



THE GENOCIDE AND SLAUGHTER OF INNOCENTS IN THE BALKANS AND ASIA MINOR - AN ALTERNATIVE POINT OF VIEW

Peter Adamis 21 MAY 2014

Reflection and forgiveness are the origins of a new beginning. But is this possible when the wounds and memories are still fresh in the minds of a new generation?. Far too many questions will remain answered in our life time.

If we consider this to be a truism, should we not consider history as a sentinel for accuracy and not be a silent guardian. History then should be allowed to shed its cloak of mistruths and misunderstandings to reveal the truth about its past. There are many atrocities committed daily and by a people who are recognised as being civilised and cultured and yet we are intent of destruction.

I say this with all honesty and with due respect to all the victims of genocide. Let us not forget the millions of Turks that were displaced from Europe and who were also slaughtered by the Balkan people. Those that survived and relocated to Turkey, were the progenitors of those who slaughtered the Christians in Turkey in revenge. The Armenian massacre and Genocide was also fuelled by those Cretans of Islamic faith who had been displaced and relocated to Turkey. Of the numerous Balkan Turks that were also in the same category and took part in the massacres.



I believe that we should look to the past to see the origins of genocide in order to lay the fault at some ones feet. Only then can we truly appreciate the magnitude of the genocide and slaughter on both sides. There are some good books on the this subject and yet, I do not see the information being displayed or aired, but we are fascinated with the slaughter of our own and commemorate that slaughter.

There is no denying that atrocities and slaughter took place and there is no denying that the average Turk in these cases was far too afraid to go against their political and religious masters. That fear led to few people speaking out against the atrocities and yet to save many of the Christians, they kept them and converted them into Islam in order to save their lives. I do hope that future generations review history for what it was. Greece like the olive tree may be cut down, but it has a habit of regrowing from the remnants.

Why mankind is hell bent on self destruction is beyond comprehension and no matter how much effort academics, intellectuals, politicians and like minded individuals discuss such matters, history cannot be erased or obliterated by the mere stroke of a pen. Genocide and slaughter of a people happened and those on both sides of the dividing line should accept that as reality and also acknowledge responsibility for such atrocities.



May the memory of all those who lost their lives during the period of unrest never be forgotten. No matter which side of the faith they belonged to for there are many paths to God and whichever path we choose, let not our biases and hatred for others stop those who take another path than the one we choose to travel.

There will come a time when Turks and the Balkan people will put aside their hatred of each other, but unfortunately it may not be in our life time. The blood of millions on both sides still cry out from the blood drenched earth and yearn for recognition and acknowledgments of their time on earth. If this is the case, then it will take generations to heal the ideological, religious and lifestyle differences between those of the Islamic, Christian and Jewish faiths, which is ironic in itself as they are all from the same root of faith in the one and same creator we call God.



In summary, I am a loss as how this is to be achieved as the challenges are beyond my comprehension. However I guess that forgiveness begins at home. Like Ben Gurion (Israel's first Prime Minister) said about the Jewish holocaust, 'we can forgive, but we will never forget'. One wonders how does one forget if those who were exterminated were your family , friends and lifelong acquaintances?.

Postscript: I was brought up to hate the Turk and for many years it was embedded into my psyche. I met my first Turk as a young soldier during the 1974 Brisbane floods. I was stationed on top of one of Brisbane's tallest buildings, a hotel while below the swirling waters of the Brisbane River flowed past me. We were tasked with monitoring the debris of dead animals, rubbish, bodies, drums of toxic waste and other floating objects.

We were stuck up on top of these building for some days without being relieved due to the rising waters. The hotel staff fed us from the kitchens below in the restaurants owned by the hotel. It was there that I met my first Turk. He was one of the waiters and his job was to a pass on food to us while we were monitoring the river and city below. The Turk was about my age and we got on well. He looked like a Greek and from the Mediterranean, so I asked for his origins. he smiled and said that he was a Turk.

I took into my stride and although I was astounded at meeting my first Turk, I was confused to find that he was not a monster, but just an ordinary bloke myself. As the years went by, i kept these thoughts to myself and over the years found myself meeting other Turks. Some I met whilst attending ANZAC Day at Bruce Ruxton's office and events and others were when a passenger in a taxi and driven to and from the airport.

Only on one occasion did i feel uneasy and that was when a taxi driver brought my young son home and he would not accept a torn ten dollar bill, even though all the serial number wee still on the note and considered legal tender. This confrontation although it put a sour taste in my mouth in no way deterred me from judging him and his race.

I guess I am fortunate in some ways that wisdom took some time catching me as I have always eluded her over the years. Wisdom in hindsight is a wonderful thing and as such I do wonder whether what I have learned over the years can be put into practice regarding my thoughts on the genocide of a race or people. can



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