

Re: Pope Francis Commemorates 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide- “the first of the 20th Century”



As usual, [Jerry Gordon is on target](#), He understands that the Armenian genocide was a jihad, a sacralized form of mass extermination in which the victims were regarded as enemies of God for whom any kind of death, no matter how obscene, can be inflicted without regret or apology. That is part, but only part, of the message of the crucifixion of the eight Christian maidens, victims of the Armenian genocide, who were stripped of all protective clothing, filmed or caused to be filmed by the Turks. Obviously, the Turks were initially not reluctant to publicize their terrible deed. Unlike ISIS, they later changed their minds, not out of regret but because they realized it was bad publicity The other message of the film is the proclamation of the impending victory of Islam over Christianity and the impending destruction of a Christian future, for indeed, it is the women who carry the future in their wombs. That short clip is one of the most painful scenes anyone could ever witness.

Having been a lifelong student of both the history and theology implicit in the Holocaust, I often asked myself, as Jerry Gordon indicates, “Why did the Turks refuse to admit guilt the way the Germans did after WW II?” I first wrote about the Armenian genocide in *The Cunning of History* (1974) but I minimized the religious factor and was unable to answer that crucial question. It was only after reading Bat Ye’or’s

books on dhimmitude and jihad, that I began to understand the Turkish refusal. *Successive Turkish governments have refused because they regard the genocide of the Armenians as a jihad, a holy act commanded by Allah.* Hence, in their religion, *they committed no crime and they have nothing about which to feel guilty.* From the Turkish point of view, some, if not all of the Armenian Christian had broken the dhimma, the pact of submission to which, according to Islam, every defeated people must submit in order to remain alive. The corollary of the dhimma is that, if the conquering Muslims believe that those whom they have defeated have broken the dhimma, the Muslim community has no further reason to permit their survival. In the years leading up to the 1915 genocide some, but not all, Armenians sought to liberate themselves from Ottoman rule; other Armenians saw an alliance with neighboring Christian Russia as the path to liberation. In addition, the Turks were experiencing population pressure from Muslims forced to leave the Balkan Christian nations that had defeated the Ottoman Empire shortly before the start of the Great War. From the Turkish perspective, the Armenians deserved what they got. Moreover, it is highly unlikely that the Turks will ever state publicly that their real reason for refusing to admit guilt is because they know what it would reveal about Islam. Instead, they deny that they committed genocide and say it was wartime and things happen.

The [NER essay](#) was first presented in L.A. in 2014 at the Annual Scholars Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches, an institution originally created in 1970 and meeting annually thereafter, by two Protestant theologians, the late Franklin Littell and Hubert Locke, who were students of Reinhold Niebuhr, a great theologian who had no illusions about National Socialism in the 1930s when too many Protestant leaders were isolationists.

Pope Francis is not a politician who can mouth phrases like "Islam is a religion of peace." He knows what radical Muslims

are doing to Christians in some Muslim lands. My guess is that the Pope, who is a very smart Jesuit, got to the point where, unlike our president, he could not ignore the murder of Christians by Muslims. He had to speak the truth. Given his high and enduring office, he could do no other.