newspapers and many other formal and informal sources provide the basis for making foreign-policy decisions.”⁹⁵ The empirical research presented in this paper will use the very same sources to investigate how much different institutions and authorities knew about the Armenian massacres to base their subsequent actions on and what strategic options Sweden chose in different phases of the event.

In the early 20th century, neutrality in Sweden had become synonymous with peace-policy and Swedes were, falsely, under the impression that their country’s long period of peace since 1814 was a period of strict neutrality.⁹⁶ Before 1933, Swedish foreign policy was a consequence of the succeeding minority governments, which did not allow the foreign policy to follow any exclusive partisan lines. The foreign policy, as well as the domestic, was a result of compromising over party barriers.⁹⁷ Sweden’s entry into League of Nations in the spring of 1920 marked a formal break in the well established Swedish foreign policy tradition of neutrality.⁹⁸

Swedish foreign policy was until the 1920s a matter for the King and the Government, without any involvement of the Parliament.⁹⁹ The period of the last years of the First World War and the immediate post-war years mark the transition of power from Government to Parliament, the *Riksdag*. A government bill proposed the following alteration in the Swedish constitution in regard to foreign policy: “...a country, which alike our own in regard to the foreign policy does not have any other purpose than upholding her independence and neutrality, thus, in a way which

⁹⁰ Rogers, 2007, p. 354.

⁹¹ Rogers, 2007, p. 355.

⁹² Rogers, 2007, p. 355.

⁹³ Rogers, 2007, p. 356.

⁹⁴ Rogers, 2007, p. 357.

⁹⁵ Rogers, 2007, p. 358.

⁹⁶ Norman, 1988, p. 236.

⁹⁷ Norman, 1988, p. 237.

⁹⁸ Norman, 1987, p. 432.

⁹⁹ Carlgren, 1967, p. 86.

have been the case for almost a century, will strictly refrain from conflicts which could rise between other people.”¹⁰⁰

The foreign policy, however, remained mainly under control of the Government and a small group of persons, consisting of the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, the leading officials of the Foreign Ministry, the foreign services and the members of the *Utrikesnämnden* (Foreign Committee). The proceedings of the committee were strictly secret and presided over by the King. The conflicts regarding the foreign policy issues were to be kept secret from the public as well as from the Parliament. The Foreign Minister was able to follow his own agenda even if this meant overriding the majority consensus in the Government. Yet, the decision makings of the Foreign Minister had to adapt to the economic goals of the Government.¹⁰¹ Lönneroth claims that since the party politics seldom disagreed on foreign policy, the newspapers afforded to represent individual views, revealing how certain persons took stance in specific issues.¹⁰² This is seen later in the paper when politicians and public figures are cited in newspapers commenting the Swedish Foreign Policy in regard to the Armenian question.

Sweden strived to avoid entanglement in either side and was ready to act as contact and mediator between the two blocs.¹⁰³ The country generally followed the decision of other states, while coordinating its foreign policy with the other Scandinavian countries.¹⁰⁴ It is worth mentioning that during the same period, the European Major Powers seemed to have concentrated their political and economical expansion towards Balkan and Turkey.¹⁰⁵

During the First World War, Sweden was obliged to continue its policy of neutrality, even though it is regarded to have been de facto Germanophile.¹⁰⁶ Sweden was committed to a friendly neutrality towards Germany, while maintaining a strict neutrality towards the remaining warring parties.¹⁰⁷ This observation manifested itself when in August 8, 1916, the representatives of France, Great Britain, Russia and Italy accused the Swedish Government of being “neutral with reservations.” Sweden, yielding to German pressure, had mined Kogrundsgränsen, situated at the southern entrance of Öresund, southwest of Skanör. This action blocked the only route the Entente Powers could use for passage through the strait.¹⁰⁸ It is safe to contend that this kind of neutrality restrained Swedish possible reactions towards Germany’s ally, Turkey and the subsequent silence and the critic of it will also be demonstrated in the study.

Just after the peace settlement, when the pressure of the war ceased to be a threat, the policy of strict neutrality was loosened up in pursuit of integration into the new emerging international

¹⁰⁰ Carlgren, 1967, p. 94.

¹⁰¹ Lönneroth, 1959, p. 9, 15, 21-22, 26; Norman, 1988, p. 239.

¹⁰² Lönneroth, 1959, p. 26.

¹⁰³ Carlgren, 1967, p. 77-78.

¹⁰⁴ Carlback-Isotalo, 1988, p. 229.

¹⁰⁵ Carlgren, 1967, p. 87.

¹⁰⁶ Carlback-Isotalo, 1988, p. 218; Carlgren, 1967, p. 78; Hansson, 1991, p. 7. Tingsten, 1949, p. 11-12.

¹⁰⁷ Ahlin, 1993, p. 46; Carlgren, 1967, p. 101.

¹⁰⁸ Hansson, 1991, p. 21.

communities, such the League of Nations. But this step could also be interpreted as a step towards expansionist policies, such as Sweden's claims to the island of Åland. Sweden, in Hjalmar Branting's words, had to:

Embrace a foreign policy other than the old neutrality... The old policy which enabled neutrality during the war no longer holds. New conditions have arisen since then. Nations are banding together and forming a new basis for the preservation of peace.¹⁰⁹

Could this "expansionist" policy have influenced decision-makings in other cases than that regarding Åland, e.g. a possible mandate power over Armenia? We will come back to this later.

Another important new factor in the Swedish foreign policy was the economic interests. The industrialisation of Sweden at the turn of the century meant extensive structural changes in the country's economy, making economy a top priority in the Swedish foreign policy. The Foreign Department had to adapt its activities to promote Sweden's economic interests abroad.¹¹⁰ By January, 1917, the economic problem had become the most important political issue in Sweden and a key factor in directing the country's foreign policy.¹¹¹ Thus, the question of how the Swedish economic interests in the region did affect its foreign policy toward Armenia respective Turkey is yet another aspect of this study.

It is with the theories and models mentioned above that this paper will try to answer the second main question of this study, namely the one concerning Sweden's actions and behaviour: How much did the Swedish Government know about the Armenian massacres, what choices did it have and how did it decide to act? Does the investigated data and information at hand suggest that Sweden acted as a small neutral state, more inclined to act morally and through international organisations or did it act as any other major power, pursuing expansionist policy and following its economic interests deviating from the prevailing general consensus in the matter?

1.5 Methodology and Sources

This research is based upon information and statements on the massacres in Turkey, made by Swedish missionaries, media, foreign and military personnel in Turkey, and members of the Government. The Armenian massacres (and the Swedish awareness of them) goes back to the massacres during 1894-1896 and continues well into the 1930s. But, in this paper we will content ourselves with the information from 1915 to 1923. The chosen period marks the culmination of the Armenian genocide in 1915 until the de facto closure of the Armenian question (at least for the time being on the international level) by the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 and the inclusion of the independent Armenian Republic into the Soviet Union. Another limitation will be the total extent of the 1915 genocide, affecting far more Christian minorities in Turkey

¹⁰⁹ Norman, 1988, p. 235-236.

¹¹⁰ Carlback-Isotalo, 1988, p. 218.

¹¹¹ Koblik, 1969, p. 29.

than the Armenians alone. That this paper does, in essence, only mention the Armenian losses, is not due to exclusion of other affected groups such as Syriacs, Chaldeans or Pontic Greeks, but merely due to the fact that the investigated documents mainly contain information and references concerning the fate of the Armenian nation. Where other minorities are mentioned they have been included in the study.

In order to build an opinion about Swedish knowledge and argumentation in regard to the Armenian question, the study of archive material was conducted in search of any relevant information, regardless of their position in the matter, thus also including information denying the Armenian massacres or any state orchestrated annihilation policy.

1.5.1 Swedish Press

During the First World War, Swedish press, as those in other countries, dedicated much space to the war efforts. Among others, a special bureau was created to provide the Swedish countryside papers with articles from German press. "About 50 papers were among the receivers, mostly conservative organs, but also a number of liberal papers."¹¹² The fact that so large number of newspapers were under German influence should have affected the reporting of events in the allied Turkey. This could explain why the news of the massacres in Armenia was a relatively small event in the reports from the fronts. The resources of the Swedish newspapers were not adequate for them to send out foreign correspondents of their own. This meant that much of the news concerning foreign affairs was acquired from foreign news agencies, often colouring the perspective reports. However, up to Hitler's seizure of power in Germany, the Swedish leading publications regarding foreign policy aimed less at influencing public opinion and more at debating and providing orientation in the predominant international affairs.¹¹³

With the eruption of the war, the Swedish press was subjected to external influence of public opinion. In order to further influence Swedish opinion, Germany secretly purchased the majority of the shares in the newspapers *Aftonbladet* and *Dagen*. Having a total of 92,000 in edition, this meant that the newspapers equalled the edition of the Entente-friendly *Dagens Nyheter* and *Social-Demokraten*.¹¹⁴ The transaction was made possible by placing a credit at the Wallenberg-owned, *Enskilda Banken*, whose Chairman and the newly appointed Foreign Minister, was Knut Agathon Wallenberg.¹¹⁵ The Speaker of the First Chamber, Afzelius, criticised the Germanophile attitude in Sweden, by complaining that "one can not open a so-called well-disposed newspaper which is not more German than Swedish."¹¹⁶ Another measure in regard to the war was that "An important part of the Swedish total defence became the 'neutralisation' of the Swedish

¹¹² Lundström, Rydén, and Sandlund, 2001, p. 124.

¹¹³ Lönneroth, 1959, p. 27.

¹¹⁴ Hansson, 1991, p. 20.

¹¹⁵ Lundström, Rydén, and Sandlund, 2001, p. 124.

¹¹⁶ Carlgén, 1967, p. 111.

opinion.”¹¹⁷ Already in July 31, 1914, the Foreign Department appealed to the Publicist Club for their full neutrality towards the warring parties and avoiding “for them insulting judgements.” Even the representatives of trade and industry approached the press, cautioning them that improper conduct could jeopardise the trade relations with the offended nation for years to come, thereby damaging Sweden’s economic life.¹¹⁸ But despite the obvious cautiously German amiability and overall neutrality, the Swedish newspapers did mention the Armenian massacres, both in articles from foreign news agencies, and in debate articles written by domestic politicians and other persons. This approach will also be traced in the behaviour of the future Swedish Ambassador to Turkey influencing Sweden’s policy making.

The Germanophile attitude had an obvious impact – that of cautiousness in criticising Germany and German allies, e.g. Turkey. The Ottoman Government joined the German-Austrian side in the fall of 1914. Therefore, as long as Turkey was fighting the Entente, all Turkish actions were by Germany de facto regarded as justified and thus not criticised – neither in Germany nor in German friendly countries. As it will be shown, Sweden, belonging to the latter group, adhered to this policy.

The telegrams, bulletins, feature articles, editorials and news articles were collected from respective newspaper, archived through the microfilm depository at Carolina University Library in Uppsala. For this purpose some of the major newspapers of the time were studied during the period of 1915-1923. Using the diversity of the material studied in *Längtan till Ararat*, the newspapers included in the material were *Social-Demokraten* (SD), *Dagens Nyheter* (DN), *Svenska Morgonbladet* (SvM), *Svenska Dagbladet* (SvD), and *Nya Dagligt Allehanda* (NDA). The choice of these newspapers was done due to the fact that they were some of the major organs for the different camps engaged in the war. SD and DN were overall Entente-friendly, while the two latter were regarded as conservative and German-friendly, while SM was a Liberal Free Church newspaper. NDA’s German affiliation would bloom into full sympathy for National-Socialism during the 1930s.¹¹⁹ The spread of the ideology and affiliation with different camps in the war are adequately represented by these newspapers for rendering a representative view of the coverage of the Armenian massacres.

For finding relevant information during the investigated period, the mentioned papers were searched for articles mentioning the Armenian massacres and, later, the question of the Armenian Republic. These could both be articles confirming the news about massacres or denying their existence. Both kinds of articles have been taken into consideration for rendering the whole picture presented to the Swedish readers and to see how and if the papers initiated any attempts at influencing public opinion building about Swedish Governmental intervention or civil organised humanitarian assistance for the Armenian victims.

¹¹⁷ Lundström, Rydén, and Sandlund, 2001, p. 124.

¹¹⁸ Lundström, Rydén, and Sandlund, 2001, p. 125.

¹¹⁹ Lundström, Rydén, and Sandlund, 2001, p. 258; Sturve, Sunnerstam, and Sönnnergren, 1985, p. 215.

1.5.2 *Swedish Christian Mission and other Field Mission Reports*

While the information published by the newspapers were “second-hand intelligence”, acquired from foreign news agencies, there are more reliable information, documented by individuals present in Turkey. These documents were the reports and dispatches by Swedish missionaries in Turkey and Caucasus, the Swedish Ambassador in Constantinople, and the Swedish Military Attaché in Constantinople. These documents are mainly found in the National Archives, but some are published as memoirs as well.

The material belonging to the Swedish missionaries have been collected from several sources: pamphlets, brochures, and books published during the period of 1915-1923, but also memoirs published later, which contain the witness accounts and stories of the author, pertaining to the studied period; letters and reports from the missionaries in the field which have been sent to the Swedish Church, reporting about the status of the missions but also depicting the situation in their parish, were found in the Missionary Archive, administered partly by the Church of Sweden and partly by the Swedish National Archives.

The reports and the warnings issued by the Swedish missionaries in Turkey and Caucasus date back to the end of 19th century and the massacres in 1894-96.¹²⁰ Searching through the missionary correspondence for the period 1914-1917 did not, however, reveal any special information. An examination of the letters showed that the volume, especially from Turkey, decreased dramatically, with the engagement in the Great War. Stationed since 1910 in Moush, Turkish Armenia, Alma Johansson wrote about 2-3 letters a month to Sweden. But, during the entire period of 1914-1917 there were only four letters from her in the archives.¹²¹ The archivist at *Svenska Missionskyrkan* (the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden), Katarina Thurell, explained that lack of information from missionaries all over Europe during the First World War was a common phenomenon. The reasons were many: the war forced many to leave their field missions, and at the same time resulted in communication difficulties. Another reason for scarce information was the war time censorship and control of the information flow, resulting in letters from missionaries having to pass through military channels. This censorship resulted in letters arriving several months, sometimes even longer, after they had been written. Some might never have reached their destination. It is true that German and Austrian missionaries remained in the area until the end, but (as it will be shown later) the censorship of the German and Austrian governments, in regard to the ongoing war effort in general and the reputation of the Turkish ally in particular, strictly prohibited any publication of the information and observations the missionaries relayed back home.

Two larger publications in form of booklets were *Blod och tårar: Armeniernas lidanden i Turkiet* (Blood and Tears: The Sufferings of Armenians in Turkey) and *Vad en tysk lektor i asiatiska Turkiet*

¹²⁰ Anholm, 1906; Larson, 1897; Pehrsson, 1896.

¹²¹ RA, Swedish missionary letters regarding Armenia. For Alma Johansson's description of the Armenian Genocide see Johansson, 1930.

upplevde i 1915 (“What a German senior lecturer in Asian Turkey Experienced during 1915”). The first is a collection of testimonies, letters, and articles from different medical personnel, missionaries, soldiers and Armenian survivors in regard to the massacres in the Ottoman Empire, and not all the sources are first hand information. The second is the experiences of Dr. Martin Niepage, Higher Grade Teacher in the German Technical School at Aleppo. This study has concentrated mainly on the information which is regarded to be of a more reliable nature, excluding most of the information attained by hearsay. Their content gives an interesting insight into the events, both as first hand testimonies as well as analysis of how the massacres were understood. In addition there are some other non-Swedish witness accounts, translated and published in Sweden, which are included in this study.

The Swedish missionary reports, letters and pamphlets were yet another mean to affect the public opinion, mainly to initiate and persuade the civilian Swedes to contribute to humanitarian aids and collections for the benefit of the victims and survivors of the Armenian massacres. But, they could also indicate the knowledge of the Swedish Church and its choice of action in regard to the massacres as well as actions taken by the missionaries in Ottoman Armenia. The role played by the missionaries will also be used to see whether they should be seen as bystanders or not.

1.5.3 The Swedish Military

Moving further up the “reliability scale” of the reports in regard to the events in Ottoman Turkey, and their impact on Swedish State knowledge and basis of decision making, are the reports of Swedish military personnel.

The most frequently cited Swedish military testimony in regard to the Armenian genocide is that of Major Gustav Hjalmar Pravitz, published in *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*, mentioned below in the chronological data. Pravitz was actually stationed in Persia and not in the Ottoman Empire. He was a member of the Swedish military mission invited to improve Persia’s gendarmerie and police operations.¹²² In 1918, Pravitz published his memoirs, *Från Persien i stiltje och storm* (“From Persia in Calm and Storm”). Recalling this very same content a year earlier, Pravitz makes an interesting assertion, claiming it is historically proven, that “...swift passing, even though bloody eruptions of despotism, such as the Armenian massacres, are more tolerable for a people than a continuous, but milder oppression, for which no end can be seen.”¹²³ Pravitz admitted that he had seen dead bodies and dying people begging for a piece of bread, but, with the exception of one case, he did not see the asserted violence used against the Armenian “emigrants”:

I have seen dying and dead along the roads — but among hundreds of thousands there must, of course, occur casualties. I have seen children’s corpses, shredded to pieces by jackals, and pitiful individuals stretch their bony arms with piercing screams of “ekmek” (bread).

¹²² Pravitz, 1918.

¹²³ Pravitz, 1918, p. 222.

But I have never seen direct Turkish assaults against the ones hit by destiny. A single time I saw a Turkish gendarme in passing hit a couple of slow moving people with his whip; but similar things have happened to me in Russia, without me complaining, not then, nor later.¹²⁴

He also mentions meeting an Armenian in a concentration camp (“koncentrationsläger”), in itself an interesting choice of word in the context of this study.¹²⁵ Pravitz concluded his article by acknowledging the difficult situation of the Armenians and expressing some understanding for Marika Stjernstedt’s initiative (presented further below) for a collection to aid the Armenians in need, but pointed out that that she (Stjernstedt) had uncritically “accepted the hair-raising stories from more or less biased sources.”¹²⁶

In order to be able to put Pravitz’ observations and interpretation of the Armenian situation in perspective, it is necessary to also reflect upon his personal view in regard to the Armenian people as such. In his book, Pravitz renders his views regarding Persia, Persians and the minorities living in the country. A large portion of the first part of chapter ten, entitled *My Second Journey to Persia*, where he describes the “Armenian question,” has, more or less, the same content as his article in NDA. Moreover, his description of the Armenian element is not flattering. Jews and Armenians are described as “lying merchants.”¹²⁷ The Armenians are, despite their Christian faith, no “God’s children,” a wording which he also used in his article in NDA “The deportees did not care to burry their dead, lying on the roadside.”¹²⁸ In regard to the Turkish treatment during the war, Pravitz argued that “the Armenians had themselves to thank for the punishment which was now being implemented. Thus, their fate has been a necessity, a logical consequence.”¹²⁹ Furthermore, he writes that: “the Armenians are highly untrustworthy.”¹³⁰ In general, the “bloody” measures of the Turkish Government towards the “disloyal” Armenians were quite justified, even though innocent people had suffered too.¹³¹ The parallels to the argumentation regarding the Holocaust are too striking to be ignored. Pravitz’ article and his views are more or less the only internationally well-known eyewitness account which has been ascribed to Swedish military intelligence and testimony in regard to the Armenian genocide. Needless to say, the majority of studies using Pravitz as evidence are those on the Turkish side, e.g. the Turkish Foreign Ministry.

Notwithstanding, the study of the Swedish War Archive reveals another, quite opposite, perspective, expressed by someone much closer to the events, namely those of Captain Einar af

¹²⁴ NDA, April 23, 1917.

¹²⁵ Pravitz, 1918, p. 221.

¹²⁶ NDA, April 23, 1917.

¹²⁷ Pravitz, 1918, p. 22.

¹²⁸ Pravitz, 1918, p. 222-223.

¹²⁹ Pravitz, 1918, p. 225.

¹³⁰ Pravitz, 1918, p. 226-227.

¹³¹ Pravitz, 1918, p. 219, 221-223.

Wirsén (later Major), the official Swedish Military Attaché in Constantinople, 1915-1920.¹³² His care for details and accuracy in reporting the situation in the Ottoman Empire, military as well as general, is evident in the large number of reports he sent to the General Staff Headquarters (“Generalstaben”) in Stockholm. In his memoirs, *Minnen från fred och krig* (“Memories from Peace and War”), published in 1942, referring to Talaat’s somewhat gruesome humour, he mentions the following answer Talaat gave him in regard to the Armenian massacres: “I see in Times that we would have executed, or in other ways killed none less than 800,000 Armenians. I assure you that this is untrue, it was only 600,000.”¹³³ Djemal Pasha, however, was more moderate and “disliked the massacres of the Armenians.”¹³⁴ The book is based upon his experiences and memoirs during his service as military attaché in the Balkans and Turkey. Here he demonstrated more in detail his knowledge of the Armenian genocide. Although published in 1942, the book gives insight into how the events were understood by the official Swedish Military Attaché in Turkey when they happened. In the chapter *Mordet på en nation* (“The Murder of a Nation”), Wirsén gives a brief review of the background to the Armenian question, before describing the atrocities committed by the Turkish Government during the war.¹³⁵ He founds the accusations of Armenian collaboration with the Russians questionable.¹³⁶ The subsequent deportations were nothing but a cover for the extermination:

Officially, these had the goal to move the entire Armenian population to the steppe regions of Northern Mesopotamia and Syria, but in reality they aimed to exterminate [utrota] the Armenians, whereby the pure Turkish element in Asia Minor would achieve a dominating position.¹³⁷

Thus, Wirsén claims that the deportations were merely an excuse and cover-up for the real Turkish governmental intent of annihilating the Armenian Nation.

Wirsén points out that the orders were given with utter cunningness. The communications were generally given verbally and in extreme secrecy in order to give free hands to the Government in the implementation of the massacres.¹³⁸ Describing the methods used for massacring the Armenians and depriving the survivors of basic needs so they would perish by hunger and diseases, Wirsén notes that::

¹³² By a coincidence, Wirsén is the same Swedish military who was appointed as chairman for the commission which the League of Nations put in charge of arbitration in the Mosul Crisis, discussed in John Rogers’ article. It was Wirsén’s detailed knowledge of the region, his experiences from the war, and his familiarity with the existing situation which made him an important asset in the Commission appointed by the League to resolve the crisis.

¹³³ Wirsén, 1942, p. 132.

¹³⁴ Wirsén, 1942, p. 133.

¹³⁵ Wirsén, 1942, p. 220-226. Also see p. 120, 288, and 294.

¹³⁶ Wirsén, 1942, p. 223.

¹³⁷ Wirsén, 1942, p. 223.

¹³⁸ Wirsén, 1942, p. 226. This view is confirmed by Dadrian as well. See Dadrian, 2004, p. 289, 384-385.

The annihilation of the Armenian nation in Asia Minor must revolt all human feelings...The way the Armenian problem was solved was hair-raising. I can still see in front of me Talaat's cynical expression, when he emphasized that the Armenian question was solved.¹³⁹

Here, Wirsén states that it was not a question of miscalculation or inability of the Turkish Government which resulted in a tragedy, by their deliberate use of the deportations, as well as famine and epidemics, as a mean for the annihilation. He also points out another important issue, namely the issue of verbal orders to leave as minimal evidence as possible in case of future possible investigations. General von Lossow, the German military attaché in Turkey, had in a private conversation confessed the following to Wirsén: "The Armenian massacres are world history's greatest bestiality."¹⁴⁰

The military reports and dispatches sent by Wirsén were extracted from former classified data, kept in the War Archive in Stockholm. These dispatches were mainly on the status of the ongoing war efforts and the reports of the different fronts in which the Ottoman Army was involved. Almost all his reports are structured in the same manner, beginning with a detailed report in regard to the military operations and the situation on different fronts, and they end with a general description of the situation in the country.¹⁴¹ It is mostly in these general descriptions where Wirsén mentions Turkish actions against the Armenian population, which in their turn affect the war efforts. Judging from the published pictures in the book, taken in different parts of the Ottoman Empire, Wirsén did travel around in Turkey, collecting some of the information stated in his reports by his own observations, while he also used a great deal of official German and Turkish military intelligence information as well as unofficial accounts provided by German military personnel.

The military reports are of great importance, since the Swedish Military Attaché, as a representative of a neutral state, was allowed to visit the fronts and gather information about the ongoing campaigns and actions in Ottoman Turkey. He also received military intelligence reports, dispatched not only by the Turks but also by the Germans and Austrians serving in the Ottoman Army. The reports were ciphered and relayed to Sweden and provided the Swedish Foreign Office and Chiefs of Staff with first hand intelligence information about the events inside Ottoman Turkey. The studied reports will also disclose that Wirsén took the liberty to recommend Stockholm about certain actions towards both Turkey and Germany, which suggests that his analytic reports were of importance to the Swedish foreign policy making.

¹³⁹ Wirsén, 1942, p. 226.

¹⁴⁰ Wirsén, 1942, p. 226.

¹⁴¹ See Krigsarkivet, Generalstaben. It is noteworthy that the following material has been classified as military and state secret, but that can hardly be the reason for its anonymity, since these documents have been public for the last thirty years or so.

1.5.4 Swedish Embassy, Foreign Department, and Government

The diplomatic communiqués and reports, dispatched by the Swedish Embassy personnel in the Ottoman Empire, included in the Foreign Ministry Files (“Utrikesdepartementet, HP-serien”) are kept almost entirely in the National Archive in Marieberg, Stockholm. These reports, mostly marked as classified, if anything would indicate whether the Swedish Government and Foreign Ministry were informed about the massacres, as well as how they were described and perceived. In order to gather the information studied in this paper, several volumes and series of archival material were investigated. Initially, the search started with the classified diplomatic dispatches sent by the Embassy to the Foreign Ministry during 1915 and 1923. The documents in question were divided in two distinct series, entitled *Utrikesdepartementet 1902 års dossiersystem*, respective *Utrikesdepartementet 1920 års dossiersystem*, containing all Swedish diplomatic correspondence and information (everything from data regarding embassy personnel, their wages and reports to treaties, statistics and intelligence data, and collected newspaper clips) pertaining to international and foreign relations, but especially from all Swedish foreign representations around the globe. The first series cover mainly the period of 1902-1919, while the second series cover the period between 1920 and 1970. In total they constitute over 15,000 volumes of information and data.

In order to broaden the view of the decision making, the protocols of the Swedish Parliament, the *Riksdag*, was studied to find out about any documented debates in regard to the ongoing massacres. Furthermore, the communiqués with the League of Nations and decisions made by the League have also been consulted. Most of the information regarding the League has been found in the organisation’s publication, *Official Journal*, and in the Assembly Protocols.

If any of the previous information (newspapers, missionary, and military reports) are regarded as important, the diplomatic reports by the Swedish Ambassador must be regarded as *the* most important information, at least from the Swedish Government’s point of view and basis for their decision making. The Swedish Embassy both functioned as the provider of information and analysed the gathered information. It was these reports that provided the data bed, requested instructions upon observations, and recommended certain actions in regard to the Swedish foreign policy. Thus, the contents of the reports dispatched by the Swedish Embassy are a reliable source for how official Stockholm perceived the Armenian massacres, what measures the Ambassador was instructed to take or he recommended Stockholm to do.

It is worth mentioning that, unlike Wirsén, there are no indications whether or not the Swedish Ambassador during the period between 1915 and 1920, Cosswa Anckarsvärd, did travel around in the Ottoman Empire, acquiring the information he dispatched to Sweden. In some report it is mentioned that the source of his information are published news in the country, letters or intelligence information from his German counterpart or other diplomatic missions in and outside Turkey. This will be indicated where the sources are mentioned explicitly.

Notwithstanding, an Ambassador such as Anckarsvärd must have had a broad contact net, including Turkish officials, opposition members, foreign diplomats and representatives, minority

representatives etc. who supplied him with a range of information about the situation in the Empire, thus providing him with a broad spectrum of data and views to base his analysis upon.

All documents mentioning the situation of the Armenian population, its treatment during the massacres and deportations, and later in regard to the post-war discussions about the creation of an Armenian state have been considered. Reports regarding other Christian people in Ottoman Turkey and similar treatment as that towards the Armenians have been included to depict the ongoing Turkish state policy towards minorities. As it will be shown later, both kinds of documents, confirming as well as denying the Armenian massacres, have been included in the study and will display how and when the break point in the nature of the reporting begins, under what pretext the denial is implemented and its real agenda.

1.6 Background

In order to understand the dynamics of the Armenian question and the background of the events in question, studied in the reports and articles in this paper, it is necessary to understand the transformation which Ottoman Turkey was going through at the end of 19th century. The Turkish Empire, after several centuries of decline, was at the edge of dissolution and was saved only due to the rivalry between the Major Powers who did not want the strategic straits of Bosphorus and Dardanelles to fall in the hand of a competitor.¹⁴² Until the mid-1800s, the non-Muslim minorities in the Ottoman Empire had enjoyed a relatively calm existence under the rule of their Muslim masters. However, from the early 19th century two developments hastened the transformation of the heterogeneous Ottoman Empire, to an utterly homogeneous Turkish Empire with no room for the non-Muslim non-Turks. The first was the gradual emancipation of the Christian nations in the Balkans under Turkish rule, which meant that the Empire, now, with the exception of the Armenians, Assyrians/Syrians, and patches of Greek communities on the Black Sea shores and in the western parts of the Empire, exclusively consisted of Muslims. The second event, the Arab uprising and breaking off from the Ottoman Empire, made it not only predominantly Muslim, but also Turkish. This would show to be an ill-fated development for the remaining minorities, especially the Christians (e.g. the Kurds were not regarded as an obvious alien group as the Armenians were). This development, together with constant Armenian demands for reforms in the Armenian provinces (provisioned by the treaties of San Stefano and Berlin, 1878), raised the attention of the Central Government in Constantinople. If the Armenian provinces were not to be lost as the territories in Balkan, radical measures were necessary.¹⁴³

The first measures to diminish the Armenian plurality in Western Armenia (Turkish Armenia), was to artificially change the demography of the area by including densely Muslim-populated

¹⁴² Pasdermadjian, 1949, p. 346.

¹⁴³ The provisions are mentioned mainly in article 16 of the San Stefano Treaty and article 61 of the Berlin Treaty. See Hurst, 1972, p. 528-548 respective p. 551-578.

neighbouring areas into the Armenian provinces, thus decreasing the Armenian relative majority.¹⁴⁴ The second step was tampering with statistics:

Before the Armenian question arose, the official Ottoman estimate of the Armenian population in the Ottoman Empire was fairly significant. The official book of Turkey, compiled by Sallahedin Beg in 1867, puts the Armenian population in the Ottoman Empire at 2,400,000. As soon as the Armenian question emerged, in the context of the Russian-Ottoman war of 1877-1878, the Ottoman official books showed an astonishing decrease in the number of Armenians, thanks to manipulated statistics.¹⁴⁵

During the 1880 negotiations, the Turkish Government claimed that the Armenian population in the six Armenian provinces numbered 727,000. The attempt did not go unnoticed and in a letter signed by the ambassadors of Russia, France and Great Britain, it was pointed out that the Sublime Porte was trying to manipulate the numbers in order to decrease the signification of the commitments mentioned in the Berlin Treaty.¹⁴⁶



Figure 1. The Armenian vilayets of the Turkish Empire. Source: Armenica.org.

¹⁴⁴ Pasdermadjian, 1949, p. 394.

¹⁴⁵ Pasdermadjian, 1949, p. 399.

¹⁴⁶ Pasdermadjian, 1949, p. 399.

However, these administrative measures did not seem to achieve the desirable results, at least not as quickly as necessary. The Government now took more drastic measures and started a large-scale massacre of Armenians. Already in 1894-86 European and American newspapers and governments had called attention to the atrocities committed against the Armenians in Ottoman Turkey. About 110,000 Armenians were killed and another 40,000 were forced to convert to Islam and over 100,000 Armenians fled to Transcaucasus, Europe and the USA. 2,500 communities were totally emptied of their Armenian elements, their property confiscated by Turks and Kurds, putting over 500,000 Armenians in total poverty.¹⁴⁷ The massacres were measures to decimate the Armenian population, thereby diminishing the need for reforms due to the existence of an Armenian majority in the six Armenian provinces: Sivas, Erzurum, Kharpout, Diyarbakir, Bitlis, and Van¹⁴⁸ The protests and threats of intervention were not realised until 1914, when two inspector-generals from two neutral countries were appointed to oversee the implementation of reforms in the Armenian provinces of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁴⁹ The Armenian Patriarch requested explicitly the inspector-generals to be from either Holland, Denmark, Norway, or Sweden and not from either Belgium or Switzerland since the economic and commercial interests between the two latter countries and Turkey were too strong to allow them to be objective.¹⁵⁰ This clearly indicates that the economic ties were already at this time an obvious factor when considering international relations and humanitarian interventions. The Turkish Government surrendered to the reform plan quite unwillingly and only after a long period of strong opposition to any reforms regarding the right of Armenians and other Christian minorities in the Empire. Therefore, the global war of 1914 was regarded as the golden opportunity which the new nationalist Turkish leaders of Union and Progress had been waiting for to once and for all eliminate the “Armenian question.”¹⁵¹ The masterminds of the Armenian genocide were the three leading figures of the Ittihad Party: Interior Minister and future Grand Vizier Talaat Pasha; War Minister Enver Pasha; Marine Minister Djemal Pasha.¹⁵² The Armenian nation also posed as a serious threat to the realisation of the Pan Turan, unifying all Turkish people under one single empire, ruled by the Ottoman Turks. Thus, when the news of the large-scaled massacres of Armenian intellectuals and civilians in Ottoman Turkey reached the outside world, the governments of France, Great Britain, and Russia were swift in their response which was delivered on May 24, 1915:

Massacres have taken place from mid April in Erzurum, Terjan, Eghine, Bitlis, Moush, Sasoun, Zeytoun and throughout Cilicia. The inhabitants in almost a hundred villages around Van have been completely murdered and the Armenian quarters in Van are under siege by Kurds. At the

¹⁴⁷ Pasdermadjian, 1949, p. 412. Also see Gerner and Karlsson, 2005, p. 120.

¹⁴⁸ Pasdermadjian, 1949, p. 408.

¹⁴⁹ Pasdermadjian, 1949, p. 471.

¹⁵⁰ Dussen, 1991, p. 401.

¹⁵¹ Compare with the intentionalism camp in regard to the Holocaust. See Charny, 2000, p. 313; Melson, 1992, p. 7-9; Shermer and Grobman, 2000, p. 209-213; Steinman, 1998, p. 216.

¹⁵² Somakian, 1995, p. 139-140.

same time, the Ottoman government has acted mercilessly against the defenceless Armenian population in Constantinople. In regard to this new crime against humanity and civilisation, the allied governments declare openly to the Sublime Port that they will hold each member of the Turkish government personally responsible, as well as those who have participated in these massacres.¹⁵³

The usage of the phrase “crime against humanity and civilisation” might be the very first use of this notion in international circumstances.



Figure 2. Vision of Pan Turanism and the boundaries of Armenia throughout history. Source: Armenica.org

The first stage constituted the elimination of the Armenian elite (eliticide). On April 24, 1915, the Armenian intellectuals were mass-arrested and brutally murdered within a day or two.¹⁵⁴ Then it was time to eliminate the bulk of a possible resistance – the able-bodied male population.

¹⁵³ Hovannisian, 1967, p. 52.

¹⁵⁴ In Constantinople alone 2,345 Armenian leaders were arrested within a couple of weeks. See Alvarez, 2001, p. 49. Also see Chalk and Jonassohn, 1990, p. 260; Dadrian, 2004, p. 221; Destexhe, 1995, p. 23; Jones, 2006, p. 106.

All Armenian men between 20 and 45 (August 1914) and later men between 18 to 20 and 45 to 60 were enlisted in the Ottoman Army, leaving the women, children and elderly practically defenceless.¹⁵⁵ In the early 1915, these soldiers started being disarmed and placed in labour battalions, where they were maltreated. From February 1915, the Turkish Government ordered the liquidation of these labour battalions and by July 1915, approximately 200,000 Armenian men had been executed.¹⁵⁶ Now that the leadership and the defences of the Armenian population were eliminated, the main stage of the genocide was implemented. Women, children and elderly were evicted from their homes, forced to march towards the Mesopotamian and Syrian Deserts. En route, the deportees were often massacred by Turkish soldiers and Kurds. Those who survived the killings, succumbed to hunger, exhaustion under the desert sun, and diseases. In addition to these victims, several thousand women and children were abducted, forced to convert to Islam or were sold as slaves to Turkish and Kurdish harems and households.¹⁵⁷ Notwithstanding, it should be mentioned that not the entire governmental body and the Muslim society participated or approved of the treatment of Armenians. Many Armenian children were saved by adopting Turkish and Kurdish families. There is also evidence of resistance within the official ranks, regardless their limited nature. These were, however, rectified severely: governors who did not comply with the orders were replaced and in two known cases Turkish officials refusing to carry out the order for deportation were murdered.¹⁵⁸

The number of the victims of the 1915 genocide is issue of discussion, mainly due to the uncertain population statistics of the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, it is estimated that of the 2,000,000 Armenian inhabitants in Turkey, almost 1,800,000 were subjected to the planned genocide and more than 1,000,000 lost their lives.¹⁵⁹ Only a few hundred thousand escaped to Transcaucasus or survived in Syria and Mesopotamia. It is estimated that the total number of victims of the continuous massacres, including the Armenian women and children abducted by Turks and Kurds, is somewhere between 1.2 million and 1.5 million.¹⁶⁰ Depending on the original population figures, this number corresponds to about 50-80 % of the total Ottoman Armenians and about 30-38 % of the Armenian world population. In a recently published study, David Gaunt has presented quite detailed information about the course of the massacres, among other the pertaining statistics. Even though his work on the 1915 genocide focuses mainly on a Syriac/Chaldean perspective (minority groups mostly concentrated in the south-eastern parts of

¹⁵⁵ Dadrian, 1999, p. 6; Shaw, 2003, p. 32.

¹⁵⁶ Adalian, 1995, p. 17; Akçam, 2006, p. 141-145; Jones, 2006, p. 106. Weitz, 2003, p. 4-5.

¹⁵⁷ Hovannisian writes: "After the reoccupation of Moush and Bitlis, Armenian societies of Transcaucasia offered rewards for the deliverance of women and children forcibly Islamised and taken into Turkish and Kurdish homes. The 'one piece of gold for an Armenian' fund retrieved between 5,000 and 6,000 persons." See Hovannisian, 1967, reference 89 on p. 57.

¹⁵⁸ Dadrian, 1999, p. 9.

¹⁵⁹ Pasdermadjian, 1949, p. 481.

¹⁶⁰ Dadrian, 1999, p. 20. The same figure for the Assyro-Chaldeans of Ottoman Turkey and Persia were 250,000 victims out of a pre-war population of 563,000, i.e. a 45 % loss of lives. See Gaunt, 2006, p. 300-301. For the Pontic numbers see Peterson, 2004, p. 124.

present-day Turkey, northern Mesopotamia and north-western Iran), there are also fresh results concerning the Armenian victims. Documents show that during the initial massacres the Catholics and Protestants were exempted from the deportations. However, as the deportations and massacres continued, the Catholics and the Protestants too were ordered to leave their homes and properties and were deported as the rest.¹⁶¹

During a short period of time, following the ceasefire in 1918, the victors seemed to fulfil their commitment to administer justice in the Armenian issue. The War Crimes Commission of the Paris Conference, in charge of negotiating the peace treaty, despite oppositions from U.S. State Secretary, Robert Lansing, passed a resolution by a large majority, condemning crimes violating “laws of humanity,” particularly in regard to the Turkish massacres of the Armenian, which subsequently opened the door for the trials of the Turkish Ittihadist leaders.¹⁶² Article 228 in the Treaty of Sèvres, maintained the right of the Entente Powers to punish guilty Turks, while Article 230 established Turkey’s obligation for surrendering suspect individuals to the Entente Powers.¹⁶³ The trials were convened and several Turkish political and military leaders were prosecuted for war crimes and were sentenced to death or long prison sentences. Dr. Reshid, former General Governor in Diyarbakir committed suicide during the trials, while Talaat, Enver, Djemal, and Dr. Shakir, ideologist in the Party, were sentenced to death in absentia, while Dr. Nazim, another ideologist in the Party, was sentenced to fifteen years hard labour.¹⁶⁴ These international military tribunals might very well be the first of their kind.¹⁶⁵

However, practically all the sentences were revoked by the new Kemalist regime that had overthrown the Ottoman Government.¹⁶⁶ Soon after, the Major Powers abandoned the Armenian question in favour of pursuing of their own political and economic interests in the newly emerged Turkish Republic.¹⁶⁷ The skilful manoeuvres of Mustafa Kemal managed to play the Major Powers, in particular USA, Britain, and France, against each other and use their eagerness to divide the Turkish Empire’s vast oil and mineral assets, as well as new investment opportunities in the emerging Turkey.¹⁶⁸ In return, the powers disregarded the claims for justice and granted amnesty to the prosecuted Ittihadist rulers while the new Turkish regime systematically destroyed evidence of the committed crimes and trial protocols. This will be illustrated later in the empirical part. Furthermore, records indicate that the plan of annihilation of the Armenian nation did not stop with the fall of the Ittihadist Turkey, but was fully continued by the Kemalist regime. During the thrust towards Baku, occupying large portion of the Caucasus

¹⁶¹ Gaunt, 2006, p. 77. For detailed listing see Tables 62 and 63 in Appendix 3.

¹⁶² Simpson, 1995, p. 25-26.

¹⁶³ World War I Document Archive, 2007.

¹⁶⁴ Dadrian, 2004, p. 331.

¹⁶⁵ Schabas, 2000, p. 15-19; Jones, 2006, p. 101. Also see Dadrian, 2004, p. 317-347; Höss, 1992, p. 208-221.

¹⁶⁶ Dadrian, 2004, p. 332-333.

¹⁶⁷ Charny, 2000, p. 177; Dadrian, 1999, p. 1; Kuper, 1981, p. 113. For French, Italian, British and American interests in Turkey see Helmreich, 1974, p. 211-212, 304-307, 309.

¹⁶⁸ Balakian, 2003, p. 363-372; Simpson, 1995, p. 32-33.

and Republic of Armenia, an additional 300,000 Armenians were massacred, this time by the Kemalist Army. The British Lieutenant Colonel Rawlinson, captured by the enemy during the war, asserted that the “ultimate purpose was ‘to exterminate’ the Armenians, which purpose ‘is, and has long been a deliberate policy of the Turkish Government’.”¹⁶⁹

While the Treaty of Sèvres, signed in August 10, 1920, devoted an entire section with six articles to Armenia alone, the new Treaty of Lausanne, signed in July 24, 1923, refrained from even mentioning *Armenia* or *Armenians*.¹⁷⁰ Winston Churchill wrote: “In the Lausanne Treaty, which established a new peace between the allies and Turkey, history will search in vain for the name Armenia.”¹⁷¹ In 1923, for the first time in over 2,500 years, the Armenians lived no longer on 85 % of their historical fatherland.¹⁷²

2 Empirical Analysis

The empirical research has been divided in three main periods, 1915-1916, 1917-1920, and 1921-1923. The first, between 1915 and 1916 marked the severe period of the massacres and deportations. 1917-1920 was the period during which the reports and the testimonies of home coming missionaries and field workers started to be published, notifying the world about the events which have engulfed the Armenian nation in Ottoman Empire; it also marked the period for hopes and aspirations for the creation of an Armenian Republic on historic Armenian lands, securing the future of the nation. And finally, 1921-1923 marked the abandonment of the Armenian question. During the 1920, with the raise of the Kemalist regime in Turkey, the Armenian question entered a new era during the third period of the study, where the Armenians eventually were totally abandoned (finalised by the Lausanne Treaty in 1923). The Swedish stand was quite straight forward: Armenia was the country far away, but more important, it simply did not offer Sweden anything of substantial interest, raw material, or potential market for the Swedish export, especially when compared to its neighbours Turkey, Georgia, and Azerbaijan.

2.1 1915-1916: Massacres and Deportations

Already on December 15, 1914, Sweden’s Ambassador to Constantinople, Per Gustaf August Cosswa Anckarsvärd, notified Stockholm about the political development in Constantinople and how the Ittihadists now virtually were the masters of Turkey: “...the Turkish Parliament has, for the time being, been reduced to merely and alone for approving the decisions of the ruling party.”¹⁷³

¹⁶⁹ Akçam, 2006, p. 325-327. Also see Dadrian, 2004, p. 360-361; Graber, 1996, p. 148. Jones, 2006, p. 112.

¹⁷⁰ World War I Document Archive, 2007.

¹⁷¹ Churchill, 1929, p. 408.

¹⁷² Hovannisian, 1997, p. 75.

¹⁷³ RA, UD, nr. 241, December, 15, 1914. Anckarsvärd was Swedish Ambassador to Turkey 1906-1920.

Among the newspapers, in 1915, it was only *Svenska Morgonbladet* which paid attention to the Armenian massacres. The sources of the published articles studied below are mainly home-coming American missionaries. *Dagens Nyheter* published only one article during the entire year, early in February, writing about "...the role Germany played as the defender of the Turkish-Kurdish man-butchers..." and how the foreign pressure finally resulted in the establishment of foreign supervision.¹⁷⁴

On April 30, 1915, the Ambassador wrote a five page dispatch on the subject of the *armeniska frågan* (Armenian question) and the Armenian revolutionary movement. Noting that the "ghost of the so-called Armenian question" has reappeared in the interior parts of the country, Anckarsvård gives a rather detailed chronological description of the issue. He points out that "Since year 1896, when the known massacres of Armenians took place," the situation for the Armenians has, with exception for the "Armenian bloodbath which took place in 1909 in the Adana Vilayet," been comparatively calm.¹⁷⁵ The Armenians in the eastern provinces managed, however, through agitation under leadership of revolutionary parties force the Porte to implement some degree of reforms, and the installation of a Norwegian and a Dutch General Governor to supervise the reforms in the Armenian provinces. "Moreover, these circumstances have already been reported in detail by this Embassy."¹⁷⁶ Anckarsvård states that it is difficult to predict the future of the reform work, and whether the policies of the new leadership, which drew Turkey into the war, are the reasons for a renewal of Armenian revolutionary activities. Anckarsvård mentions that the Porte, based upon intelligence information about revolutionary plans, have mass arrested about 400 Armenians in Constantinople and numerous others have been taken into custody in other cities as well. "Among the arrested are especially many Armenian journalists, doctors, and lawyers." They had been sent to Angora [Ankara], awaiting trial in court martial. The Armenian Patriarch had appealed to the Grand Vizier, in the interest of those arrested, and the latter had assured him that the trials would be conducted in complete impartiality. Anckarsvård concluded: "It is noteworthy, that during the house-search bombs were found only here and there, while they have found a great number of French flags."¹⁷⁷ Anckarsvård was referring to the arrest of the Armenian intellectuals throughout the Empire, especially in Constantinople. Almost none of the arrested survived the following 72 hours as noted earlier in the background section.

On May 26, SvM published the following telegram from Paris:

Since about a month ago, the Kurdish and Turkish population in Armenia, in accord with each other and with help from the Turkish Government, have committed mass murder on Armenians.

¹⁷⁴ DN, February 9, 1915.

¹⁷⁵ RA, UD, nr. 99, April 30, 1915, p. 1.

¹⁷⁶ RA, UD, nr. 99, April 30, 1915, p. 3.

¹⁷⁷ RA, UD, nr. 99, April 30, 1915, p. 5.

These have occurred from mid-April [new style], in Erzurum, Dertsjun [Ter-Djan], Egin, Bitlis, Moush, Sassoun, and others.¹⁷⁸

On June 7, 1915, the Ambassador notified his government of reported massacres of Armenians and noted the delivered ultimatum which the American Ambassador had, on behalf of the French and possibly the English Governments, handed over to the Grand Vizier.¹⁷⁹

On July 6, Anckarsvård dispatched a two page report entitled “The Armenian Persecutions”, a wording which entitled six other reports during 1915. The dispatch reads:

The persecutions of the Armenians have reached hair-raising proportions and all points to the fact that the Young Turks want to seize the opportunity, since due to different reasons there are no effective external pressure to be feared, to once and for all put an end to the Armenian question. The means for this are quite simple and consist of the extermination [utrotandet] of the Armenian nation. The measure stops at nothing and beside a massacre here and there they have now resorted to expelling the Armenians from areas they have been residents of for centuries or have their origins in, and disperse them in different directions of the geographically enormous empire. Thereby, it appears that the Armenians in the cities by the Black Sea coast have been dispersed into the interior of the country, they in Erzurum, up to 60,000 people, have been driven downward to Mesopotamia and so on. With ingenious cruelty the men are sent in one direction and the families in another. It is easy to imagine the kind of distress and sufferings the expelled will be subjected to.

It does not seem to be the Turkish population which acts on its own accord, but the entire movement originates from the government institutions and that of behind them standing Young Turks’ Committee, which now displays what kind of ideas they harbour.

It is true that the Armenians have much to blame themselves for, but even if one or a couple of thousand let themselves be bought by Russia, plotted and conspired against the government and so on, is it all not so much the least extreme to let one million Armenians pay for this in a noticeable manner[?]

The German Ambassador has in writing appealed to the Porte, but what can Germany or any other of the Major Powers do as long as the war continues. That the Central Powers would threaten Turkey is in the time being unthinkable, and the majority of the remaining Major Powers is Turkey already in war with. After its end, Europe must intervene once more here; the Turks are now doing everything conceivable to demonstrate how necessary such an intervention is. In an upsetting manner, in which the Armenians are treated, Turkey is, now more than ever, passing the sentence upon herself, but in the prevailing critical situation of the Turks and in face of the highly inflamed xenophobia it is probably useless to seek to clarify their peril here within. “On retrouvera toujours la Turquie!” Quite true, but when and in what condition will the unfortunate Armenian nation, which has never been subjected to greater tests than now, be in. How will it go for the 150,000 Armenians here in Constantinople if the Straits are forced by the English, shudders therefore truly back the thought.¹⁸⁰

Here, for the first time Anckarsvård pin points two important observations: 1) the mass killings were state orchestrated with the Ittihadists behind the scheme and 2) its aim was to “exterminate the Armenian nation”. The Turkish Government was using the existence of a relative small number of armed groups as excuse and the war as a cover up to end the Armenian question. The atrocities would justify yet another European intervention, but only once the war was over. The

¹⁷⁸ SvM, May 26, 1915.

¹⁷⁹ RA, UD, nr. 117, June 7, 1915.

¹⁸⁰ RA, UD, nr. 137, July 6, 1915.

analysis of the Swedish Ambassador about the hopelessness of the situation also emphasises the perpetrator's knowledge of the presented window of opportunity, caused partly by the passivity (of its allies) and the inability of the world (neutral and hostile nations) as an opportunity to implement its "final solution." Furthermore, the protests of Germany, while stating their official dissociation from any responsibility for the massacres, acknowledge the reality and the nature of the massacres. This statement was going to be repeated in the coming days. Furthermore, Anckarsvård's report rendered the basic need of a humanitarian intervention, but neither the friendly state (Germany) nor other major powers capable of implementing such an intervention were in position to interfere for stopping the genocide.

Soon after, on July 15, Anckarsvård informed Stockholm about the warning delivered to the Porte by the German Ambassador in regard to the Armenian massacres. The Ambassador had pointed out that, even though some measures were justified towards the Armenian population in certain areas due to military reasons, the measures had reached such an extent that:

Turkey risked, especially among the neutral nations and foremost in America, evoke an extremely disadvantageous opinion. Furthermore, the unlawfulness and excesses of the Turkish Government agencies opened the door for Europe's intervention and its interference in Turkey's internal affairs as soon as the war ceases. In the note it is further pointed out that, by dispersing the laborious Armenian population, Germany's economic interests in Turkey have suffered.¹⁸¹

The German Ambassador had concluded his note by pointing out that Germany "can not financially support a state which allows similar persecutions on its territory."¹⁸² Germany was thus fully aware of the risk of being regarded as accomplice if the Armenian massacres were allowed to go unchecked. Not much was done to stop them, but at least Germany made sure that foreign representatives were informed of Germany's disapproval of the Turkish plans. The issue of a humanitarian intervention was made clear, but it also established the fact that such an action would, due to the prevailing circumstances, most probably come all too late to save the Armenians.

The day after, on July 15, Anckarsvård dispatched yet another report regarding the Armenian massacres, rendering information he had received from "a respected, in Turkish Government's service standing Armenian." The Armenian had expressed his views about the involvement of some twenty or thirty persons in a conspiracy initiated by, among others, the former Turkish Ambassador to Stockholm, Sherif Pasha, aimed at starting a revolution in Turkey. This was the reason why several hundred Armenians were arrested and executed. At the end of his three pages dispatch Anckarsvård made the following note:

The Armenian Patriarch has asked the Justice and Culture Minister, whether the intention is to annihilate the entire Armenian nation, in which case he was ready to start a movement to organise

¹⁸¹ RA, UD, nr. 142, July 14, 1915.

¹⁸² RA, UD, nr. 145, July 14, 1915.

a mass emigration to e.g. South America. In this way the Turks would get rid of the Armenians and they will suffer somewhat less than now.¹⁸³

This suggestion was quite similar to the Nazi's Madagascar-plan.¹⁸⁴

On July 22, Anckarsvärd informed his Foreign Ministry that it was not only the Armenians who were subject to persecutions, but the Greeks now also faced the same fate. The Greek chargé d'affaires explained that:

it [the deportations] can not be any other issue than an annihilation war against the Greek nation in Turkey and as measures hereof they have been implementing forced conversions to Islam, in obvious aim to, that if after the end of the war there again would be a question of European intervention for the protection of the Christians, there will be as few of them left as possible.¹⁸⁵

On August 18, The Swedish Ambassador notified Stockholm about a new German protest against the ongoing massacres. News was received about "unbelievable cruelties," and that the deported former Armenian member of the Turkish Parliament, Zohrab, had died, "probably of anything but natural causes." The German Ambassador's recent note contained a "much more serious tone," pointing out that Germany can not passively witness

...how Turkey, through the Armenian persecutions, was going downhill, morally and economically. Furthermore, it was protested against Porte's course of actions, based on which her allied Germany becomes suspected of approving these and, finally, Germany renounces any responsibility for the consequences.¹⁸⁶

Later, Anckarsvärd received a copy of the above mentioned German note, dated August 9. The note stated that over half a million Armenians had disappeared, been killed, or died as a result of diseases and hunger. "The six so-called Armenian provinces are as good as totally emptied of at least its Armenian-Catholic Armenians. The cruelties have been less towards the Roman-Catholic and Protestant Armenians." Anckarsvärd's dispatch continues:

It is obvious that the Turks are taking the opportunity to, now during the war, annihilate [utplåna] the Armenian nation so that when the peace comes no Armenian question longer exists. The Turks claim that, at the Russian conquest of the city of Van, the Armenian population in the area massacred over 100,000 Turks. Even if the accusation does not lack grounds, the number is, however, certainly highly exaggerated...It is noteworthy that the persecutions of Armenians have been done at the instigation of the Turkish Government and are primarily not a spontaneous eruption of Turkish fanaticism, even though this fanaticism is used and matters. The tendency to make Turkey inhabited only by Turks could in due time come to appear in a horrifying manner also towards the Greeks and other Christians.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³ RA, UD, nr. 145, July 15, 1915.

¹⁸⁴ For the Madagascar Plan see Browning, 2004, p. 81-83.

¹⁸⁵ RA, UD, nr. 155, July 22, 1915.

¹⁸⁶ RA, UD, nr. 170, August 18, 1915.

¹⁸⁷ RA, UD, nr. 182, September 2, 1915.

Anckarsvård made it quite clear that the massacres were neither an act of vengeance, nor a matter of civil or domestic war, but a systematic killing, planned and implemented by the state, i.e. a genocide. Thus, Turkey was behaving as a failed state.

The dispatch of September 4 presented the estimation of the Armenian losses given by the Armenian Patriarch. Anckarsvård confirmed the Patriarch's estimation about half the Armenian population having been erased, but doubted that the Armenian population was as numerous as two million, which the Patriarch asserted. Anckarsvård also noted the negative economic impact these persecutions had in Turkey, since almost 80 % of the trade was in Armenian hands.¹⁸⁸

On September 28, the following was stated in SvM:

[On] Monday, April 19, the slaughtering of the Armenians began around Van. At one place, 2,500 men were killed. They were arranged in groups of 50 and shot. Even boys fell for men's fate. But the girls and women are treated by soldiers as they please. Many were subjected to ignominious violence. Women tried to flee to the mountains, where they tried to appease their hunger with snow.¹⁸⁹

A telegram from London published in SvM describes the atrocities committed during the deportations and the fact that many of those deported did not reach the designated destinations, dying in piles on the side of the roads.¹⁹⁰ Four days later SvM claimed that the US Ambassador in Constantinople, Morgenthau, had been ordered by his Government to deliver a warning to the Turkish Foreign Minister, stating that "if the Armenian massacres do not cease, the friendly relations with US will be jeopardised."¹⁹¹ On October 10, SvM published Lord Bryce's appeal for a manifestation of opinion, especially from the neutral countries. Lord Bryce pointed out Germany's complicity in the Armenian massacres with reference to Armenian testimonies about "German consular representatives in Asia Minor not only watched, but even encouraged these horrors."¹⁹² But, a similar directive as the American warning was never issued by Stockholm.

Instead of the exhorted protests, the Swedish press now started to question the creditability of the news. On October 11, SvM noted that the Swedish newspaper *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning* (Gothenburg's Trade and Shipping Newspaper) doubts the information and quotes the Turkish Government's explanation concerning the necessity of the measures due to Armenian liaison with the Russians, British, and the French.¹⁹³

1915 was replete with notes and reports about the state implemented annihilation and extermination of the Armenian nation. The Ambassador alone dispatched over 10 reports regarding the persecution of the Armenians and their fate.

¹⁸⁸ RA, UD, nr. 183, September 4, 1915.

¹⁸⁹ SvM, September 9, 1915.

¹⁹⁰ SvM, October 2, 1915.

¹⁹¹ SvM, October 4, 1915.

¹⁹² SvM, October 8, 1915.

¹⁹³ SvM, October 11, 1915.

On January 15, 1916, Anckarsvård dispatched a report written by the Swedish Military Attaché Wirsén, in which the situation of the military operations in Turkey was described. Commenting on the shortage of food, the report pointed out the straits partly as a result of bad harvests in Anatolia. This was due to lack of labour since “so many men had been enlisted and in large areas the most able-bodied population, i.e. the Armenians, have been subjected to the saddest fate...”¹⁹⁴

The Swedish Military Attaché, Wirsén, arrived in Constantinople in August, 1915, which explains the absence of military reports in regard to the Armenian massacres during that year. In one of his very first briefings on the situation in the Ottoman Empire, sent to Major O. M. Francke at the Swedish General Staff's Headquarter in Stockholm, Wirsén depicts the tension that has arisen between the Turks and Germans due to some actions taken by the former which has had a negative impact on German financial interests. He added: “That the persecution of Armenians is also being by the Turks insidiously blamed on the Germans is probably known in Sweden.”¹⁹⁵ He also made the following comment:

I am being treated with remarkable cordiality by the leading Turks in the War Ministry. The Turks have now indeed started to initiate negotiations for direct trade contacts with Sweden, and I assume that it is mostly therefore I am receiving my share of sunshine.¹⁹⁶

The remark was due to Wirsén's knowledge of Turkish opinion about him. In one of his very first letters he sent to Stockholm, he wrote the following:

... people, in Turkish circles had the opinion that I am less Turkish-friendly, an opinion which apparently originates from the Turkish Ambassador in Stockholm. He has apparently, in connection to some words about me in Aftonbladet in regard to my appointment, been informed about my work which was published some years ago (1909) about the Balkan People, where one or two less favourable [words] have been said about the then Turkey (before the introduction of the Constitution).¹⁹⁷

However, he had been greeted kindly by Enver Pasha and was planning to visit the front within the coming weeks.

On February 22, DN reports that “The Turks are now fleeing from that part of Armenia, where the Turkish gendarmerie during last September drove thousands of women and children into their houses, after which these were set on fire, so that the stench from the burned corpses filled the air.”¹⁹⁸

Wirsén did not waste much time in gathering information and soon upon his arrival he started to send letters and reports regarding the situation in the Ottoman Turkey. In his February report

¹⁹⁴ RA, UD, nr. 20, January 15, 1916.

¹⁹⁵ KA, Generalstaben, letter 1 & 2, January 31, 1916.

¹⁹⁶ KA, Generalstaben, letter 1 & 2, January 31, 1916.

¹⁹⁷ KA, Generalstaben, Wirsén's handwritten letter to Major Francke, August 11, 1915. For Wirsén's mentioned book see Wirsén, 1909.

¹⁹⁸ DN, February 22, 1916.

on the war situation in Turkey, Wirsén writes the following in regard to the Caucasian front, where the Russian army advances:

The Armenian population has equipped a large number of armed bands, which go ahead of the Russian troops and avenging the Armenian massacres in last fall, destroying the fleeing Turkish population as much as they can.¹⁹⁹

On March 13, 1916, Wirsén noted the tension surrounding the German officers which was affecting their relations with the Turks. He assumes that something is about to happen at the Caucasian front, but the outcome is uncertain. He concludes the paragraph with the following sentence:

To observe is that the persecution of the Armenians have now begun in Thrace and even in Constantinople itself, when the Armenians living in the eastern parts of the city have begun being transported away to Asia.²⁰⁰

On March 27, Wirsén included the following report in his dispatch:

The Russians advance slowly in Armenia. It is very difficult to be well-informed on the situation, since the Headquarters here sometime issues two different communiqués about the same thing. One is intended for foreign countries, the other is for the Turks. The former is anxiously kept secret.²⁰¹

The secrecy and the doublet information handling described here is similar to the same observation made in regard to the issued orders for massacring and deportations, described earlier. Commenting on the general situation in May, Wirsén points out the main source for the epidemics spreading in the eastern front:

The health situation in Iraq is horrifying. Typhus fever claims numerous victims. The Armenian persecutions have to a large degree contributed to the spreading of the disease, since the expelled [Armenians] in hundred thousands have died from hunger and deprivation along the roads.²⁰²

During the rest of 1916, Wirsén did not write anything specific in relation to the Armenian persecutions, but continues to report in detail the war efforts in eastern Turkey, which he continually names “Armenia.”

In his dispatch, dated May 20, 1916, Ambassador Anckarsvärd reported on the ongoing negotiations between Turkey and Germany, commenting on the situation in Turkey and the possibility of rumoured surrender. Talking about the possible assaults on foreigners in Turkey and the subsequent foreign intervention, Anckarsvärd asserts that a foreign intervention would only weaken the Turkish Empire, but his analysis does not leave any other options:

¹⁹⁹ KA, Generalstaben, letter 11, March 3, 1916.

²⁰⁰ KA, Generalstaben, letter 13, March 13, 1916.

²⁰¹ KA, Generalstaben, letter 18, March, 23, 1916.

²⁰² KA, Generalstaben, letter 8, May 13, 1916.

It is only due to the war that an ultra terrorist regiment such as the present can be uphold. The true nature of this regiment has come to surface in such a significant manner through the Armenian persecutions. That the same violent methods still are implemented is evident through the recent intelligence reports regarding measures for subjugating fermentation among Arabs. A week ago, 21 Arab sheiks were hanged in Damascus. Between 150 and 200 notable Arab families have been deported from Syria to the vicinity of Angora (with a totally different and colder climate), while their property has been confiscated. In Aleppo there are rumors regarding an imminent deportation of the Arabs in hundreds of thousands.

Such is the Young Turk administration, so incompetent is it in solving the difficult problems posed by the heterogeneous elements which the population is composed of. The military successes, thanks to German aid, should not create the illusion that Turkey will be re-born thanks to the war. The stub is so corroded that a real regeneration is inconceivable.²⁰³

Thus, Anckarsvärd predicted that, even though an intervention might not be the perfect answer, it might be the only alternative since no change would come from within to improve the situation of the minorities. However, the war gave the perfect opportunity to act as a failed state without fearing external interference.

On June 7, a telegram reports of a survey, conducted by a delegate from the Federation of Cities' Caucasian department, indicating that in 45 Armenian villages in Trabizond, inhabited by 8,343 Armenians prior to the war, now (since the Russian occupation) only has 367 inhabitants. In Trabizond, for every ten thousand inhabitants only 92 are still alive. "The extermination of the Armenians has been done systematically."²⁰⁴

On August 15, DN published an article written by the Armenian correspondent of the English newspapers, Arshak Safrastian, who, describing the slaughter with terrifying realism, writes about the Armenian will to survive and the complicity of the German Government. He also points out that the German public, despite the presence of German missionaries in the area witnessing the massacres, is most probably unaware of the events due to the government's censorship of missionary's reports and letters.²⁰⁵

The Swedish passivity in response to the reported atrocities was criticised by Editor G. H. von Kock, who not only criticised the Government, but the Church as well:

It is with sorrow one notes that, since the initial knowledge of the issue, yet has none or at least very little been done to assist the Christian Armenians and Syrians who in Asia Minor have been murdered in hundred thousands by Turks and Kurds. In the presence of this unpleasant religious war, about which testimonies have started to come from impartial missionaries and American relief expeditions and which has also been depicted in a heartbreaking manner in Swedish newspapers, not even the Swedish Church has come with a call for help and support. Sometimes it feels that we, here in Sweden, have been paralysed in the face of all misery which now prevails and increases constantly in the world.²⁰⁶

²⁰³ RA, UD, Nr. 80, May 20, 1916.

²⁰⁴ DN, June 7, 1916.

²⁰⁵ DN, August 15, 1916.

²⁰⁶ DN, August 30, 1916.

Almost a month later, Anckarsvård dispatched a report notifying Stockholm of the possibility of Greek declaration of war against Turkey, which could result in the repetition of the Armenian fate, this time engulfing the Greeks in Turkey. The report is significant due to the following:

During such circumstances it becomes an extraordinary difficult task for the foreign mission in Constantinople to, in case of war against Greece, be assigned to the task of protecting Greek interests...

On the other hand it should be noted that the foreign legation, which will be assigned to the mentioned task, with all certainty will meet the most stubborn resistance from the Porte in every case when trying to intervene or complaint on behalf of the Greeks. It is obvious that the foreign legation hereby could easily get into conflict with the Turkish government and thereby jeopardize its influence for protection of its own country's interests.

Thus, the Dutch Ambassador here has notified his government, that in case a possible request from Greece regarding entrusting the protection of its interests in Turkey to the Dutch legation, it must be denied. The foreign ministry in Hague has replied that it completely approves the Ambassador's view. On my own behalf, I would like respectfully make the same proposal to Your Excellency as it concerns this embassy, in case the government in Athens would turn to H. M.'s government.²⁰⁷

This is the only instance where Anckarsvård recommended a certain policy to Stockholm regarding the events in Turkey. It also illustrates that risks of endangering one's own country's interests could directly prevent that country from intervening in case of a humanitarian urgency. This policy would become much more flagrant once the new Swedish Ambassador would arrive in 1920.

1916 was the year when the annihilation had had its toll and there were not many Armenians left to kill. The change would come during the following year, when an Entente victory might have encouraged a more critical stance towards Germany and its allied Turkey.

2.2 1917-1920: Recess in the Killings and Hopes for the Future

In his dispatch on January 5, Anckarsvård made an important observation in regard to German influence in Turkey in regard to the impending risk for Turkish surrender:

The situation would have been different if Turkey had followed the advice of the Central Powers in letting them organise the question of provisioning etc...Even worse than this is, however, the extermination [utrotandet] of Armenians, which, perhaps, could have been prevented if German advisers had in time received authority over the civilian administration as the German officers actually practise over army and navy... The above mentioned statements, as mentioned, come from a diplomatic official allied with Turkey. Your Excellency can then consider what the neutral diplomats think of the situation here.²⁰⁸

On January 14, 1917, Anckarsvård sent a dispatch regarding the deportation decision of the Ottoman Greeks. The US Ambassador had been trying to stop the deportation by stressing to the Porte the kind of impression "a repetition of the Armenian persecutions, but this time against

²⁰⁷ RA, UD, nr. 137, September 25, 1916.

²⁰⁸ RA, UD, nr. 9, January 5, 1917.

the Greeks, would give in the entire civilised world.” He ended the report by asserting the following:

What above all appears as an unnecessary cruelty is that the deportation is not limited to the men alone, but is extended likewise to women and children. This is supposedly done in order to much easier be able to confiscate the property of the deported.²⁰⁹

1917 was the revival year for the Armenian question in Sweden. Then, even writers and politicians joined the debate. The Turkish Embassy in Stockholm got engaged in the debate, refuting the allegations presented in the Swedish press. On March 24, DN published the interpellation, written by Stockholm’s Mayor Carl Lindhagen, to Foreign Minister Johannes Hellner, stating that “Earlier cruelties in Armenia fade in the face of the actual extermination [utrotandet] of the Armenians, which recently has been going on.” He continued, asking whether:

...the Government, alone or in cooperation with other neutral governments wished to in respect to the parties concerned, who could have any influence in the matter, to help the right of the Armenian population to protect their lives, their property and their nationality?²¹⁰

As an answer to Mayor Lindhagen’s interpellation to the Swedish Foreign Minister, the Chairman of the Conservative Parliamentary Group, Arvid Lindman, rejected any claim for intervention, referring to the fact that Sweden will not interfere in other state’s internal affairs.²¹¹ The leader of the opposition, the Chairman of the Social Democratic Party, Hjalmar Branting, mentioned that Sweden should protest against the Armenian massacres in the same way Sweden protested against the “catastrophe in Belgium.”²¹² But, no protest was ever issued. Why did the Swedish Government differ between the Armenian and the Belgian cases? A possible answer would be the geographical and economical closeness to Belgium which made it easier to identify with the “European” victims, while Armenia, despite the religious affinity, was in the distance Asian part of the Ottoman Turkey, almost unknown to the Swedes. Nevertheless, a more accurate answer would require further research regarding government argumentation and decision making. The humanitarian crisis seemed apparently not be of enough value to prevail the doctrine of non-intervention in a foreign sovereign state.

On March 26, a protest meeting was arranged in support of the Armenians. In a full Auditorium in Stockholm the meeting was presided by Mayor Lindhagen, and the leader of the Social Democrats and the future Prime Minister, Hjalmar Branting, gave the introductory speech. The key note was held by the author Marika Stjernstedt. The French, Russian, Belgian, and Italian Ambassadors also attended the meeting and funds were raised.²¹³ Talking about the Armenian

²⁰⁹ RA, UD, nr. 14, January 14, 1917.

²¹⁰ DN, March 24, 1917

²¹¹ RAK, 35:29-30 and 62:7-8, March 23, 1917.

²¹² RAK, 62:10, March 23, 1917.

²¹³ SvD, March 28, 1917.

massacres during the last decades of 19th century, Branting rebuked the conservative newspapers for practically having silenced information on the massacres:

The suffering over there has not been able to penetrate through the walls of silence, the most impenetrable of all. Perhaps the silence depends on [the fact] that a considerable and loud part of our press has not found anything in the matter where it usually acquires its information, in Germany. There they have too been silent – for quite understandable reasons.²¹⁴

Pointing to the testimonies, documents and intelligence information that had reached the outside world since 1916, Branting made the following remark: “...They have witnessed that in Armenia, a fully organized genocide [folk-mord] has been carried out and the events down there are unparalleled with all that has happened during the war.”²¹⁵ Branting might very well have been the first public figure who, decades before Raphael Lemkin, used the term *folk-mord*, verbatim genocide, in regard to the annihilation of a nation. Branting also informed that he, back in 1916, had contacted the then Foreign Minister Knut Wallenberg in order to make him intervene in order to put a stop to the massacres. The courting had been fruitless.²¹⁶ Bear in mind that at this point of time Branting was the opposition leader, chastising the Government for its Germanophile attitudes and indifference at the face of an obvious humanitarian disaster. He would have the chance to address the issue while in office of the Prime Minister, which we will touch upon later.

During her speech, Stjernstedt, talking about the Armenian history and the situation of different people under Turkish rule, said:

But, unlike most other conquered people, Armenians have never had any separatist aspirations... And then came 1915. The Young Turks considered solving the Armenian question while the world was busy elsewhere and the deportations and massacres, well-organised in the smallest detail, were initiated.²¹⁷

She then continued to give a detailed description of the different stages of the annihilation, how the deportations had been staged, how children were taken from their mothers, how women and girls preferred to commit suicide rather than being violated by the soldiers, and the carnage, hunger, and diseases which spared only a few out of hundred thousands Armenians.²¹⁸ Here, Stjernstedt concurs with the image depicted by Anckarsvärd's reports about the state orchestrated solution for resolving the Armenian question, even though the Embassy dispatches were marked as top secret or confidential and can not have been known to the Swedish public. Stjernstedt also mentioned abduction of the Armenian children and women at large.

²¹⁴ SD, March 27, 1917.

²¹⁵ SD, March 27, 1917; SvD, March 28, 1917

²¹⁶ SD, March 27, 1917.

²¹⁷ SvD, March 27, 1917.

²¹⁸ SvD, March 27, 1917.

The meeting infuriated the Turkish mission in Stockholm, which published an article in SvM, explaining that the Turkish Government, at the beginning of the war, had cautioned all for “...severe punishment for attempts to rebellion. Armenians continued with their old policy, and a bloodbath and attacks on Turks began – with other words, all symptoms for a total insurrection.”²¹⁹ Nine days later, Stjernstedt published a passionate article about the Armenian massacres, citing new testimonies verifying the accusations against the Turks.²²⁰

On April 23, NDA published a lengthy article, written by Major Gustav Hjalmar Pravitz, denouncing the allegations made against the Turkish authorities. Recently back home from his mission in Persia, Pravitz published an article in NDA, as a response to the two brochures *Sven Hedin-adelnman* (“Sven Hedin – nobleman”), by K. G. Ossiannilsson, and *Armeniernas fruktansvärda läge* (“Armenian’s horrible situation”), by Marika Stjernstedt. “The former book went directly into the trash can”, writes Pravitz.²²¹ Pravitz wrote that, unlike the authors of these two articles, he personally witnessed the situation of the Armenians during his journey from Constantinople to Aleppo. “In spite of the fact that I have been and am a well pronounced friend of Germany and her allies, consistent with my position as a neutral state’s servant...,” Pravitz started his journey ready to witness the Turkish cruelties, partly described by American travellers, trying to form his own opinion in the matter:

And although my long service in the Orient has not convinced me that the Armenians, despite their Christianity, are any of God’s best children, I decided to keep my eyes open to see for myself to which extent the rumours about Turkish assaults are true and the nameless victims were telling the truth.²²²

He admitted having witnessed much misery, but refuted any evidence of deliberate Turkish acts of violence. In view of the fact that the Armenians were collaborating with the Russians, awaiting the eminent Russian invasion to “turn against the hated local authority”, Pravitz argued, that the Turkish measures of removing the Armenian “settlers” to the eastern and south-eastern parts of Turkey were “irreproachable.” Writing about the living conditions of the Armenians, Pravitz asserts that the Turks treated the Armenians much better than many other nations:

Indian Kulis and Bengalis under British rule, and the Persian nationalists in Azerbaijan under the Russians’ “pénétration pacifique”, and the Negroes in Belgian Congo, and the Indians in the Kautschuk district in French Guyana. All these, not to mention many others, seem to me, are victimized to a higher degree and more permanently than the Armenians.²²³

²¹⁹ SvM, April 2, 1917.

²²⁰ DN, April 11, 1917.

²²¹ NDA, April 23, 1917. Ossiannilsson’s book was a harsh attack at the Swedish explorer Sven Hedin. Ossiannilsson openly and repeatedly through out the book accused Hedin for his pro-German attitude and claimed that the explorer had missed the German and Turkish atrocities committed in Belgium respective Armenia, and instead had boasted over drinking champagne with the “Armenian-slaughters” Enver, Djemal and Talaat. See Ossiannilsson, 1917.

²²² NDA, April 23, 1917.

²²³ NDA, April 23, 1917.

On August 2, DN wrote about the coming international peace congress in Stockholm, for which numerous delegates, from East and West, had already arrived, among them a representative of “occupied Armenia”, Mr. Zorian. The article stated that he would at the congress:

Specially emphasise the principal of people’s free right of determination over their own destiny. Thus, a possible free Poland, Finland, [and] Armenia, according to respective people’s wish to live independent or dependant under another state.²²⁴

The first appearance of a longer Swedish missionary text, written about the World War Armenian massacres, is a collection of witness testimonies, *Blood and Tears: Armenian’s Sufferings in Turkey*, edited by M. Piranjan and translated from German to Swedish by missionary Olga Moberg. In the foreword, missionary Lars Erik Högberg, referring to the Armenian massacres points out “that in Turkey they intend to exterminate an entire nation.” Mentioning the Armenian aspirations for freeing themselves from the “Turkish yoke” and their yearning for regaining their lost fatherland and the expected treatment received by the Muslims, Högberg writes “But by these means none of the flagrant atrocities could be justified, which are here being implemented against the Armenian nation in general but especially against the women and the children.”²²⁵

Olga Moberg, a Swedish missionary in Caucasus between 1908 and 1916, writes about the sad fate of the Armenians, giving a short history of Armenia and mentioning the Armenian massacres of 1894-96. “But,” she notes, “all these horrible actions fade compared with the formal extermination of the Armenians in Turkey during the summer of 1915.”²²⁶

An article published in *Evangelisches Gemeindeblatt*, rendered the testimony of two German nurses, serving in a Turkish hospital in Erzurum and later in Erzindjan between 1914 and 1915, who sent the story to the newspaper in July 29, 1915. Their protests against the “slaughter of the Armenians forced them to give up their work and leave the country.”²²⁷ In places, the testimony renders a detailed description of the mass killings by the Turkish soldiers. After returning from an execution mission, a young Turkish soldier had assured them that “It was a misery! I could not shoot, I just pretended!”²²⁸ In Kharpout, the nurses attempted to save a group of six boys, 3-14 years old. The manger of the hotel, where the nurses were staying, warned them not “to say too much, since the killings of the women and the children were implemented on orders from Constantinople.” Ignoring the warning, the nurses appealed to the Governor who rejected their appeal, declaring that they were no longer tolerated in the city and were sent, via Sivas, to the border. Short after, they received the news about the boys being killed.²²⁹ En route they saw the

²²⁴ DN, August 2, 1917.

²²⁵ Högberg, 1917, p. 3-4.

²²⁶ Moberg, 1917, p. 11.

²²⁷ Piranjan, 1917, p. 15.

²²⁸ Piranjan, 1917, p. 16.

²²⁹ Piranjan, 1917, p. 18.

bodies of dead naked people and met an armed man. “He told that the Government had given him the task to kill all Armenians who travelled by; already he had shot 259.”²³⁰

There are in total 18 articles in the publication. The converging point in almost all of them is the highly organized act of annihilation, where the Turkish Government has ordered the Turkish Military to gather, remove from the cities and then kill the Armenian population, while giving the Kurds free hands to participate in the massacring and the confiscation of Armenian land and property. One article is of special interest. It describes the accounts of an American doctor, with the initials M. K., previously stationed in Turkish Armenia and Constantinople, but now in Tbilisi. In a meeting with other missionaries, a preacher present in the group was asked why the US Ambassador in Constantinople did not take measures in regard to the “bloodbath in Armenia.” The preacher answered that the Ambassador had told Enver Pasha about the grave responsibility these actions burdened Turkey with. Enver had replied:

Dear Ambassador! If we come out victorious from the war, who will then dare to demand us accountability for our actions? If we, however, should be at a disadvantage and be defeated, then we know that our end has come. In that case, the Armenian question does not especially matter. In the time being the European Powers are busy with the World War. Some are on our side, the others are our enemy, and each part does what it can. America is yet neutral. We know that we therefore do not have anything to fear.²³¹

Even though the citing is third-hand information, thus questioning its accuracy and authenticity, it does correlate with analysis which Anckarsvård mentioned in his, above mentioned, reports during summer and fall of 1915. It reiterates that Turkish leaders were well aware of the golden opportunity: the allies would overlook the acts of cruelty for the sake of the war effort; the enemies would be busy with their own war concerns, while the neutrals would avoid being entangled in the ongoing conflict. Furthermore, the Turkish Government had already tested the international tolerance and ability in this matter, namely during the already mentioned Armenian massacres of 1894-1896.²³² The silence of the bystanders has also been discussed in relation to Hitler’s and the Nazi’s knowledge about the Armenian genocide and world’s reaction, convincing the Third Reich leaders that the world’s rescue attempts of the Jews would either not take place or be too late to affect the goals of the genocide.²³³ This conclusion will be further confirmed by Enver’s remark, later in the paper.

²³⁰ Piranjan, 1917, p. 19.

²³¹ Piranjan, 1917, p. 37-38.

²³² Dadrian highlights this issue, asserting the 1894-96 massacres being a prelude to the Armenian genocide, where the indifference and passivity of the Major Powers (the bystander) signalled the perpetrators the green light for implementing a larger scale massacre, once the opportunity was given. See Dadrian, 2004, 172-174.

²³³ Dadrian, 2004, p. 402-412. The most representative expression in this regard is Hitler’s famous speech for his officers, recollecting the fate of Armenians: “Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?” See Schabas, 2000, p. 1.

Writing about the impacts of the war on Turkey, the territorial losses as well as the impacts on the society, the Swedish Envoy Ahlgren makes some observations about the situation in Turkey. In explaining the increased living costs he identified a number of reasons:

...obstacles for domestic trade, the almost total paralysing of the foreign trade and finally the strong decreasing of labour power, caused partly by the mobilisation but partly also by the extermination of the Armenian race [utrotandet af den armeniska rasen].²³⁴

Thus, Ahlgren concurred with the Ambassador's view when describing the true goal of the massacres and the nature of the Armenian fate. The analysis of the situation was elaborated more in detail soon after in the report about the new masters of Turkey, the "Young Turks". In a dispatch on September 10, Algren gives a detailed description of the Union and Progress Party. The Turkish policy prior to the war was that of "Ottomanism", aiming to homogenise the disintegrating heterogenic empire which until that was kept together by autocracy. However, the new leaders realised that Ottomanism threatened the Turkish element, since other subdued people "demanded equal rights for themselves as the Turks: security for life and property, access to the civil and the military offices, yes even to government."²³⁵ In order to prevent this Talaat and Enver, through the coup d'état in 1913, eliminated the liberal government, and started implementing changes in the constitution for improving the rights of the Turkish element. Rendering the new Turkish leader's policy of homogenising Turkey, Ahlgren asserts this being planned by:

...assimilating other nationalities and, when it failed, soon enough through political persecutions and extermination. It is in the light of these facts that one should regard the measures taken against the Armenians and maybe future similar [actions] against the Greeks.²³⁶

Ahlgren continued claiming that the "Turkish chauvinism characterised the party program" and the fact that "Cruelty is exerted especially against the non-Turkish elements of the population." All opposition had been removed brutally, all major position within the administration were appointed to loyal people, while a new police force was created to act as a secure tool in the government's hand. The same applied to the army. He concluded the dispatch presenting some of the top leaders, namely Enver Pasha (War Minister), Djemal Pasha (Marine Minister and Governor of Syria), Talaat Pasha (Interior Minister and Grand Vizier), and Dr. Nazim, the chief ideologist of the party. Presenting Talaat, Ahlgren makes the following note: "Talaat possesses a violent energy, great intelligence, great working-ability, and an utter complete ruthlessness. Regarding the annihilation of the Armenians he uttered that it was a painful necessity." Describing Djemal Pasha, the Envoy notes that the Governor of Syria was most responsible for the Arab uprising due to "His violent rampaging and executions of notable Arabs

²³⁴ RA, UD, nr. 232, August, 20, 1917.

²³⁵ RA, UD, nr. 260, September 10, 1917.

²³⁶ RA, UD, nr. 260, September 10, 1917.

and their sons..."²³⁷ In regard to the religious leader, Moussa Kiazim Effendi, Ahlgren notes that his role is to secure the support of the Muslim world as well as the superiority of the Muslim Turkish elements in the country. This, in spite the fact that none of the men in power are especially religious, but they have realised the kind of power religion posses over the masses. Ahlgren ends the report by describing the chief ideologist of the party, Dr. Nazim Bey, his great influence on the Committee as well as the ministers. Nazim is said to be the architect behind the social engineering, by moving non-Turkish elements to the inner parts of the country to make way for settling their homes with Turks from areas lost in the Balkan Wars. He is also "one of the instigators of the Armenian massacres. He is a great chauvinist, much hard-working, and has large number of followers."²³⁸

1917 was the year when the scale of the Armenian massacres became known to the world. Returning missionaries, who had been unable to communicate with their countries from the war zones, now told their horror stories of massacres and deportations, the carnage and the death tolls. Their published stories incited a public reaction of moderate level in Sweden. Public figures arranged meetings and collections were made while the opposition chastised Government's passivity.

After the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, the war on the Caucasian front took an unexpected turn when Russia pulled out of the war and signed the peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk.²³⁹ From being hardly pressured by the ever advancing Russian Army in Turkish Armenia, the Turks now got the upper hand, pushing forward towards Transcaucasus, and the newborn Armenian Republic.

The Armenian question became once more a mere tool in the propaganda war of the Major Powers. The Germanophile NDA published a large number of articles depicting the actions of the Armenian armed bands in the area as "blood-curdling Armenian revolutionary movement." On January 10, NDA published a Turkish telegram claiming that Armenian natives in the Russian Army, during the retreat in the Caucasian front, had initiated persecution of the "Muslim population in the area."²⁴⁰ Where ever the Russian Army retreats, "these Armenian bands turn up, who make themselves guilty of all kinds of atrocities. They rob, steal and massacre all women, children and old men who come in their way...which is implemented in a systematic manner."²⁴¹ It is noteworthy that the Turkish accusations are formulated in almost same manner in which the Turks were accused of the earlier Armenian massacres. The fact that the Turks now, by accusing the Armenians, seem to justify their actions in the past is an observation made by the Swedish Ambassador, which we will get back to.²⁴²

²³⁷ RA, UD, nr. 260, September 10, 1917.

²³⁸ RA, UD, nr. 260, September 10, 1917.

²³⁹ Hovannisian, 1967, p. 110.

²⁴⁰ NDA, January 10, 1918; SvM, February 8, 1918.

²⁴¹ NDA, March 30, 1918.

²⁴² See the letter from Anckarsvärd, RA, UD, nr. 23, February 13, 1918.

On the same day as NDA's last article, SvD published a Russian telegram, mentioning the Caucasian Parliament's declaration of independence and their separate peace treaty with Turkey and the creation of an autonomous Armenia.²⁴³ Six days later, SvD published yet another Russian telegram, about the Armenian recapturing of Erzurum and surroundings.²⁴⁴ However, the image given by the Turkish agencies seems to be exaggerated. In his dispatch, dated February 13, 1918, Anckarsvård mentions Enver Pasha's report about "Armenian bands massacring innocent Muslims in those parts under Russian occupation". In regard to the necessity of creation of Turkish bands which can suppress the Armenians in the region, Anckarsvård made the following note: "From Turkish side, the Armenian cruelties will surely come to be alleged as an excuse for what Turkey earlier rendered herself guilty of extreme cruelties during the evacuation of the Armenians."²⁴⁵ Here the Ambassador describes one of the strategies employed by genocide deniers, namely distorted linkages and temporal confusions as well as self-righteousness and reversal for justifying ones own actions against the victim group.

Describing the military situation in Turkey in February, 1918, Wirsén reports the desertion of the Russian soldiers on the Armenian front. The Russians, abandoning the front, sold their guns and ammunitions to Armenian bands as well as deserted Turkish soldiers. That the Turkish Army faced a considerable resistance during their advance towards Caucasus and the capture of Baku, opening the possibility of "the creation of a great Turkish nation," introduced the risk for renewal of Armenian massacres:

One can assume that the new actions of the Armenian bands will give reasons to the Turkish Government to again organize persecutions against the remaining Armenian population in Eastern Armenia.

In the analyze of the mentioned conditions, it should not be forgotten that the Turks, without any doubt, have the sympathies of the numerous Tatars living in the Caucasus area, and that possible Armenian massacres from this side will be regarded chiefly as an advantage.²⁴⁶

Two weeks later, on March 25, Anckarsvård dispatched a report entitled "Turkish expansion plans". "Well-informed sources" were indicating that Turkish eyes now were aimed at Baku and beyond, as well as the Tartar inhabited Crimea Peninsula. However, Anckarsvård made the following note: "It remains to be seen whether these plans will be adopted by the Muslim population there, which probably would not be inclined to exchange the Russian regime, of which the land has enjoyed much use, for the Turkish, known for its misrule."²⁴⁷ The dream of Pan Turanism was then known by the Swedish representative and the goals for the Turkish push

²⁴³ SvD, March 30, 1918.

²⁴⁴ SvD, April 6, 1918.

²⁴⁵ RA, UD, nr. 23, February 13, 1918.

²⁴⁶ KA, Generalstab, letter 3, March 9, 1918. In regard to Turkish plans for creation of a great Turkish Empire, also see letter 9, dated May 10, 1918 and letter 4, dated May 18, 1918.

²⁴⁷ RA, UD, nr 41, March 25, 1918. Also see RA, UD, nr. 22, January 21, 1919.

eastward was clearly stated in Wirsén's report. Armenia and the Armenian nation was an obstacle for the realisation of this goal and must be eliminated.

On April 22, NDA published a new Turkish telegram, stating "...From reliable sources it is learned that Armenians...especially with cruelty have avenged on those of our captive soldiers, who are invalids."²⁴⁸ A month later both SvM and SvD published a Russian telegram asserting "...Those events which are taking place indicate that the extermination policy against the Armenian people, which have been used in some decades still continues." At the same time, Germany is blamed for its accessory to these atrocities.²⁴⁹ What the German Ambassador had warned back in 1915 was now being unfolded in the international arena.

After a conversation with the Turkish Foreign Minister, Nessimy Bey, Anckarsvård dispatched a letter to Stockholm, reporting on the information he had received from the Minister. Nessimy Bey had refuted the recent news about renewed Armenian massacres, calling them as British propaganda and had pointed out that their previous sufferings were due to the Armenians' own rebellious posture and the subsequent evacuation. "But," Anckarsvård added, "...to just recently [and] unnecessary subject the Armenians to new sufferings could not be comprehended by any reasonable person in Turkey, since this would further nourish the already prevailing indignation towards Turkey."²⁵⁰ In other words, Anckarsvård hinted at existing foreign resentment towards Turkey and its treatment of the Armenian subjects, even though a strong condemnation of the actions was conspicuous by its absence.

At the end of the summer, the Turkish leaders must have sensed the inevitable defeat approaching with haste. It was now essential to do penance for the war time measures and ingratiate themselves with the Entente in the face of the inevitable peace negotiations. Therefore, the harsh Turkish wordings and accusations towards the Armenians gave place to that of reconciliation and Turkish benevolence. On August 10, DN published a Turkish article, writing about the decision of letting the deported Armenians return home:

This shown favour to the Armenians shall give them a new opportunity to display their feelings of gratitude towards the Imperial Throne. The newspaper clarifies the benefits, from commercial and economic point of view, the state will have from the Armenian element as soon as they return to their core.²⁵¹

²⁴⁸ NDA, April 22, 1918.

²⁴⁹ SvD and SvM, May 28, 1918.

²⁵⁰ RA, UD, nr. 58, April 22, 1918.

²⁵¹ DN, August 10, 1918. It should be mentioned that the Turkish leaders also approached the Armenian leaders present at the Trabizond Peace Conference. The Armenians had during the entire March and April been trying to convince the Turks to agree on some minimal requirements for the survival of the Armenian nation, but the Turks had replied coldly. The tables, however, were now turned and the Turkish Chief Negotiator, Rauf Bey, asked the Armenian representative, Khatisian, "to accompany him to Port Mudros as evidence that enmity no longer existed between Turks and Armenians. For this favour, the Ottoman government was willing to relinquish Kars and Ardahan, re-establish the 1914 international boundary, and even cede a part of the Alashkert Valley." The Armenians turned down the offer. See Hovannisian, 1967, p. 238.

On August 25, Ahlgren reported on the ongoing peace negotiations in Caucasus between Turkey and the newly created Caucasian republics of Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia. Mentioning the Turkish push eastward, into Caucasus, towards Baku and beyond. He notes that the Georgian and Azerbaijani republic's territorial demands were mostly met by Turkey, while the original Armenian claims to a territory of 45,000 square kilometres were limited to only 11,000 square kilometres, largely encompassing the Erivan province. Ahlgren then makes the following remark:

Thus, Armenia was heavily circumscribed, but this is less surprising than that the Turks have, at all, decided to recognise an independent Armenian state, which conspicuously contradicts their implemented policy since 1915, which strived to solve the Armenian question by the extermination of the Armenian race [den armeniska rasens utrotande].²⁵²

However, the Turkish recognition was not voluntarily, but due to German persuasion. However, the Turkish offensive towards Baku halted by signing the ceasefire treaty in Mudros, by which Turkey surrendered on October 30, 1918.²⁵³ The Turkish reconciliation measures would continue in 1919.

It is noteworthy to mention a dispatch which Anckarsvård send to Stockholm on October 8, 1918. The dispatch contained a debriefing on Anckarsvård's audience at Crown Prince Abdul Medjid's court. The prince had dismissed the Talaat cabinet due to its misrule of the country and especially lost confidence, internal as well as external, due to "two unforgivable errors, which in the eyes of Turkey and abroad, made them unsuitable of running the country, namely partly the Armenian persecutions, and partly the exaggerated cruelties committed in Syria against the conspiracy entangled Arab sheiks."²⁵⁴ The essential with this report and its content is two-fold: 1) the Turkish rule was indicating a failed state, misgoverning the country in general and not only in regard to the minorities; 2) the Turkish reaction, here by the Crown Prince, did admit to the knowledge of the atrocities long before the Entente powers exerted pressure on the defeated Turkey and subsequent trials.

Almost two weeks later, on October 20, Anckarsvård reports on the program of the new government, which, among others, includes "the home-returning of the deported during the war (Armenians and Greeks) and compensating their inflicted losses."²⁵⁵ During the debate in the Parliament a discussion had evolved demanding punishment of the committed cruelties during the war, which referred to the persecutions against the Armenians and the Greeks. The Grand Vizier had promised that justice would be served. However, the Ambassador noted that the threat in regard to the punishment should not be taken seriously.²⁵⁶

²⁵² RA, UD, Nr. 118, August 25, 1918.

²⁵³ Pasdermadjian, 1949, p. 494.

²⁵⁴ RA, UD, Nr. 143, October 8, 1918.

²⁵⁵ RA, UD, Nr. 152, October 20, 1918.

²⁵⁶ RA, UD, Nr. 152, October 20, 1918.

At the same day of the signing of the cease fire Anckarsvård dispatched a new report, describing the new government's actions. While waiting for the details of the cease fire the new government was hastily taking steps to repair as much as possible of committed error:

Above all, the government strives after, as much as possible, repairing the injustice, which in such a large extension affected Armenians and Greeks. They who have been driven away from their homes may now return and it is announced that their losses will be compensated. Apparently it is hoped that through these measures, the veil of oblivion shall spread over the mass killings, for which hundred thousands Armenians have fallen victim for. Men between, however, talks about that the "Entente" will demand personal responsibility from those who have staged the persecutions, and an English statesman's previously stated threat is still fresh in the memory.²⁵⁷

1918 was the year of beckons of hope for the Armenian nation. The Entente victory seemed at hand and now even the Turkish tone regarding the issue had softened to some extent. Both sides of the conflict used the Armenian question as a tool in advancing their own goals and Sweden continued to receive reports and testimonies about the Armenian massacres

In 1919, the Swedish Missionary, E. John Larson, with experiences from his work in Turkey and the Middle East, published a book, *Vid Ararats fot* ("At Ararat's foot"), writing about the Swedish Mission's 35 years activity in Caucasus. Describing the situation in Caucasus, Larson mentions the 1894-96 "Bloodbath in Armenia," how the Turkish Armenia is now emptied of Armenians, and the numerous immigrants seeking shelter in Caucasus.²⁵⁸

1919 was the year in which the Turkish Government desperately tried to salvage as much as it could. Under Entente pressure the Turkish Government issued orders for arresting all governmental and military members who were suspected of having committed crimes against humanity. Most of the leading figures, including Talaat, Enver, Djemal and Dr. Shakir fled to Germany before they were arrested.²⁵⁹ Many others escaped captivity. Nevertheless, a large number of them were put on trial and convicted.²⁶⁰

On January 3, SvM published a note, asserting that "According to a French investigation, the massacres in Armenia have claimed 1.5 million victims."²⁶¹ On February 11, SvM published another article mentioning the trial of the "executioners of Armenians." The article noted that "Governors and commanders, who are accused of instigating the massacres, are being tried in court martial trials."²⁶²

In an article, published in SvM on February 25, the women of Scandinavia appealed for the sake of the Armenians. An ad in the same paper recommended the two books, *Blod och tårar* and *Vid Ararats fot*.²⁶³

²⁵⁷ RA, UD, Nr. 161, October 30, 1918.

²⁵⁸ Larson, 1919, p. 66-69, 99.

²⁵⁹ Dadrian, 2004, p. 319.

²⁶⁰ Dadrian, 2004, p. 321-333.

²⁶¹ SvM, January 3, 1919.

²⁶² SvM, February 11, 1919.

²⁶³ SvM, February 25, 1919.

On January 10, Anckarsvärd reported on the future prospects of Turkey. A major issue mentioned in the report was the future of Cilicia (but also Diyarbakir), whether the important and rich province would be included in the planned independent Armenia, or left to Turkey. This report was one of the first of many from Constantinople to Stockholm, indicating the impacts of the creation of an Armenia and the affected Turkish finances. The main issue is how to salvage Turkey from an impending financial catastrophe, and more important, how to save foreign capital invested in Turkey? Anckarsvärd notes that a French adviser, commenting on the financial situation in Turkey, advises that “Turkey must be saved from bankruptcy and at the same time save the considerable French and English capital here in Turkey. ‘The Entente’ should, in its own interest, not ruin Turkey, which they hope, in the future, to fully be able to control and exploit freely”.²⁶⁴ Anckarsvärd concludes “‘The cliché’ states that one does not ruin its debtor, and the question is, whether one should best draw conclusions from this thesis.” Future reports, mentioned later ahead, will further illuminate the implementation of this thesis by the foreign powers in regard to Armenia and Turkey.

A month later, Anckarsvärd notified Stockholm of the arrest orders of the former Ittihadist leaders of the following bases:

1. The guilt of the “Union et Progrès” Party in dragging Turkey in the devastating war
2. Persecution and massacres of the Armenians and Greeks.
3. Extreme misuse of power, provision speculations, and a number of other irregularities.
4. The activities of the party members during the recent past in order to sabotage government measures, feared insurrection tendencies, etc.²⁶⁵

Anckarsvärd notes that the reaction to the news differs quite much among different nationalities; Greeks and Armenians welcome them and demand more severe measures, while Turkish newspapers state their dislike and label them as “political persecutions.”²⁶⁶

In a dispatch dated March 16, Anckarsvärd notified Stockholm about a presented statistics and the proportion between different nationalities in Turkey. Official numbers indicated that the number of Armenians had decreased about one million Armenians due to deportations and massacres.²⁶⁷ Almost three weeks later, Envoy Ahlgren dispatches a seven page report regarding the prevailing situation in Turkey. Describing that the Entente forces have occupied the European part and the capital, Ahlgren writes about the human sufferings implicated by the war. Mentioning the ongoing peace negotiations, he writes:

Meanwhile, brochures and statistical maps have been prepared, intended partly to reduce the impression of the Armenian and Greek massacres committed during the war, and partly, according to the nationality principle, prove Turkey’s right to areas which surrender are questioned.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁴ RA, UD, Nr. 5, January 10, 1919.

²⁶⁵ RA, UD, Nr. 16, February 5, 1919.

²⁶⁶ RA, UD, Nr. 16, February 5, 1919.

²⁶⁷ RA, UD, Nr. 29, March 16, 1919.

²⁶⁸ RA, UD, Nr. 34, April 5, 1919, p. 3.

Further ahead, reporting about the ongoing trials Ahlgren reports of the arresting of the members of the Union and Progress party, but foremost to punish those who have “caused Turkey’s entry into the war, have been responsible for the massacres of the Armenians and Greeks or involved in the numerous irregularities committed during the war – specially the scandalous and pernicious provisions usury.”²⁶⁹ On May 1, Ahlgren notifies Stockholm about the proceedings of the trials noting the long delay caused by the resentment of the Turks towards the

...resentment of the Turkish element in the country towards, under Entente pressure, initiated trials against people who – regardless to the mistakes and crimes they may have committed – nonetheless, by a large number of Turks, with few exceptions, are regarded as patriots. The guiltiest parties have, however, saved themselves by escaping.²⁷⁰

On August 15, SvM informed of an American investigation committee, an initiative by the US President Wilson, sent to Armenia to examine the situation from a military perspective.²⁷¹ On September 1, DN published the news about the discussion of US mandate over Armenia, a decision condemned by the Republicans.²⁷² In his report dated February 24, 1919, Wirsén looks forward to coming home and gives a general description of the situation in the country, warning Stockholm about the imposing migration wave, “a catastrophe in the entire Europe, worse than any other since the great migrations during the Middle Ages.” The following remark is, however, interesting:

The general situation in the Orient is unclear in so far as the fact that no definitive decisions are made in regard to Turkey’s position. That this old rotten butcher-state can not be allowed to exist as it has up till now, is, however, clear and must be agreed upon.²⁷³

Here Wirsén took the liberty to comment on the nature of the Ottoman Empire, revealing his thoughts about the internal structure of the Empire as well as the maltreatment of the subjects.

On August 22, Anckarsvärd forwarded a telegram from President Wilson, which the Swedish Ambassador at the request of the US High Commissioner to Turkey, Admiral Bristol, had presented to the Turkish Government. Anckarsvärd noted that the telegram was unusual due to “its utterly serious tone and also due to its sharp tone and absence of diplomatic way of writing.”²⁷⁴ The dispatch entitled “American High Commissioner appointed. Threat against Turkey in case of new massacres of Armenians” was attached to a copy of the telegram send by US President to the Turkish authorities, stating that

The government itself stands powerless in preventing the massacres far away in Caucasus. Furthermore, the Turks are held responsible for massacres, which could be implemented against

²⁶⁹ RA, UD, Nr. 34, April 5, 1919, p. 5.

²⁷⁰ RA, UD, Nr. 45, May 1, 1919.

²⁷¹ SvM, August 15, 1919.

²⁷² DN, September 1, 1919.

²⁷³ KA, Generalstab, letter 1, February 24, 1919.

²⁷⁴ RA, UD, Nr. 102, August 22, 1919.

the Armenians in Caucasus or elsewhere [towards] them or "their co-religionaries." This should be interpreted as a widening of Turkish responsibility for massacres outside Turkish border and for Muslims other than Turkish subjects.²⁷⁵

Anckarsvård noted that the telegram was intended as intimidating tactics to prevent new Armenian massacres during the waiting time until Armenia would come under US or other power's protection. The preventive aim of the telegram should be seen in the light of news about the new growing national movement, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, in the eastern parts of the empire and bordering to Caucasus.

In a report to the Swedish Defence Minister, dated October 10, 1919, Wirsén described the new Kemalist movement, how it has helped the jailed Turkish military awaiting court martial to escape, their advancing towards Constantinople and how the new regime is highly influenced by former members of the Union and Progress Party:

Another proof of the Union Party's influence is that one of the leading figures of the party, Doctor Nasim, regarded as one of the instigators of 1915 Armenian massacres, is said to be back in Anatolia and is again playing an [active] role there.

It is characteristic that, at the same time, we have received quite firm rumours about new massacres of Christians, especially in Eastern Anatolia and in the western parts of the former Russian Caucasus, i.e. in Armenia.²⁷⁶

Thus, it was known that the massacres were still ongoing, in spite of the signing of the ceasefire treaty, now under the leadership of the new Kemalist movement, the founders of the future Turkey.

On December 7, Anckarsvård debriefs Stockholm on the US High Commissioner, Admiral Bristol's, views in regard to the situation in Turkey. Commenting on the Armenian issue, the admiral does no attempts to conceal his objection against US mandate in Armenia. "The plan for creating a large Armenia, with the inclusion of the six Turkish vilayets in East Anatolia does not seem to have the slightest chance to be realised."²⁷⁷ The British and the French had in vain tried to convince USA to assume mandate over Armenia.

The growing national movement in Anatolia was emphasised in the report dated to December 29. Anckarsvård writes about the prevailing anarchy in Anatolia and the powerlessness of the Constantinople Government. The nationalists had, among others, confiscated grain supplies in six or seven places. The report concludes with the following note:

An article has been published in a Turkish paper, which aims to turn the responsibility of the government's prevailing lack of currency over to a couple of Armenian officials in the finance department. These officials are, however, known for their competence, why the accusation falls on its own exorbitance. Nonetheless, this shows huge lack of judgment to allow publishing similar stuff in these times.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁵ RA, UD, Nr. 102, August 22, 1919.

²⁷⁶ KA, Generalstab, letter 20, October 10, 1919.

²⁷⁷ RA, UD, Nr. 163, December 7, 1919.

²⁷⁸ RA, UD, Nr. 173, December 29, 1919.

1919 marked the beginning of the turning point for the Armenian question. The ceasefire had put an end to the large scale massacres and deportations and numerous Turkish leaders were arrested, charged with having committed war crimes. The massacres had not ceased completely and Sweden watched the events closely and followed the development on the international level regarding a possible compensation for the sufferings of the Armenian nation.

The period of 1915-1919 (and to some extent also a portion of 1920), was a time of observation and condemnation of the actions committed against the Christian minority in Ottoman Turkey in general and the Armenians in particular. But up till this moment, the condemnations came from the enemy camp, unaffected by incentives which Turkey could offer as payment for looking in the other direction.

The discussion of the Armenian question reached its peak during 1920 and a solution seemed to be at hand. The Sèvres Treaty, signed on August 10, 1920, established the creation of an independent Armenia and assigned the arbitrary responsibility of designating the borders between the new republic and Turkey to the US President, Woodrow Wilson.²⁷⁹ But soon, it was proved that, once the new Kemalist movement established itself in Turkey, the newborn Republic of Armenia could not offer anything of substantial value to any benevolent state that would be assigned as its mandate power.

Up till this point, the Embassy dispatches clearly stated that there were large scale massacres with the aim of annihilating the Armenian nation. There had been some Armenian revolutionary activities, partly due to the Turkish atrocities committed in the past, but the scale of these and other actions were hardly reason to exterminate the entire Armenian nation. Furthermore, the dispatches pointed out, on more than one occasion, that the Armenian massacres were not a result of spontaneous public actions, but government orchestrated implementation of erasing a nation. Thus, it is safe to say that the Swedish Government, irrespective of the additional information provided by domestic newspapers and missionaries, was, based solely on dispatches from its foreign and military missions, well-informed of the ongoing eradication of the Armenian nation.

But in 1920, with the arrival of a new Swedish Envoy to Constantinople, the tone of the reports and analysis changed dramatically, at least in regard to Armenians and the Armenian question. The new envoy was Gustaf Oskar Wallenberg, former Swedish Envoy to Japan, and half-brother to K. A. Wallenberg, the former Swedish Foreign Minister. He represented a completely new breed of diplomats in the Swedish Foreign Office. He differed from the traditional Swedish diplomats in several ways: he was no career diplomat, but rather a businessman, a fact that can definitely be ascribed to his family background. He belonged to the wealthy Wallenberg clan, Sweden's by far financially leading family. But, despite his plutocratic background he was not from an aristocratic family which was the normal case for Swedish

²⁷⁹ World War I Document Archive, 2007.

diplomats.²⁸⁰ Furthermore, he was an energetic advocate for Swedish trade interests, both in existing markets, but especially in new emerging ones.²⁸¹ The latter aspect is quite evident in the studied material as well: while Wallenberg's predecessor, Anckarsvård, primarily reported on the military and diplomatic issues, Wallenberg's reports are replete with comments on trade possibilities, strategies for expansion of Swedish export to the region etc.

On January 26, 1920, the Swedish Foreign Ministry sent a letter marked "Strictly Confidential" [Strängt Förtroligt] to its ambassadors in Oslo, Helsinki, Berlin, Vienna, Hague, Bern, Rome, and London as well as to Lieutenant Colonel Francke at the General Staff's Headquarters. The attachment to the letter is an anonymous report from "a Swede, who has been staying in Constantinople for a longer time."²⁸² The report in question completely refutes the massacres:

The talk about massacres of the "Christians" and so on is undoubtedly absolute untrustworthy; it is characteristic that there are no offered verifiable details, "the national forces" are presented only in general as massacrers, but does anyone ask for proof?²⁸³

The dispatch statement asserts that the news is due to the "irresponsible agitation against Turkey, which, since the truce, has been allowed to be carried out by more or less loathsome Levantine elements..."²⁸⁴ There are no clarification in regard to these "Levantine elements", even though one could assume which nationalities the author has in mind.

On February 19, news of new Armenian massacres, committed by Turks and Kurds in Cilicia was received. 7,000 Armenians had been killed.²⁸⁵ On the same day SvD reported that an international committee had been assigned to draw up the boundaries of the Armenian Republic.²⁸⁶ Ten days later, on February 29, SvD reported about additional killings, in which "16,000 people had been killed in Marash, in Cilicia, during the evacuation of the French troops."²⁸⁷ The massacres in Marash were by the Entente regarded as "a premeditated attempt on behalf of the Turks to make the implementation of the planned peace treaty impossible."²⁸⁸ On March 15, the Swedish relief organization *Rädda Barnen* ("Save the Children"), published an appeal for help to the Armenian children.²⁸⁹ The news on the massacres is confirmed by Anckarsvård in his report dated March 5, who quotes a Turkish opposition newspaper as well as Entente representatives in Turkey.²⁹⁰ However, another dispatch, dated March 18, and signed by E. Lind af Hageby, dismisses the news, calling the result of "that part of the European press

²⁸⁰ Edström, 1999, p. 6.

²⁸¹ Edström, 1999, p. 13-16.

²⁸² RA, UD, nr. 55, January 26, 1920.

²⁸³ RA, UD, nr. 55, January 26, 1920.

²⁸⁴ RA, UD, nr. 55, January 26, 1920.

²⁸⁵ DN, February 19, 1920.

²⁸⁶ SvD, February 19, 1920.

²⁸⁷ SvD, February 20, 1920.

²⁸⁸ NDA, March 12, 1920.

²⁸⁹ SvD, March 15, 1920.

²⁹⁰ RA, UD, Nr. 46, March 5, 1920.

influenced by Armenian and Greek propaganda” trying to accuse Mustafa Kemal’s movement of new massacres.²⁹¹ Shortly thereafter, President Wilson announced his conclusions as designated arbitrator, deciding that “Armenia should obtain as much territory as possible and access to the sea.” It was noted that the mandate power over Armenia had been offered to the League of Nations.²⁹² On April 6, SvM reported that the United States did not wish to accept the role as mandate power over Armenia.²⁹³

On April 12, the Swedish Embassy sent a dispatch entitled “regarding the future position of Armenia”, asking Stockholm about the decision of the Council of the League to find a “civilised state who wished to accept the responsibility of mandate [power] over Armenia under the supervision of the League of Nations.”²⁹⁴ During a conversation, M. J. Gout, Chief of the French Affairs in the League of Nations, had told the Swedish Envoy: “it would be extremely desirable if one or several states, who might be inclined to accept this significantly important and humanitarian task...” The Embassy concluded the message by offering further information if Stockholm would be inclined to accept the offer.²⁹⁵

On April 15, SvM published a telegram, sent to a newspaper in London, reading:

Daily News reports that the League of Nations, in its Council meeting in Paris, has proposed an international loan to be established for Armenia, to which all member nations shall contribute. It is hoped that this will make it easier to find a state which would accept the mandate power over Armenia. Further, the Daily News reports that it would evoke much satisfaction if Holland, Sweden, or Norway would be able to accept the mandate responsibility, to which even Canada seems to be willing. The final decision will probably be taken during the Allied meeting in San Remo.²⁹⁶

A week later SvD reported that “The League of Nations had declined the mandate over Armenia.”²⁹⁷ The next day, on April 23, DN reported that Sweden does not wish to be given the mandate over Armenia. The League of Nations, referring to lack of resources, wishes a neutral state, primarily Sweden and, in case Sweden should not accept, Norway, to assume this responsibility. Declining the offer, Sweden was said to have based its decision on the lack of economic and military resources:

The fact of the matter is probably that from a Swedish point of view, with all the dauntlessness an implementation of this nature may have, it is considered that a mandate mission over Armenia would place too burdensome economic and military demands on our country.²⁹⁸

²⁹¹ RA, UD, Nr. 50, March 18, 1920.

²⁹² SvD, March 26, 1920.

²⁹³ SvM, April 6, 1920.

²⁹⁴ RA, UD, nr. 160, April 12, 1920.

²⁹⁵ RA, UD, nr. 160, April 12, 1920.

²⁹⁶ DN, April 15, 1920.

²⁹⁷ SvD, April 22, 1920.

²⁹⁸ DN, April 23, 1920.

On April 24, a telegram was received in Stockholm, refereeing to newspapers claiming that either Holland, Sweden, or Norway was intended to be take the mandate role. In any case, USA would assume the responsibility for the economic aid. According to additional information the final decision was postponed, awaiting the statement of the International Commission.²⁹⁹

On the same day, SvM reported that at the conference at San Remo, Armenia had been granted the province of Erzurum.³⁰⁰ Soon after, SvM published an article, entitled “Armenia – a country where Swedish Mission has successfully been carried out in 35 years.” The article was in connection to the news concerning Holland, Sweden, or Norway as mandate powers over Armenia.³⁰¹

On April 26, however, G. O. Wallenberg dispatched the following lengthy, three pages recommendation to Foreign Minister Erik Palmstierna:

A Reuter telegram has stated that a neutral state, one of the Scandinavian countries, or Holland, could be intended to be honoured with the task of being appointed mandate over Armenia.

For this reason I take the liberty to bring some issues to Your Excellency's attention in regard to this matter.

From a population map I have seen in the Foreign Ministry here, it appears that a concentrated Armenian population does not exist in Asia Minor. Small fragments of Armenians exist over the entire country and the maps give the undisputable impression that it is almost impossible to unite these within any reasonable borders.

An Armenian state which would go beyond the city of Yerevan and its immediate vicinity can not be composed in any way so that the Armenians constitute at most a third of the population. Left to its own it would thereby, on the assumption of democratic governing principles, soon not be Armenian. What the Armenian expects from the mandate power in the first place is securing the rule of the minority over the majority, until such point that they have made the country so unbearable for the latter that it will withdraw itself. A mandate power which would not undertake the task in this way, but wish to provide for a just development for the benefit of country's all inhabitants, would, without a doubt, immediately get the entire international Armenian propaganda with all its well-tried agitation methods against it.

To all appearances, the Armenian national character is highly unreliable, something which, by the way, is nothing to be surprised about a people, whose policy since centuries have been restricted to the fields of intrigues. It is not expected that rooted methods and ways of dissemblance shall change this easy. The representatives of the mandate power there will risk to be used for aims which they will not like; and if there be any scandals, the Armenians will always let them to bear the responsibility.

As far as it concerns us, it is important to stress that Armenia, both in regard to our needs for raw material, and concerning opportunities to offer a market for us, is considerably less [important] than its neighbouring countries – Anatolia on one hand, and Georgia and Azerbaijan on the other. Since we Swedes, hardly seem to have any particular moral obligations towards any of the Black Sea nations, there are barely any reasons for us to specialise on those among them who are, from our point of view, the least important. It becomes even less so, since we thereby would also risk compromising our prospects within the above mentioned much more important regions.

For this reason, it is my opinion that, if such an appeal is directed to Sweden to accept the task of mandate power over Armenia, it should be rejected. We will have no use of this. On the contrary. We would easily get into complications, not only with the neighbouring countries, but also with the other interested major powers: England, France, Italy, and Russia. Exercise of Power

²⁹⁹ UD, April 24, 1920.

³⁰⁰ SvM, April 24, 1920.

³⁰¹ SvM, April 26, 1920.

in a future Armenia will therefore, in addition to considerable funds, require the only measure that would get any attention among these corrupted groups, beside the raw power represented by bayonets and warships.³⁰²

The content of the report can not be seen in any other way than a clear attempt to down play the need for Swedish involvement based on moral and humanitarian issues. Wallenberg approached the problem from a purely realistic perspective, safekeeping what was regarded best for Swedish economic and political interests. Armenia, unlike its neighbours, had nothing to offer Sweden. Wallenberg made this utterly clear and would continue this rhetoric in order to diminish the Armenian position in the equation. It is especially worth noting that his analysis and observations contradict strongly with that of his predecessor as well as with Wirsén's views. Wallenberg was a businessman, interested in profits, not in humanitarian responsibilities.

Three days later, on April 29, DN published an article, stating the following:

The League of Nations has not, as previously stated, declined accepting mandate power over Armenia, but has instead, since the Council itself lacks economic and military resources, declared its willingness to try to convince one of the affiliated states to accept the assignment. It is thought that one of the smaller, neutral states will accept this, on the assumption that the economic resources will be provided from somewhere else. The Council's plan is that the powers represented in the Allied Supreme Council will divide the expenses.³⁰³

A month later, DN reported that the "American Government does not accept the mandate over Armenia and has also rejected the suggestion of an international commission for rebuilding Armenia."³⁰⁴ The Armenian question and the issues of moral and justice were no longer any high priority on the international level, but were steadily being replaced by securing respective state's economic and political interests in a reviving Turkey under Kemalist leadership.

The next news did not appear until October 22, when Armenia had called on the Entente Powers for help due to an ultimatum from Soviet Russia. Citing *Indépendance Belge*, DN reported that "the League of Nations, in regard to Armenia, has proposed that the Supreme Council should appoint a mandate power for Armenia."³⁰⁵ The issue of a Swedish mandate over Armenia was brought up during the autumn session of the League of Nations. On November 20, the League had its first General Assembly, with Hjalmar Branting as the leader of the Swedish delegation. The question of Armenia was put forward on the morning of November 22, when Lord Robert Cecil, representing South Africa, had proposed:

...that the Council is requested to immediately consider the situation in Armenian and to the Assembly contemplate solutions for averting the danger which at the moment threatens the remainder of the Armenian race and to also establish a stable situation in the country.³⁰⁶

³⁰² RA, UD, nr. 74, April 26, 1920.

³⁰³ DN, April 29, 1920.

³⁰⁴ DN, June 3, 1920.

³⁰⁵ DN, October 22, 1920.

³⁰⁶ LN, November 22, 1920, p. 184.

The Belgian Senator, Lafontaine, as an amendment to Lord Cecil's proposal, suggested to the Assembly to "appoint a commission with six members, who would investigate which measures that could be taken to end the hostilities between Armenia and the Kemalists."³⁰⁷ The meeting had received numerous telegrams from Armenian organisations from, among others, France, Turkey, Romania, USA, and Egypt, appealing to the members of the League to save Armenia.³⁰⁸ In terms of Grotian definition, these appeals were the calls from the suppressed subjects asking for foreign intervention as a refined form of "just war." Referring to the telegrams and the appeal of the Armenians, the Yugoslavian delegate asked the Major Powers to intervene. The humanitarian intervention was not only a rescue mission, but also a peace-keeping one. Thereafter, Branting took the podium, seconding the previous speakers, demanding that the Major Powers should intervene in the matter:

From the news received now and then from Armenia, it becomes clear that the massacres continue all the time. It shows the inability of the Major Powers to intervene effectively in aid of the Armenian people. If similar events happen again it will be a shame for humanity and also a real danger for the League of Nations.³⁰⁹

Thus, one could conclude that, in Branting's view, the intervention was not only a moral duty for protecting the human rights and the security of the Armenian subjects in Turkey, but that the whole situation posed a threat to the international security and the newly established League of Nations. Both France and England declined the mandate, referring to the fact that they already had accepted mandate missions. The French delegate, Viviani, rejected Cecil's and Lafontaine's proposal, asking the Council to exhort the governments to mediate a peace between Armenia and the Kemalists. Since the decision of the Assembly must be unanimous all three suggestions were accepted and a commission of six members was appointed, and the member governments were notified by telegrams. Upon receiving the news, the Swedish Prime Minister, Louis De Geer the Younger, immediately telegraphed back to the League, stating:

The Swedish Government takes the most sympathetic interest in the question of assuring the safety of Armenia, and welcomes every possible measure for alleviating the sufferings of the Armenian nation, which have aroused great sympathy in Sweden. By reasons of the distance between the countries, and the complex and grave nature of the Armenian problem, the Swedish Government, though fully aware of the importance of this enterprise to humanity, regrets that it has not the power to accept the undertaking put forward in the telegram of the Council. The generous offer of President Wilson seems to it to be a far better method of reaching a satisfactory conclusion than the intervention of a country whose imperfect knowledge of the situation and conditions in Armenia prevents it from acting with a chance of success.³¹⁰

³⁰⁷ LN, November 22, 1920, p. 184.

³⁰⁸ Lindberg, 1985, p. 273.

³⁰⁹ LN, November 22, 1920, p. 187.

³¹⁰ LN, Official Journal, nr. 8, 1920, p. 96.

Norway's telegram was, literally, a carbon copy of the Swedish reply, while the Danish answer was also the same in its content.³¹¹ The mentioned suggestion by President Wilson, referred to the latter's offer to mediate between Armenia and the Kemalists.³¹² That the distance to Armenia constituted, physically and mentally, a barrier which hindered a Swedish involvement was made clear. However, the reference to the alleged "imperfect knowledge" disregarded altogether the Swedish diplomatic and military intelligence information dispatched by Anckarsvård and Wirsén which must have been known by the Swedish Government.

DN reported about the session of the League of Nations' debating Armenia's situation:

At the meeting of the League of Nations, on the Saturday morning, the Belgian delegate, Senator Lafontaine, in touching words, expressed his conviction that Armenia is at death's door and will be destroyed in front of the eyes of an assembly of nations, which counts to 41 states with millions of soldiers. If we had an international army, we would have measures to act. The speaker proposed that a commission would be summoned with mission to immediately address the issue of rescuing Armenia and demanded that the countries who had suffered least in the war would be the proper soldiers.³¹³

The next day, on November 23, DN published a new article, stating that the League of Nations had decided to aid Armenia. The meeting had been opened with a speech by Branting, who had called upon the Major Powers to finally assist Armenia in an effective manner. Branting had:

...supported Robert Cecil's suggestion and the amendment made by the Belgian Socialist Lafontaine. These suggestions were about the creation of a commission consisting of six members to propose practical measures. Branting's speech, which was delivered in French with clarity and vigorously, received the most vivid applause.³¹⁴

On the same day NDA published an article posing the following question: "Shall the Armenian question lead to the creation of an international police force?"³¹⁵ This also might be the very first occasion when the need of an international peace-keeping force had arisen.

That the League was unwilling, or at least paralysed, to any commitment in regard to the Armenian question and support in the hour of need was exposed by the SD correspondent in Geneva, who wrote:

The civilised nations looked at each other, indeed a bit ashamed and each and everyone whispered their answer to the Council: "Surely Armenia must be aided. It is a responsibility towards all humanity to aid Armenia. It must not happen that Armenia is not aided. But why should I do it? Why should I? Why should I?" was sounded from every direction. "Why should exactly I expose myself for the risk and the inconvenience to put my nose in this robber's den?" And so stood all the civilised nations there on the shore, around the drowning people, each and everyone with its

³¹¹ LN, Official Journal, nr. 8, 1920, p. 96-97.

³¹² LN, Official Journal, nr. 8, 1920, p. 92.

³¹³ DN, November 22, 1920.

³¹⁴ DN, November 23, 1920.

³¹⁵ NDA, November, 23, 1920.

lifeline in the hand. But no one wanted or dared to throw it, fearing they would themselves be drawn into the water.³¹⁶

The world community obviously saw the problem and expressed its sympathy, but that was all. Armenia was simply not worth the risk. Whoever that engaged in accepting mandate power over Armenia, would risk both being burdened with expenses, but also risk coming into conflict with the more potential neighbours such as Turkey, Azerbaijan, or Russia. In addition, the responses from almost all countries declining participation while they perfectly acknowledged the needed humanitarian intervention illustrates the assertion regarding the relations between the sufficient will to intervene but the insufficient will to devote resources to the cause.

On November 26, it was reported that Armenia had been forced to sign a truce with Moscow:

The Armenian Government has resigned as a result of its incapability to simultaneously fight the domestic disorder and the Turkish invasions, and has been succeeded by the extremists who have concluded a treaty with Moscow on November 11, whereby an immediate truce is established with the Turks and the Bolshevik occupation of the disputed territories awaiting the establishment of definitive peace. According to the news from Tiflis, the Turks are unsatisfied with the agreements.³¹⁷

That the Bolshevik presence and take-over in Armenia would put an end to Turkish expansion eastward was probably the reason for Turkish dissatisfaction. Before the end of the year, Armenia had ceased to exist as an independent republic, becoming the Soviet Socialistic Republic of Armenia.³¹⁸

The only missionary publication, found during this year, was a book entitled *Ett blad ur Armeniens historia* ("A Page from Armenia's History"), translated from Danish. Its author, Amalia Lange, was a member of the Female Missionary Workers, active in Turkish Armenia. The book was based upon eyewitness testimonies, stories and other documents, with contribution from the Swedish missionary worker Alma Johansson. Describing how hungry Turkish soldiers, during the first months of the war, plundered the Armenian villages, the missionaries argued "It can not become much worse than this," but, "it was a mercy of God that they could not lift the veil of the future and see what 1915 would bear in its womb."³¹⁹ The German missionary, Christoffel, who witnessed the events in place, pointed out that

The external reason to the government's interference against the Armenians are said to be some local events in Cilicia and a uprising in Van in eastern Armenia, which by the Turks was marked as 'revolutionary rising,' while it, in reality, was the self-defence of the Armenians against them and could not without any *suspicion* give reason to exterminate a people of 2 ½ millions. *But, with this goal before its eyes, the Turkish Government employed with all measures which were at its disposal...*³²⁰

³¹⁶ Written on November 24 and published in SD, November, 29, 1920.

³¹⁷ DN, November 26, 1920.

³¹⁸ Pasdermadjian, 1949, p. 506.

³¹⁹ Lange, 1920, p. 22.

³²⁰ Lange, 1920, p. 22-23.

Lange gave a detailed description of how the order of deportation in April 1915, “*meant the extermination of the Armenian people* [utrotandet av det armeniska folket];”³²¹ how the deportations were carried out; how the properties of the deportees were confiscated; how, in “slave markets,” the Muslims picked new members for their harem among the Armenian women and girls.³²²

The Norwegian Nurse Wedel-Jarlsberg, stationed in Erzinjan, had told Lange about the initiation of the deportations and how she told of “the Turkish soldier’s raw treatment of the unfortunate, seen them crush children’s skulls with butt [of the gun].”³²³ From Moush, Alma Johansson had reported about the massacres and how children, who she had appealed to the Turkish Governor to be saved, had all been burned together with their parents.³²⁴ Miss Hansine Marcher, returning from her duties in Mezreh, had told about the fully organized and the utterly brutal manners which were meant not to allow anyone to escape the deportations. Lange continued her work until 1920, but recalled the horrors by citing Miss Karen Marie Petersen:

The frightful time which, with the summer of 1915, erupted upon the unfortunate Armenian people, is to me like a horrible dream, and how often have I not wished that it would just be one, but unfortunately it *is* not so, but altogether is a dreadful reality which I try not to recall. When we stood in the middle of the horrible events, we were as paralysed; how could it be possible that such things *could* happen – that an entire people, defenceless as a herd of sheep, was brought to the butchering table, according to an, in advance, worked-out, diabolical extermination plan.³²⁵

1920 marked a clear turning-point in the Armenian question. The Kemalist movement in Turkey had secured the military resources and the protection from some of the Major Powers in exchange for economic and political compensations. It had thwarted the Sèvres Treaty and started pushing eastward towards the existing Republic of Armenia which now also was threatened by the advancing Bolshevik armies. Abandoned by the Entente Powers, Armenia had to choose between total annihilation from the invading Turkish Army, staging new large scale massacres, or surrendering to Bolshevik Moscow. The choice was obvious.

2.3 1921-1923: Abandonment, Denial and Disassociation

The reality of the wartime German censorship of the news about the Armenian massacres could be seen in a pamphlet, translated from German and entitled *Vad en tysk lektor i asiatiska Turkiet upplevde i 1915* (“What a German senior lecturer in Asian Turkey Experienced during 1915”). It was the story of Dr. Martin Niepage, former lecturer at the German Junior Secondary School in Aleppo. In the foreword he contended the following:

³²¹ Lange, 1920, p. 24.

³²² Lange, 1920. p. 25-26.

³²³ Lange, 1920, p. 31.

³²⁴ Lange, 1920, p. 32.

³²⁵ Lange, 1920, p. 41.

The author is convinced that, if his people as well as the other civilised people, only had the knowledge about the horrifying truth, they would have passed a sentence and tried, with all measures, to avert the extreme, which here a non-immediate combatant people had to suffer during the war.

As a result of the censorship, it is first now that it has been possible to publish this script. Its first edition was actually only revealed to members of the Parliament.

May this script serve not only to rouse resentment for the Turkish barbarism and ache over the insufficiency of the German counter-measures, but also in every reader [arouse] a feeling of compassion and willingness to aid the innocent victims.³²⁶

Describing the receiving of the news about the massacres and piles of dead bodies, Niepage writes:

In the beginning I could not believe that it was true. It was told to me that, in several quarters of Aleppo, there were lots of half-starved people, the remains of the so-called deportation-transports. In order to politically disguise the extermination of the Armenian people, military reasons were stated... They claimed also that individual Armenians had allowed themselves to be enticed to espionage.

After personally having found out the true circumstances and collected intelligence information from all directions, I came to the conclusion that all accusations towards the Armenians had minor grounds, which were used to kill tens of thousands innocents for each guilty,... - all for the intent to exterminate an entire nation.³²⁷

Niepage continued to describe how he had walked through the different quarters of Aleppo to find proof and evidence which further confirmed his claims. Finally he had been compelled to report his observations to Berlin. The report, along with pictures of piles of corpses, had been signed by his colleague Dr. Græter and his wife, Marie Spiecker, and the headmaster of the school, Huber, and had then been handed over to the German Consul in Alexandretta, Hoffman, to be sent to Berlin. When the help did not come, Niepage wanted to resign his office as a protest, but was convinced by the headmaster to stay, since their eyewitness accounts would be important. "I now realise that I was too long a silent witness to all this injustice."³²⁸ Niepage pointed out that the horror he had witnessed were the last phase of the implementation. German engineers returning home, previously working on the Baghdad railway, and travellers told of even more chilling scenes, so terrifying that "Many of them could not eat anything for several days after witnessing such horrors."³²⁹ The German consul in Mosul had personally told Niepage that he, "in several places along the road between Mosul and Aleppo, had seen so many cut-off children's hands that one could pave a street with."³³⁰ A German acquaintance to Niepage had told him about the way the Turkish soldiers, near Urfa, had:

forced hundreds of Armenian peasant women to strip naked. In order to delight the soldiers, they must then drag themselves all days through the desert in this way in 40 degree's heat, until their

³²⁶ Niepage, 1921, p. 3.

³²⁷ Niepage, 1921, p. 4.

³²⁸ Niepage, 1921, p. 9.

³²⁹ Niepage, 1921, p. 9-10.

³³⁰ Niepage, 1921, p. 10.

skin was totally scorched. Another saw how a Turk pulled out a baby from the uterus of an Armenian woman and threw it against a wall.³³¹

There were even far more horrifying examples, contended Niepage. They were described in numerous reports from the consuls in Alexandretta, Aleppo, and Mosul and had been sent to the Embassy. “The consuls estimate that, up till now, probably about one million Armenians have succumbed through the last month’s massacres. Of this figure, about the half are women and children, who either have been slaughtered or died of hunger.”³³² Establishing once more that “The aim of this deportation is to exterminate the entire Armenian people,” Niepage continued to describe eyewitness accounts and reports about the massacres, urging the German Government to intervene.³³³

Niepage’s testimony was supported by the information in a report written by the German Consul in Aleppo, Rössler, which was also published as a pamphlet. Translated from German, the report, dated November 30, 1915, forwarded the description of the deportations, given by the Armenian Sarkis Manukian, a former student at Berlin and Leipzig universities, and now a German linguistic teacher in Erzurum. His deportation was as many others: “the men and women were separated, and the men were killed. There were no bullets left for them, but they were butchered, 2,000 individuals a day, with axes and knives.” The Turkish gendarmes coordinated the killings and the Kurds claimed that they were acting on Government orders. Rössler continued the report by describing the sanitary conditions and the transportation of thousands of deportees by train.³³⁴

In 1921, another pamphlet, entitled *Ett martyrfolk i det tjugonde århundradet* (“A Martyr Nation in the 20th Century”), was published by Natanael Beskow, a Swedish preacher, author, artist, and headmaster. “Of a people of 2 to 2 ½ million, about 1 million have by a methodical extermination-war been killed through the most frightful cruelties.”³³⁵ Beskow gives a brief background of the Armenian history, the Armenian massacres in 1894-96 and the course of events of the genocide. He describes how the Armenians in Turkish Armenia were ordered to be deported, how the men were separated and killed, while the women, children, and the elderly were pushed towards the Mesopotamian and Syrian deserts under the burning sun.³³⁶ “According to estimates, in the time being there are about 250,000 orphans in Armenia. The number of those being killed or, through sufferings deceased Armenians, as I have already mentioned, is estimated to about 1 million.”³³⁷ Further on, Beskow writes about the Sèvres Treaty, how Mustafa Kemal’s government has overthrown the government in Constantinople and was now coming along with

³³¹ Niepage, 1921, p. 11.

³³² Niepage, 1921, p. 11.

³³³ Niepage, 1921, p. 12, 18.

³³⁴ Rössler, 1921, p. 3-5.

³³⁵ Beskow, 1921, p. 2.

³³⁶ Beskow, 1921, p. 5.

³³⁷ Beskow, 1921, p. 8.

Soviet Russia. Bearing in mind the political and military dialogues between the Major Powers, which did not seem to care about Armenia's future, not least France was benevolent towards Turkey in order to counteract the British influence in Middle East. Therefore, the mandate power over Armenia, offered by the League of Nations to a country in Scandinavia and Sweden was of a special character, one which Sweden should cherish. The offered responsibility, wrote Beskow:

Honoured us highly, since it was about a mandate full of difficulties and without prospects of profits, for which reason no one else wanted it. In that matter we could not do anything. But that no, which was said then, shall be turned into a yes.³³⁸

The political leadership in Sweden would soon proof that they did not quite share his view.

During the coming years, Wallenberg continued his negative tone towards the Armenians and the Armenian question. He dismissed the claims that there were any Armenians in Turkey, what so ever, but "Turks of Christian faith". To verify that there was no Armenian community in Turkey, Wallenberg cites an Armenian lawyer, who said: "We are Turks and wish to remain that way."³³⁹ Later Wallenberg asserts that the Armenians do not have a future anyhow. In Turkey, practically all "so-called Armenians speak Turkish," and "in Soviet Union they will surely be russified."³⁴⁰ Furthermore, he claimed that the strive for creating an independent Armenia was an entirely a desire of Diaspora Armenians, who were "rootless nationalists", and had no anchorage what so ever among Armenians in Armenia. In this regard he compared the Armenian exile organisations with the Zionist movement, comparing the Turkish Armenians to the Palestinian Jews, criticising their co-nationalists in the Diaspora.³⁴¹ Furthermore, Wallenberg asserts that the Turkish Armenians do actually not blame the 1915 massacres on their Muslim countrymen, with exception of Enver and Talaat of course, but on the Entente and the Diaspora Armenian organisations which scared the Turkish authorities and agitated the reaction which led to the deportations.³⁴² As a general description of Armenia and Armenians, Wallenberg writes:

Nonetheless, it is about a people, which during a long historical development, more or less having been uprooted from their own plot of land, on the same time that it has got used to aim its undisputable intelligence and capability in the individual struggle for existence in some, quite limited forms of human activities. To turn back such a development belongs hardly to those tasks, which entice any statesman in such a time when all are fairly agreed upon that, above all, it is about making the, yet only on the paper – and hardly even that – existing new world peace really "viable".³⁴³

³³⁸ Beskow, 1921, p. 11.

³³⁹ RA, UD, nr. 69, March 17, 1921.

³⁴⁰ RA, UD, nr. 69, March 17, 1921.

³⁴¹ RA, UD, nr. 69, March 17, 1921. Richard Hovannisian's excellent and descriptive work, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, however, gives a very different image than that depicted by Wallenberg. See Hovannisian 1967.

³⁴² RA, UD, nr. 69, March 17.

³⁴³ RA, UD, nr. 69, March 17.

In addition to the negative tone regarding the Armenians and Armenia, the dispatch accentuates another characteristic for Wallenberg's report on the subject, namely his positive view of the Kemalist movement. In several places in his report (which occurs in his future dispatches as well), he accentuates the constructive steps taken by the "nationalistic confederation" movement in Angora, how the Turkish Armenians and Greeks have welcomed the Kemalists and are openheartedly cooperating with them and demand that the foreign powers leave Turkey.³⁴⁴ This seven page dispatch was followed by a twelve pages long report, dated April 19, where Wallenberg described in detail the situation in Turkey. Among other things, he made it clear that the Armenians and the Greeks have come to realise that simply belonging to the Christian faith of Armenian or Greek rite "does not justify to call oneself an Armenian or a Greek...when they have the same language and fatherland as their Muslim countrymen."³⁴⁵ It is interesting to note that continuing his reports he refers to the "Armenians" (put in quotation marks in his text) as if the name was nothing but an invented term. In addition Wallenberg makes the following remark: "In reality, the 'megali idea' (great idea) of Greece, has during the entire time rested, at a closer look, on the same loose ground as the Armenian or the Jewish political restoration plans."³⁴⁶ In regard to the Greeks, and an obvious parallel to the Armenians, Wallenberg writes

Even here – due to the poverty of the own country and incapability to achieve any production – the elite of the population has constantly swarmed out to the large population centers, in order to there win what they could not at home. The country has thereby emptied of intelligentsia: they instead sit here [Constantinople] or in Smyrna, in Paris or in London, and lack, despite all the patriotism of the mouth and at times even that of the pocket, which indeed distinguish them, the immediate contact with the living national base, which, after all, is the foremost prerequisite for being able to act politically, and not alone private economically, creative.³⁴⁷

Wallenberg continued to emphasize his assertion about the non-existence of any minorities in Turkey, but mere religious groups. In his dispatch of May 9, he writes about the struggle within the Orthodox Church in Turkey where he again talks disparaging about the groups striving to become "nations", referring to them as "Gregorians who use Armenian in their divine service".³⁴⁸

On October 19, Wallenberg wrote yet another letter, this time recommending that if Sweden, contrary to what had been expected, would, by the League of Nations, be asked to be a guarantor for a temporary government in Cilicia, Sweden should, according to Wallenberg, decline for the same reasons as he had stated in regard to the suggestion concerning the mandate power.³⁴⁹ Commenting on the issue of non-interference in a sovereign state's internal affairs he notes that "But to seek to make an international issue of this would in core be the same to choose raise the

³⁴⁴ RA, UD, nr. 69, March 17, p. 3. See also RA, UD, nr. 91, April 19, 1921.

³⁴⁵ RA, UD, nr. 91, April 19, 1921.

³⁴⁶ RA, UD, nr. 91, April 19, 1921.

³⁴⁷ RA, UD, nr. 91, April 19, 1921.

³⁴⁸ RA, UD, nr. 116, May 9, 1921.

³⁴⁹ RA, UD, nr. 234, October 19, 1921.

principle that states no longer would legally have the right to take measures against plots regarding their security”.³⁵⁰

On November 15, the economic values of a close relation with Constantinople were made further clear, when Wallenberg dispatched a four page report, analysing the development in the Black Sea region, in which he recurrently emphasised the renewed importance of Constantinople, pointing out (mentioned twice and underlined in pages 1 and 4) that “the road to the new Russian market does not pass over the Baltic Sea any more, but over Constantinople and the Black Sea ports.”³⁵¹

Once the independent Republic of Armenia ceased to exist, the political ambitions started to cool down rapidly. The sovietisation of Armenia eliminated the only legal international spokesperson for the Armenian question and the other states soon chose to “forget” the entire Armenian episode. Wallenberg proceeded to advice against all Swedish involvement in Armenian issues and continued to present the Armenian future as an already lost cause. In a dispatch dated June 6, 1922, Wallenberg attached four documents, all claiming the falsity of the assertion about the existence of any minorities in Turkey, defending the deportation of the Armenians during the war, and rejecting the new claimed atrocities by the Kemalists towards the Armenians being true. Wallenberg attached an interview with the American trade attaché, Gillespie, who claimed that the news about “atrocities” committed towards Armenians were totally false. Referring to recently published news, Gillespie asserted that his knowledge about, among others, the “Turkish people’s gentlemanlike qualities...does not leave any room for doubt, to that effect, that it is incompatible with the truth to talk about a poor treatment of the non-Mohammedan element in Anatolia on the Government’s behalf.”³⁵² Quoting an Armenian merchant from Kharput, Wallenberg pointed out that no such thing as “Turkish atrocities [towards the Armenians] were heard of.” Citing the Greek acting Patriarch of Caesarea, Wallenberg writes:

May the entire world know, that we are satisfied with our government, which has given us protection and tranquillity, and that we refuse to let us be used as tools for political intrigues of any kind! Here are no longer any minorities, here only exists one Turkish people, there each and every one has the freedom of religion, and who does not demand anything else of democracies in Europe than being allowed to by its glorious national government rule its beloved fatherland.³⁵³

If anything, this statement alone represented the new homogenised Turkey, free of any kind of other nationalities but the Turkish. Attached to the same dispatch was also a letter from Wallenberg, addressed to Hjalmar Branting in person. Here, Wallenberg wrote about Miss Anna Lindhagen, who had visited the Turkish Ambassador to Sweden, Galib Kemali Bey, and expressed great indignation in regard to the content of the startling information presented in the telegram Lord Curzon, Foreign Secretary of Great Britain, had sent to Sir Horace Rumbold,

³⁵⁰ RA, UD, nr. 234, October 19, 1921.

³⁵¹ RA, UD, nr. 267, November 15, 1921.

³⁵² RA, UD, nr. 115, June 6, 1922.

³⁵³ RA, UD, nr. 115, June 6, 1922, attachment nr. 4.

British Ambassador in Constantinople, in regard to the “atrocities”, published in Times.

Wallenberg wrote:

Since now Miss Lindhagen is chairman of the Swedish section of la Société internationale de la femme pour la paix et la liberté, whose centre is in Geneva, I allow myself to ask You to consider whether it would not be appropriate to allow Miss L. complete knowledge about [this] delegation’s writing nr. 113, from May 28, this year (except the last part, which is about politics), plus today’s report and attachments.³⁵⁴

Wallenberg’s analysis and reports regarding the Orient were appreciated highly by the Prime Minister, and likewise Foreign Minister Branting. In a letter dated November 23, 1922, Branting wrote the following to Wallenberg:

It is with a great interest that I have studied the clear and illuminating presentation in Your latest quarterly report about the Oriental situation and the meaning its development could have for our country’s interests. I wish therefore not to forbear to express my acknowledgement for the manner You have fulfilled your informative duty.³⁵⁵

Judging from this highly appreciative tone, it should be safe to contend that Wallenberg’s recommendation in regard to the Armenian questions did too weigh heavily in forming the Swedish decision-making when the League suggested that Sweden should take the mandate role. Baring in mind the descriptions which Wallenberg depicted about the Armenian people, their sentiments and the unavoidable negative impacts on Swedish economic interests in the region, it is not hard to understand Stockholm’s firm negative replies to the League of Nations.

Taking into account the background, earlier mission, and goals of G. O. Wallenberg, it is of little surprise to find the shift in the tone from the Swedish representation in Constantinople. The economic gains at hand were too important to be sacrificed for moral issues. The denial of the Armenian massacres, freed Sweden from its moral obligations. And Sweden was far from alone. Almost all other former Entente Powers, as well as any other state, were busy securing their share of the spoils of the former Turkish Empire. Here, we content ourselves to the case of USA, just to demonstrate the pattern. The US Ambassador to Constantinople, Henry Morgenthau, was, if not the most, then one of the active messengers informing the world about the ongoing Armenian massacres.³⁵⁶ But the American attitude, both in Constantinople and Washington, changed radically, and much alike that of Sweden’s, once the Kemalists took over in Turkey. The U.S. High Commissioner to Turkey, Admiral Mark L. Bristol, was a striking spokesman of the denial policy, arguing that “the Armenians are a race like the Jews – they have little or no national spirit and poor moral character.” This, Bristol argued, was a firm argument for dropping, as soon as possible, all support for the Armenian Republic and instead courting the new Kemalist Turkey,

³⁵⁴ RA, UD, nr. 115, June 6, 1922. The cited Miss Anna Lindhagen was one of the leading Social Democrats of the time, sister to Stockholm’s Mayor, Carl Lindhagen, and active in the organisation *Rädda Barnen*.

³⁵⁵ RA, UD, nr. 146a, November, 23, 1922.

³⁵⁶ Morgenthau, 1918. Also see Jones, 2006, p. 105,106.

in order to get access to the oilfields of the former Turkish Empire.³⁵⁷ Bristol's correspondent at the U.S. State Department, Allen Dulles, supported these initiatives: "Confidentially the State Department is in bind. Our task would be simple if the reports of the atrocities could be declared untrue or even exaggerated, but the evidence, alas, is irrefutable."³⁵⁸ State Secretary Lansing's close supporter, the retired U.S. Admiral William Colby Chester contented that "the Armenians had been deported not to deserts, but to 'the most delightful and fertile parts of Syria... at great expense of money and effort'."³⁵⁹ The drastic change of Swedish and US rhetoric is too strikingly similar to be ignored.

1922 marked the exit of the Armenian issues in the documents of Swedish Foreign Department. Now the Kemalist movement had a firm grasp over Turkey and was in direct negotiations with the Foreign Powers. Independent Armenia was long gone and incorporated into the Soviet Union, thus losing all means to advocate a solution to the Armenian question. The sooner calls referring to the Armenian question could be forgotten, the better it would be for the ongoing talks with new-born Turkey. The Lausanne Treaty, signed on July 24, 1923 put an official end to the Armenian question. At least for the time being.

³⁵⁷ See footnote 164 on p. 37.

³⁵⁸ Simpson, 1995, p. 34.

³⁵⁹ Simpson, 1995, p. 35.

3 Conclusion

Taking the data at hand into consideration, it is clear that the information regarding the massacres in the Ottoman Turkey and their genocidal nature was replete in Swedish newspapers as well as in the reports submitted to Church of Sweden and Swedish Foreign Ministry and Government.

It is safe to assert that the Swedish Government had a clear view of what transpired in Turkish Armenia during the Great War. Even if one would disregard the information presented by the missionaries and the press, the Swedish Government, especially through its Embassy in Constantinople, but also through its Military Attaché in Turkey, was well informed about the ongoing annihilation. In his dispatches to Stockholm, Ambassador Anckarsvård stressed the fact that what took place in Turkish Armenia was neither an act of mutual killings nor measures taken against Armenian insurrection, but a well-planned systematic annihilation of the Armenian nation, initiated and implemented by the Turkish Government. Indeed, the reports do tell of Armenian collaboration with the Russian Army and armed resistance in some places, but they also make clear that 1) the acts of vengeance did occur long after the bulk of the massacres and deportations in 1915-1916, thus the government's actions can not be justified as measures against insurgency and treason 2) the cooperation with the enemy was in a very limited extent and could not justify the implemented annihilation of the entire Armenian nation. This view was verified additionally by the information and testimonies published by the Swedish, as well as Danish, Norwegian, German, and American missionaries and relief workers who had returned home during the last years of the war. The reports also indicate that the Turkish Government relied on the fact that, as long as the war was going on, the world would be unable to intervene. Once the war ended the genocide had had its toll, emptying Armenia of its Armenians, thus partly legitimating claims of the impossibility of creating an Armenia based on national self-determination, simply because there were no Armenians left to make this decision. The date of the first classified diplomatic intelligence indicates that Stockholm received an early warning and was notified of the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe during the first steps of the large scale massacres and deportations. Later reports further indicated that these government actions illustrated a state violating the rights and the safekeeping of its citizens, that is to say Turkey being a failed state, which in its turn could justify a humanitarian intervention.

A limited number of politicians, such as Hjalmar Branting, Carl Lindhagen and influential public figures such as Anna Lindhagen and Marika Stjernstedt did appeal to the Swedish public trying to influence the Swedish decision-making, but there are no indications in the studied data which suggests any affect in this matter. It seems that only the missionaries can be "acquitted" from being bystanders (a new dimension which could be analysed further in a future study). Where and when possible they did everything in their power to give shelter to the victims, actively worked for providing assistance and food for the deportees, saving as many as possible from executions etc. Ambassador Anckarsvård, despite his clear knowledge of the situation,

refrained from making any official recommendations to his Government in regard to this issue, or to ask Stockholm about any possible directives. Having said that, one must be reminded that Ambassador Anckarsvärd did remark the moral aspects of the annihilation policy and how the Turkish Government made itself guilty of committing crimes against humanity, but his diplomatic position and obedience to the neutrality policy did not allow him to act. Unlike Anckarsvärd, Wallenberg played an active role in Stockholm's decision making, or at least influencing the basis for it, by openly advocating a specific policy in regard to the Armenian question. It would have been interesting to expand the investigation to the reports of other Swedish Ambassadors (from Washington DC, Paris, London, etc.) to see if they too concurred in Wallenberg's reporting, or if their reports and recommendations did disagree with Wallenberg's, in which case it would be justified to see why Wallenberg's recommendation was weighted in differently? Wirsén too had a clear knowledge about the annihilation, but as a military envoy might not have had the possibility to make political comments. Only later, when commenting his experience from the mission, Wirsén describes the massacres and the deportation of the Armenian nation and tries to interpret their true nature and the aims of the Turkish leaders. As far as the Swedish Government is concerned, this analysis will need an extended study of the events in order to be able to comment the Swedish official action, or apparently the lack of it. There are no data indicating that Sweden would have exhorted any protests or pressure as a humanitarian intervention. Nonetheless, the absence of relevant information does not allow a full interpretation of the official stand. Yet, later, when the question of a mandate power was brought up, Sweden acted as the rest, unwilling to be involved in the country far away. Thus, the wording of the Swedish correspondent narrating the nations asking "Why should I?" depicts quite well the sentiment which prevailed in Sweden in regard to the far away Armenia. Then again, this does not comply with the Swedish involvement in the Mosul Crisis, in 1923, when Sweden assumed the role of arbitrator in an equally (if not further away) distant place as Armenia. What had changed? One obvious difference could be that, while the Armenian mission would mean direct Swedish involvement, the Mosul case only required arbitration. Another possible explanation could be that Sweden, in 1923, had come further in its integration into the League of Nations, leaving behind the strict policy of neutrality and developed a clearer foreign policy doctrine in how to act in the international arena. Nevertheless, Sweden had a clear notion about the nature of the massacres and was aware of the humanitarian catastrophe which was unfolding in the Ottoman Empire. The state orchestrated annihilation of the Armenian nation did surely fit into the category of gross violation of the human rights of the citizens in a failed state and demanded the intervention of the international community. However, the ongoing world war did limit the range of alternatives at hand proposed as tools in a humanitarian intervention. It is also important to note that, while some calls for humanitarian intervention aroused during the ongoing war, the calls intensified during the post-war period when the governments calling for an intervention no longer risked to be pulled into the ongoing global conflict. Nevertheless, even

though the governments expressed their will to intervene, but they clearly were not willing to allocate the required resources for realising, in their own opinion, justified intervention.

Expanding the horizons of this study, trying to find out how the Swedish officials argued in regard to the received news about the Armenian massacres, would able one to investigate a new dimension into the data presented in this study. How does a small state argue when confronted with the news about ongoing humanitarian crisis and the options of intervening? What alternatives did Stockholm have, how did the decision makers argue and what did they decide? Does massive humanitarian crisis, such as genocide, challenge the fundamental doctrine of small state policy or that of an international organisation such as UN, consisting of small nations? How can an effective humanitarian intervention be implemented in a time of a major regional or global conflict when the perpetrating side already is at war with the primarily capable interveners? Is an intervention by foreign states always impossible when genocide is committed during the course of a global war? Are there any alternative solutions for a military intervention? In order to answer these questions, additional factors must be added to the equation. One such factor is the possible external and internal threats which were regarded by Stockholm as decisive factors in the decision making, e.g. the emergence of the Bolshevik Russia and the immediate threat that the growing communism posed to Sweden during the last years of WWI and the post-war period. But foremost, the future broader study must conduct further surveys in the archives of the Swedish Foreign Ministry and the Parliament, trying to find out the process of decision making on this issue. Furthermore, one must take into account the fact that WWI substantially changed the global political landscape, among others by establishing the League of Nations, and its successor the United Nations, as an attempt to prevent major armed conflicts as well as humanitarian catastrophes. That neither of the organisations could neither prohibit WWII, the Holocaust nor the genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Yugoslavia, Darfur etc. might be explained better by examining how a neutral small state such as Sweden, who champions solving similar issues in international forums, behaves.

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