

II.G.10

The Other Side of Modernity

The Armenian Genocide – Eine aktuelle Debatte

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Am Beispiel des osmanischen Vorgehens gegen die Armenier in den Jahren 1915/16 lernen die Schülerinnen und Schüler Grundmuster und Mechanismen eines Genozids im 20. Jahrhundert kennen. Die aktuelle Debatte um die offizielle Anerkennung als Völkermord und der Umgang Deutschlands mit seiner Mitverantwortung werden in dieser Unterrichtsreihe aufgegriffen. Die Lerngruppe wird zur Reflexion angeleitet und erkennt, wie aus Geschichte tagesaktuelle Gegenwart wird. Anhand von Bildmaterial, einer Debatte und eines Gruppenpuzzles erarbeiten sich die Schülerinnen und Schüler weitgehend selbstständig diese Themenbereiche.

KOMPETENZPROFIL

Klassenstufe:	11–13
Dauer:	7 Unterrichtsstunden
Kompetenzen:	Ursachen und Verlauf des Genozids an den Armeniern vor dem Hintergrund des Ersten Weltkriegs erarbeiten; die Verantwortung, die sich aus der Geschichte ergeben kann, am Beispiel des Genozids an den Armeniern reflektieren
Thematische Bereiche:	Genozid im 20. Jahrhundert, Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches und der Türkei, Erster Weltkrieg, Erinnerungskultur
Medien:	Texte, Bilder, Farbseiten

M 1

Turkey: "The Sick Man of Europe"?

Tasks

1. Describe the cartoon and explain the meaning of the cartoon's caption.
2. Formulate hypotheses about the Ottoman Empire and the German Reich at the outbreak of the First.



THE REVERSION.

Turkey. "I'M GIVING UP THIS BED, WILLIAM. WON'T YOU TAKE MY PLACE?"

© Punch Limited

cot: a plain narrow bed

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C: Armenian orphans (1918)

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Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on the events of 1915

M 13

Tasks

1. Outline Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's position towards the Armenian genocide. Prepare a one-minute speech.
2. Follow-up Activity: Discuss whether remembering the Armenian genocide is a real challenge.



On 24 April 2014, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who was then Prime Minister of Turkey, described the events of 1915 as follows:

The 24th of April carries a particular significance for our Armenian citizens and for all Armenians around the world, and provides a valuable opportunity to share opinions freely on a historical matter.

It is indisputable that the last years of the Ottoman Empire were a difficult period, full of suffering for Turkish, Kurdish, Arab, Armenian and millions of other Ottoman citizens, regardless of their religion or ethnic origin. [...]

As a Turkish proverb goes, "fire burns the place where it falls". It is a duty of humanity to acknowledge that Armenians remember the suffering experienced in that period, just like every other citizen of the Ottoman Empire. In Turkey, expressing different opinions and thoughts freely on the events of 1915 is the requirement of a pluralistic perspective as well as of a culture of democracy and modernity. [...]

Even so, if this will enable us to better understand historical issues with their legal aspects and to transform resentment to friendship again, it is natural to approach different discourses with empathy and tolerance and expect a similar attitude from all sides. The Republic of Turkey will continue to approach every idea with dignity in line with the universal values of law.

Nevertheless, using the events of 1915 as an excuse for hostility against Turkey and turning this issue into a matter of political conflict is inadmissible¹. The incidents of the First World War are our shared pain. To evaluate this painful period of history through a perspective of just memory is a humane and scholarly responsibility.

Millions of people of all religions and ethnicities lost their lives in the First World War. Having experienced events which had inhumane consequences – such as relocation – during the First World War, should not prevent Turks and Armenians from establishing compassion and mutually humane attitudes among towards one another. [...]

Regardless of their ethnic or religious origins, we pay tribute, with compassion and respect, to all Ottoman citizens who lost their lives in the same period and under similar conditions.

<https://www.voltairenet.org/article183442.html> [letzter Abruf: 05.03.2021]

¹ **inadmissible:** not valid, not acceptable

How Armenians remember the Armenian Genocide

M 15

Tasks

1. Outline how the Armenians commemorate the genocide. Prepare a one-minute speech.
2. Follow-up Activity: Discuss whether remembering the Armenian genocide is a real challenge.



24th April is the day Armenians commemorate the victims of the genocide.

How do they remember?

At first glance it is difficult to spot the small purple, yellow and black lapel pins to bemoan the victims and a lost homeland. But posters, T-shirts, umbrellas, bumper stickers and even cakes all catch one's eye with a distinctive forget-me-not design to remember the tragedy of a nation. It symbolises the centenary of the Armenian genocide of 1915. This week, festive ceremonies are held in Yerevan and worldwide wherever this ancient people were forced to flee due to the atrocities suffered in the dying days of the Ottoman empire.

Complaints about commercialisation of this new tradition have risen. Although it has been described as a poppy-like throwback to the killing fields of eastern Anatolia, it has caught on. Children in schools and homes in Armenia but also in the diaspora community of Glendale, California, are making their own paper flowers or have planted forget-me-nots as tribute to the horrors their ancestors had to endure. [...]

These killings were once infamous, then faded from the spotlight and were the cause of a vicious propaganda war. Today, they are widely regarded as a gruesome harbinger to the Nazi Holocaust. [...]

The last preparations for Friday's commemoration are being made at Armenia's genocide memorial on the Tsitsernakaberd plateau, overlooking Yerevan. Attractions include a bunker-like museum as well as a tapering grey stele pointing skywards, resembling an accusing finger. [...] "I am proud to be here and I understand why I am here," said Milena Avetisyan, 16, [...]. "It is a call to the world to recognise the Armenian genocide. It is to show the we remember and demand." [...] How closely this country's identity and future are connected with the bloody past is highlighted by many centenary events such as conferences, exhibitions and concerts. [...] "International recognition is fine but, if Turkey doesn't do it, then we won't have the security we need," said Tevan Poghosyan, an MP for the nationalist Heritage party. "It is a security issue because the genocide happened to us. It is our nation that lost its homeland and was scattered around the world. It is not just a historical issue." [...] Remembering and being aware of what happened is presented as a national duty. [...] Contrary to what organisations in the more militantly nationalist diaspora would like, the Armenian government does not demand any territory or reparations. Yerevan strives for the normalisation of relations with Ankara [...].

Text: Yannick Kraus, adapted from: Ian Black: A small country but a big nation: How genocide shaped the Armenia of today, in: The Guardian 22.04.2015, found at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/22/turkish-silence-fans-century-of-armenian-grief-over-genocide> [letzter Abruf: 09.03.2021]