

Differences between the armenian genocide and the jewish holocaust essay examples...

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Similarities And Differences Between The Armenian Genocide And The Jewish Holocaust

Genocide refers to a deliberate intention of the destruction and killing of people of a particular ethnic, cultural or religious people. The people in government who usually perform such action have attitudes and behaviors that were discriminative and racial in nature though they were being covered up in super nationalistic ideologies (Kelman, 1973). The Armenian Genocide and the Jewish Holocaust have several similarities and differences and scholars have examined both events and explored what led to such actions.

The Armenian Genocide

The Armenian genocide occurred in several steps over several years during World War 1 in the Ottoman Empire. First of all the Turkish government took all the Armenian men in the armies and confiscated their artillery. Their jobs were changed from soldiers to hard laborers in road and other forms of constructions. They were overworked and overwhelmed by their working conditions. They were forced to transport heavy loads in the snow, sleeping in the open while being underfed with scraps of food. If they got sick, they would be left to die.

Those who succeeded to reach the given destination were taken to the fields and executed to death. The execution of these well bodied men weakened the defense of the overall Armenian people. The Turkish government turned to the remaining male population and promised them that they were going to be deported to a safe haven. They were to be taken to a developing country which was not however the case.

The deportation was simply an elaborate plan to finish off the male population. The men would be grouped in threes or fours sent in the desert where either they were shot to death by the army or once they had reached a secluded place, they would be attacked and killed by the Turkish citizens. Once all the men had been killed, what were left were the women, children and old men who could not defend themselves. For the Armenian women, they were given the option to convert to Islam and work as slaves in the Turkish homes. They were those who accepted these conditions however there were those who refused.

As they travelled in the desert, with no food or water, many of them died from hunger and starvation (Cohan, 2005). They were also subjected to certain inhuman conditions such as rape, torture and mutilation. When anyone stumbled or became too weak, they were killed. The heat proved to be too much as they were scantily dressed. There were those who died from diseases. Those few who survived died in the camps of Syria and Mesopotamian or Iraq starved to death and died from diseases. The government took all the wealth and property from the armeans. Those who were leaders in the educational, political and religious sectors were also secluded and executed. Another similarity between these holocausts is that the government took steps to incite hate against towards these minority groups and to see them as an obstruction to their nationalistic efforts.

The Jewish Holocaust

In Europe, even before the Holocaust there was a lot of anti-Semitism. The European Jews were regarded as lower in the social hierarchy. The Jews did

not accept Jesus as the Messiah which brought them into great conflict with the Christians. The Jews therefore had a history of persecution in various parts in Europe over the centuries. Adolf Hitler became the leader of the National Socialist or Nazi in Germany as it was more popularly known.

He had great hate for the Jews and he started a campaign that led to the death of two thirds of the Jews in Europe. Once the party was in power, the actions taken were similar to the ones in the Ottoman Empire against the Armenians. The Jews lost their jobs through mass dismissal from their jobs in the hospitals, schools and the civil service. Their businesses were taken over by the Nazi party. There were public forums held where their books and other items were burnt.

In 1935, the Nuremberg laws stripped all the Jews of their citizenship and intermarriage or intercourse with the Jews was prohibited or outlawed. Many Jews fled the country and they could only leave with a third of their wealth. Others committed suicide as the conditions proved to be too much for them. They termed the prevailing conditions imposed on them as a social death. In 1938, the Nazi targeted the Jews and their properties where 30, 000 male Jews were arrested and taken to concentration camps. Several Jews were killed while many lost their properties and wealth. The Jews who tried to escape had nowhere to go as the other European countries refused to allow them in their lands.

Adolf Hitler was now preparing himself for the Final Solution where he would exterminate all the Jews. He however wanted public support and he set time

to spend propaganda on the evil of the Jews and the supremacy of the Aryan race in order to increase the anti-Semitism views in the country. This supremacy view had been fueled by the German's accomplishments in science and industry.

Between 1939 and 1941, the Germans confined the Jews in the overcrowded neighborhoods of the cities. They lived in inhuman conditions in the ghettos where they starved and got diseases such as typhoid and cholera. The Nazi wanted most of them to die in these ghettos. Later in 1941, 1.8 million Jews were rounded up by the Nazi and they were all murdered by use of guns. Those who were not killed by guns were killed using gas where they would be locked in chambers and the poisonous gases administered. As the Germans expanded their territories by war, they secluded the Jews and killed them. They wanted to have the Final Solution where all the Jews would be killed.

Similarities between the Armenian Genocide and the Jewish Holocaust

In both the genocides, there were State-initiated policies and programs that sought to exterminate the minority population. The people were nationalists who were envious of these minorities. In both genocides, the majority racial or ethnic group deemed themselves to be superior and wanted to occupy and control the territories around them. Both Genocides occurred during World Wars. The Armenian Genocide occurred during World War 1 while the Jewish Holocaust occurred during World War 2.

Adolf Hitler in Germany propagated the ideology that the Germans were a superior race and that the Jews would contaminate them. The country of Germany needed to get rid of the Jews. It was the same ideology in Armenia. The Turks wanted the region occupied by the Turkish people only. The national party in the Ottoman Empire was made up of young men who were nationalists and saw the Armenians as a people who would threaten the stability of the

nation. They rejected the concept of a multi or plural society where the minorities in the region would be appreciated and their rights respected. In the 20th century, the armeans had started to speak out on having their rights respected by the state.

In the Jewish holocaust, the Germans targeted to destroy the Jews who were a religious and ethnic minority in the country. In the Ottoman Empire, the Armenians were targeted by the Turkish government. In both genocides, these people were being blamed and treated as a threat to the stability of these countries. They were being taken to be the scapegoats of all the problems of these countries. In the 19th century, the Ottoman Empire which covered territories of the Serbs, Romanians, Armenia and the Greek was undergoing through a lot of pressure. Most of the European states were resisting the domination of the Turks. The size of the Ottoman Empire diminished in size as the Greeks, Serbians and Romans had been able to secure their territories. The Ottoman Empire now consisted of only the Arabs and the Armenians. The

Armenians were Christians and had actually accepted Christianity as the state religion before the invasion by the Turks.

When the Ottoman Empire started to deteriorate due to corruption and mismanagement, the Arabs started to persecute the Armenians. Their taxes were higher. The Arabs viewed the Armenians as infidels or unbelievers. The Armenians were targeted and hated for the status they had in the society. They were a religious minority. Secondly, most of them had the privilege of having attained high levels of education and wealth causing the other people in the Ottoman Empire to envy and hate them. The Armenians though peasants, were professionals, businessmen and skilled craftsman.

Germany had suffered great defeat in World War 1 and it was forced to enter into the humiliating Treaty of Versailles. It lost the colonies or territories it had captured in overseas, its army was greatly reduced and they had to bear high financial repatriations. The country faced hyperinflation and widespread unemployment. It was blamed for the outbreak of the war. There were Germans therefore looking for people to blame and the Jews were blamed. The Jews became the scapegoats for the supremacist forces in the country. The Jews were foreigners who had arisen in power by becoming wealthy. They were in the business of moneylending and the repayment with interest increased their wealth (Heilbrunner, 2000).

The Nazi party spread the propaganda that these people stole the wealth of the people. However, the people were just jealous of these foreigners who had risen to become influential people in the societies. In the cities they

flourished, rising in business and commerce, cultural pursuits and other professions such as journalism.

For both countries, the most powerful nations such as Britain and USA realized that these persecuted people needed a territory of their own. After the Jewish holocaust, America and Britain worked to have the Jews to have a territory of their own known as Israel in 1948 after World War 2. The boundaries were established and these people could now have a secure place. For the people of Armenia, their journey would be long. Like Israel, the nation of Armenia was also created after the World War 1 and the U. S president Woodrow Wilson drew the boundaries and a treaty was entered into with Turkey. However, the treaty was disregarded and Turkey joined forces with the Soviet Union to invade Armenia and it was absorbed into the USSR. The Armenians got their independence from the USSR in 1991.

Differences between the Armenian Genocide and the Jewish Holocaust

There are however certain differences between the Armenian genocide and the Jewish holocausts. First of all, the Armenian people were living in their home when the Turks invaded their territory. The Jews however did not have a central location as their home rather they were scattered in the European states of Germany and Poland.

The Germans targeted the Jews by propagating the lie that their race was inferior however for the Armenians there was no attack on their ethnicity or race as inferior rather it was their religion that was attacked. They were viewed as infidels. There were times in the Turkish Empire where the

Armenians could have been accepted. If they accepted Islam, they might have been able to spare their lives. For the Jews, it was not just their religion but their race. They were deemed to be inferior and there was no chance that they would be assimilated or absorbed. They had no choice they knew they would lose their lives.

The intention of the Nazi party was to eliminate the Jews from the world; the act of genocide was intended to occur at a global level. The Germans wanted to kill the Jews as they conquered more and more territories in Europe and Asia. The Armenian genocide was a domestic genocide where the Turks wanted to remove the Armenians from the Ottoman Empire. The Turks also feared that the Armenians might join forces with Russia in order to remove them from power. The Armenians were also getting exposed to European culture and intellect and were arising demanding for fair democracy.

References

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