

Standard 10.5.5 Discuss human rights violations and genocide, including the Ottoman government’s actions against Armenian citizens.

Document-Based Assessment

The Forgotten Genocide

The Armenian massacre has been called the “forgotten genocide.” It refers to the destruction, between 1895 and 1923, of the Christian Armenians of Turkey under the Muslim Ottoman government. More than 2 million Armenians lived in Turkey before the genocide. Estimates of those killed vary from 600,000 to 1.5 million. The rest were driven from their ancestral home. Most perpetrators were freed, despite pledges by the Allies to punish them after World War I.

Document A

“As it got worse, all of us, and all the people, began gathering in our school. The word came around that the Turks were going on the streets and killing all the Armenians and leaving them on the streets. I, myself, was in school already, so I simply stayed there. Then orders came from the school that we, too, should run away. But where? All the buildings were on fire! The Turks were burning everything. There was a whole group of us running away from the school.”

-Annalin, a survivor from Smyrna on events of 1922

Document B

“The massacre of Armenian subject in the Ottoman Empire in 1896...was amateur and ineffective compared with the largely successful attempt to exterminate [them] during the First World War in 1915...[This] genocide was carried out under the cloak of legality by cold-blooded governmental action. These were not mass-murders committed spontaneously by mobs of private people...”

-Arnold Toynbee, British historian, cited in **Experiences**

Document C

“The 1,000 Armenian houses are being emptied of furniture by the police one after the other. The furniture, bedding and everything of value is being stored in large buildings about the city...The goods are piled in without any attempt at labeling or systematic storage. A crowd of Turkish women and children follow the police about like a lot of vultures and seize anything they can lay their hands on and when the more valuable things are carried out of the house by police they rush in and take the balance...I suppose it will take several weeks to empty all the houses and then the Armenian shops and stores will be closed out.

-From a report to the American embassy by Oscar S. Heizer, American counsel in Tebizond, July 1915

Document D

“The proportion of Armenians killed by the Turks in World War I out of the general number of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire was no less than that of the Jewish victims [during the Holocaust] out of the total Jewish population in Europe. Nor are the methods of killing unique...The type of murder committed by the Germans in the USSR-mass machine-gunning-was the traditional method of mass murder in our century, and the death marches of the Jews in the closing stages of the war had their precedent in the Armenian case as well. Nor is the fact that the case of the Holocaust it was a state machine and a bureaucracy that was responsible for the murder unique, because there, too, the Young Turks had preceded the German Nazis in planning the execution of a population with such means as were modern at the time.”

-From **Remembrance and Denial** by Richard G. Hovannisian

Use your knowledge of the Enlightenment and Documents A, B, C, D, and E to answer the questions

1. According to Document B, the 1915 massacre of Armenians
 - a. Went unpunished.
 - b. Was ineffective and unsuccessful.
 - c. Was not as well documented as the 1896 massacre.
 - d. Was committed with the knowledge of the Turkish government.
2. Document C shows that the Turkish police
 - a. Tried to protect the property of Armenian citizens, despite their government’s orders.
 - b. Tried to help Armenian citizens as best they could.
 - c. Took part in stealing the property of Armenian citizens.
 - d. Protested to the American embassy to try to help their friends.
3. According to Document D, the Armenian Massacre and the Holocaust
 - a. Were committed by the same people.
 - b. Were carried out in a similar way.
 - c. Had very few similarities, except for the large number of murders.
 - d. Both took place in Germany.
4. Ismayale Kemal Pasha, a governor in Marash, was described by one survivor as kind and justice-loving. He tried saving Armenian citizens, despite orders from his superiors to carry out the genocide without remorse. Suppose Ismayale Kemal Pasha explained his decision to help in a memoir. Write a brief explanation from his point of view. Use these documents along with information from the notes and textbook in your writing.