

# **To Annihilate All Armenians Living Within Turkey: Continuity and Contingency in the Origins of the Armenian Genocide, 1877-1915**

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## ABSTRACT

Debates regarding the Armenian genocide center on the extent to which decision-making for the genocide was contingent on the specific circumstances of the onset of World War One, or reflected longer-term continuities with the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century Hamidian massacres and genocidal planning by the Ottoman political leadership before the war. These debates present a false dichotomy regarding decision-making for the genocide, which was simultaneously a function of the specific contingencies of the war, and at the same time represented a culmination of a process of escalating hostility towards Armenians by Muslims at multiple levels of Ottoman society initiated in the aftermath of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78. This structural anti-Armenian radicalization was in turn driven by the fragmentation of the Ottoman Empire, resulting from Russian imperialism and the growth of internal ethnic nationalism, anti-Muslim violence in the Balkans and the Caucasus, and the Ottoman political leadership's attempts to violently suppress perceived internal revolts.

**Keywords:** Armenian Genocide, Balkan Wars 1912-13, Battle of Sarikamish, Committee for Union and Progress, Hamidian Massacres, Ottoman Empire, Russo-Turkish War 1877-78, World War One, Young Turk Revolution

# **Aniquilar a todos los armenios que viven en Turquía: continuidad y contingencia en los orígenes del genocidio armenio, 1877-1915**

## RESUMEN

Los debates sobre el genocidio armenio se centran en la medida en que la toma de decisiones para el genocidio dependía de las circunstancias específicas del inicio de la Primera Guerra Mundial,

o reflejaban continuidades a más largo plazo con las masacres de Hamidian de finales del siglo XIX y la planificación genocida realizada por el gobierno. Liderazgo político otomano antes de la guerra. Estos debates representan una falsa dicotomía con respecto a la toma de decisiones para el genocidio, que fue simultáneamente una función de las contingencias específicas de la guerra, y al mismo tiempo representó la culminación de un proceso de creciente hostilidad hacia los armenios por parte de los musulmanes en múltiples niveles del Imperio Otomano. sociedad iniciada a raíz de la guerra ruso-turca de 1877-78. Esta radicalización estructural anti-armenia fue impulsada a su vez por la fragmentación del Imperio Otomano resultante del imperialismo ruso y el crecimiento del nacionalismo étnico interno, la violencia anti-musulmana en los Balcanes y el Cáucaso, y los intentos del liderazgo político otomano de reprimir violentamente la percepción revueltas internas.

**Palabras clave:** Genocidio armenio; Guerras de los Balcanes 1912-13; Batalla de Sarikamish; Comité de Unión y Progreso; Masacres de Hamidian; Imperio Otomano; Guerra Ruso-Turca 1877-78; Primera Guerra Mundial; Revolución de los jóvenes turcos

## 消灭所有居住在土耳其的亚美尼亚人：1877-1915 年间亚美尼亚种族灭绝起源中的连续性和偶然性

### 摘要

关于亚美尼亚种族灭绝的辩论聚焦于种族灭绝决策在多大程度上取决于一战开端的具体情况，或反映了与“19世纪末期哈米德大屠杀以及战前奥斯曼政治领导所作的种族灭绝计划”相关的长期连续性。这些辩论代表了关于种族灭绝决策的错误二分法，因为种族灭绝计划同时也与战争的特殊偶然性相关，同时还代表了1877至1878年俄土战争结束后引起的、奥斯曼社会不同层面的穆斯林对亚美尼亚人仇恨加深过程的顶点。这一结构性的反亚美尼亚人的极端化过程反过来受奥斯曼帝国的碎片化所驱动，后者归因于俄国帝国主义和内部的族裔种族主义情绪上升、巴尔干和高加索地区的反穆斯林暴力、以及奥斯曼政治领导者为暴力镇压感知的内部叛乱所作的尝试。

关键词：亚美尼亚种族灭绝；巴尔干战争（1912-1913）；萨利卡米什战役；团结与进步委员会；哈米德大屠杀，奥斯曼帝国，俄土战争（1877-1878）；一战，青年土耳其革命



Syria - Aleppo - Armenian woman kneeling beside dead child in field “within sight of help and safety at Aleppo” Library of Congress, Washington DC, accessed October 31, 2021, <https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/service/pnp/cph/3a40000/3a48000/3a48200/3a48241r.jpg>

**B**etween 1915 and 1919, the Ottoman government, directed by the political leadership of the Committee for Union and Progress Party, used the pretext of suppressing an internal uprising during World War One and deliberately murdered approximately 1.5 million Armenian Ottoman citizens, in what historians consider one of the first instances of genocide in the 20th century. How and why did the Ottoman political leadership make the decision to initiate the genocide of the Armenian people in 1915? To what extent did the Ottoman leadership’s per-

ceptions of the conditions before and during the war, both inside and outside Ottoman territory, contribute to this decision-making process? The proximate cause of the Armenian genocide was the decision taken by the ruling Committee for Union and Progress in the spring of 1915 to annihilate the Armenian people based on a perception of Armenians as an internal security threat. This belief developed in the wake of Armenian participation in the Russian Caucasus campaign of 1914-15 and localized Armenian resistance activities within the Empire at the outset of World War One.

However, this decision reflected a longer-term structural dynamic of escalating hostility and violence directed against Armenians by Ottoman political leaders and local Muslims which developed in the wake of the territorial losses and anti-Muslim violence of the 1877-78 Russo-Turkish war. This dynamic was predicated on a belief that Armenian demands for civil and political rights within the Empire were precursors to Great Power intervention, Armenian independence, and increased Ottoman territorial loss and violence against Ottoman Muslims. Despite a brief period in which Armenians succeeded in achieving increased political representation following the Young Turk revolution of 1908, the further territorial fragmentation and violence of Balkan Wars of 1912-13 served to radicalize and escalate preexisting views of Armenians as alien and hostile elements to an Empire which had grown proportionately more Muslim in the wake of population transfers in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars.

The historiography of the Armenian genocide can broadly be divided into the official Turkish stance on the genocide and the debate among scholars outside of Turkey. The official Turkish position today is one of strict genocide denial. According to this view, the Ottoman government did not deliberately engage in large scale mass killings of the Armenian minority during World War One, and to the extent there was violence directed against Armenians it occurred within the legitimate context of attempting to suppress a large scale Armenian revolt.<sup>1</sup> However, the major-

ity of scholars outside of Turkey reject this official view, and instead argue that the Ottoman government deliberately carried out a genocide of the Armenian people during the war based on the analysis of extensive primary sources. Debates among scholars of the Armenian genocide outside of Turkey have instead hinged on issues related to continuity and contingency regarding the CUP's initiation of the genocide.

Scholars emphasizing continuity such as Vahkn Dadrian have argued for a structural relationship between the Armenian genocide and earlier outbreaks of mass violence directed against the Armenian minority, specifically the 1894-96 Hamidian massacres that occurred during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II. In Dadrian's view, both the Sultan and the CUP were able to take advantage of an Ottoman political culture rooted in Islam that allowed for the use of mass violence against non-Muslims in a situation that viewed the conflict between the Ottoman Empire and the Armenians as a challenge to Islamic supremacy.<sup>2</sup> Another element of the continuity claim is that the CUP developed genocidal intentions toward the Armenians before the outbreak of World War One. Dadrian argues that this genocidal intent can be seen as early as 1910 during a secret speech by Interior Minister Mehmed Talaat, in which he called for "Ottomanizing" the Empire, which in Dadrian's view required the "liquidation" and "violent elimination" of Armenians and other Christians.<sup>3</sup> According to this argument, the outbreak of the war created a pretext for the CUP to enact its pre-existing genocidal in-

tent.<sup>4</sup> Tanner Akcam also argues that the CUP developed genocidal plans in response to the 1914 Armenian reform agreement which demanded the CUP “eliminate” the Armenian issue “in a comprehensive and absolute manner.”<sup>5</sup>

In contrast to the continuity thesis, historians emphasizing contingency in explaining the Armenian genocide such as Ronald Suny and Donald Bloxham have specifically rejected claims of genocidal plans developed before the war. Instead, these historians argue that the genocide was the result of CUP policies enacted in response to specific wartime developments. As Bloxham has stated, “there was no a priori blueprint for genocide, and that it emerged from a series of more limited regional measures in a process of cumulative policy radicalization . . . only by the early summer of 1915 may we speak of a crystallized policy of empire-wide killing and death-by-attrition.”<sup>6</sup> Suny rejects arguments that Islam and Ottoman political culture explain the Armenian genocide, pointing out that genocide was not a regular feature of Ottoman history.<sup>7</sup>

Norman Naimark has pointed out that genocide as a historical phenomenon occurs at multiple levels of society, including political leaders and other decision makers, regional and local leaders or military and police officers who interpret and carry out orders, and local individuals who may participate in or witness the killings.<sup>8</sup> Explaining the Armenian genocide necessitates accounting for all levels of Ottoman society that were participants in the genocide. The fragmentation

of the Empire as a result of the 1877-78 Russo-Turkish War and the Balkan Wars initiated and escalated a long-term process of increasing hostility and suspicion by political leaders and local Muslims directed towards Armenians, whose growing calls for increased civil and political rights and protection from violence within the Empire were seen as precursors to European intervention. Ottoman Muslims at multiple levels of society believed this intervention would result not only in further territorial loss but also increased violence against Muslims. This anti-Armenian radicalization developed in stages, and led to systematic violence at identifiable points, beginning with the Hamidian massacres and culminating in the CUP’s decision to initiate the genocide in response to the specific contingencies of the war.

In 1877, the Russian government took advantage of Ottoman anti-Christian violence in the Balkans to launch an attack on the Ottoman Empire in order to achieve the long-standing goal of control over the Black Sea Straits. Since the late 18th century, Russia had engaged in a drive towards the Balkans and the Caucasus in order to secure access to and control over the warm-water port of the Black Sea. This process inevitably brought Russia into conflict with the Ottoman Empire, whose capital in Istanbul lay on the strategic waterways of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles controlling the passageway between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Russia also had ideological justifications for this expansion, seeing itself as inheriting the legacy of the Byzantine Empire as the “Third Rome” with the mission

of liberating Istanbul and returning it as the center of Orthodox Christianity, and in the later 19th century as the leader of Slavic nationalist movements in the Balkans.<sup>9</sup> Taking advantage of this Balkan pan-Slavism, Russia used the pretext of the violent Ottoman suppression of the Bulgarian revolt in 1876 to declare war on the Ottoman Empire, seizing control of large swaths of territory in the Balkans and the Caucasus.

European rejection of Armenian appeals for greater autonomy within the Ottoman Empire led some Armenians to consider more radical means for independence. In the ensuing 1878 Congress of Berlin, called by the European powers to resolve territorial issues of both of the war and in Balkans, the Ottoman Empire lost forty percent of its total territory, including Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Balkans, and the eastern Anatolian provinces of Ardahan, Kars and Batum to Russia.<sup>10</sup> During the war Kurds in Van and Diyarbakır in the Ottoman Empire, as well as in Persia, killed thousands of Armenians and destroyed multiple villages, fearing Russia would support Armenian separatist claims. Ottoman Armenians sent a representative, Khrimian Hayrik, to the Congress of Berlin to appeal for European support for Armenian political autonomy within the Ottoman Empire and guarantees of Armenian rights and safety. At the Congress Khrimian called for political autonomy within the Empire for what he claimed were two million Armenian inhabitants in six provinces in Eastern Anatolia, with Christian governors appointed by the Sultan assisted by coun-

cils comprised of equal measures Muslim and Armenian representatives.<sup>11</sup> The European powers rejected Khrimian's calls for extensive Armenian political autonomy and instead called for simple reforms regarding the safety and security of Armenians within the Empire. Upon his return from Berlin, Khrimian began to urge Armenians to turn to an armed revolutionary struggle for independence, pointing to the success of the Balkan insurrections against the Ottoman Empire in comparison with unsuccessful attempts by Armenians at peaceful advocacy for political and social autonomy.<sup>12</sup>

In the aftermath of the Congress of Berlin Armenian nationalist groups promoted revolutionary activity in the Ottoman Empire in support of Armenian autonomy. In 1886, Armenian socialists formed the Hunchak Party, which called for a violent uprising in Ottoman eastern Anatolia in support of an independent Armenia. The Hunchak program specifically advocated the use of terror to undermine Ottoman authority and inspire in the Ottoman Empire:

The purpose of terror is to protect the people, when it is subject to persecution, to raise its spirit, to inspire and elevate a revolutionary disposition among them, to show daring on behalf of the people protesting against the government, and thus to maintain the faith of the people toward the task on hand, to shake the power of the government, to abase its reputation of being powerful, to create extreme

fear [in its ranks]. The means to achieve these goals are: to annihilate the worst Turkish and Armenian personalities within the government, to annihilate the spies and the traitors.<sup>13</sup>

In 1890, a second group of Armenian nationalists established the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, or Dashnaks, which supported Armenian political and social autonomy but not the creation of an independent state. In the mid-1890s, members of both groups sent agents into the Ottoman Empire to coordinate revolutionary activity, smuggle weapons, and engage in acts of terror against the Ottoman state such as attacking soldiers, police outposts, and groups of Kurds who were thought to have committed violence against Armenians. The Armenian revolutionaries believed such attacks would attract the support of European powers, following the example of Bulgarian revolutionaries.<sup>14</sup>

Territorial loss and the formation of Armenian nationalist revolutionary groups in the aftermath of the Congress of Berlin contributed to Ottoman fears of Armenian independence movements and led to the development of specialized Ottoman border control units in Armenian territory. After the Russo-Turkish War the Ottoman Sultan, Abdulhamid, increasingly turned to an ideology of conservative Islam to help unify the disparate Muslim ethnic groups in the Empire in the face of territorial encroachment by Christian European powers. In 1890 Abdulhamid established the Hamidiye regiments in

eastern Anatolia, which consisted of 30,000 Kurdish tribesmen on the border with Russia, as a way of strengthening their loyalty to the Ottoman state. The Sultan also established these units in areas with high concentrations of Armenians in response to the revolutionary activity by nationalist groups, and Hamidiye units exploited their immunity from prosecution to engage in attacks and acts of extortion of local Armenians, further inflaming local hostilities.<sup>15</sup>

Between 1894 to 1896, fears of local Armenian revolutionary activity and the potential for further territorial loss led Ottoman authorities and local Muslims to initiate a wave of massacres of Armenians in eastern Anatolia. In 1894, Armenians in the Sasun region, encouraged by Hunchak activists, rebelled against attacks by local Kurdish warlords and demands for the payment of tribute in addition to taxation by local Ottoman authorities. In August, fighting erupted between the Armenians and Kurds, and the Ottomans sent in Hamidiye units and regular military forces to reinforce the Kurds, killing approximately 3,000 Armenian men, women and children.<sup>16</sup> Local Turks saw the Armenian rebellion as evidence of a conspiracy against Turks and the Empire itself, believing that Armenians “were plotting against the Empire and the Turkish element in the population.”<sup>17</sup> Reacting to the massacre of Christian Armenians, the European powers proposed a series of reforms and protections for Armenians in the six Ottoman provinces in eastern Anatolia with high concentrations of Armenians, Erzurum, Bitlis, Diyarbakır,

Harput, Sivas, and Van. The Great Powers' plan envisioned European commissioners overseeing the implementation of reforms and European approval of the appointment of local Ottoman governors. Ottoman authorities viewed these reforms as a prelude to Armenian independence and they were rejected by the Sultan.<sup>18</sup>

In September 1895, the Hunchaks organized a protest in Istanbul to demand increased political and civil rights for Armenians. Muslim counter-protestors, backed by the army and police, attacked the Armenians, killing sixty, followed by further attacks by Muslims on Armenians in Trabzon in which hundreds died. To forestall further European interference the Sultan finally agreed to the European reform proposals to provide protections and increased political representation to Armenians, under European oversight.<sup>19</sup> Local Muslims, fearful the European reforms would lead to an independent Christian Armenian state in which they would be a minority or forced to leave as had thousands of Muslims from the former Ottoman territory in the Balkans, unleashed a wave of violence that killed between 37,000 and up to 300,000 in some estimates in central and eastern Anatolia. In Diyarbakır, anger over the potential for Armenian independence as well as local economic resentment of Armenians contributed to Muslim attacks. In the aftermath of the massacres there, local Muslim notables wrote to the Sultan, in an attempt to explain the local violence: "It is clear that the Armenians live under much happier conditions than the Muslims and are

not as destitute and pitiful as they claim but, in reality, in this area own many places of work and have capital. Feeling discontented with their current advantages they will surely strive passionately to acquire still more privileges and to realize other unnecessary benefits that are contrary to Islamic law."<sup>20</sup>

The third wave of violence began in August 1896 when a group of Dashnaks took hostages and threatened to blow up a bank in Istanbul, demanding reforms in the six provinces and an end to the wave of violence against the Armenians. Local mobs began attacking Armenians in Istanbul and surrounded the bank, attempting to break in. The Dashnaks dropped explosives on the crowd, killing several people. The European powers successfully negotiated an end to the hostage crisis, promising to ensure reforms, and escorted the Dashnaks to a waiting British ship. The incident led to another wave of violence by local Muslims angered by the bank attack, who killed approximately 8,000 Armenians in Istanbul as a result.<sup>21</sup> The overall wave of violence directed against Armenians between 1894-96 shows the extent to which both the government, as well as local Muslims, increasingly saw Armenian demands for increased rights backed by European powers, and the potential for further territorial loss, as a threat to be suppressed with overwhelming violence.

The Young Turk Revolution of 1908 contributed to a period of optimism among Armenians and other ethnic and religious minorities for full political and civil rights within a constitutional Ottoman government. Since

the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the increasingly autocratic rule of Sultan Abdulhamid resulted in the development of multiple opposition groups who sought the return of the constitutional government the Sultan had promised but abandoned in the wake of 1877 Russo-Turkish war. The most significant opposition group was the Committee for Union and Progress, which included intellectuals, bureaucrats and military officers committed to secularism, Turkish nationalism, economic modernization, and political reform who were willing to accept a liberal constitutional framework that allowed for an inclusive multi-ethnic and multi-religious Ottoman citizenship and representative government. The CUP collaborated with Dashnaks who had abandoned the idea of Armenian independence and sought Armenian autonomy within a constitutional Ottoman state.<sup>22</sup> The CUP coup against Abdulhamid in July 1908 began after the Sultan's agents arrested CUP officers in a cell in Macedonia and the officers faced a court-martial. Instead, CUP officers in Macedonia led a revolt against the Sultan in support of the reinstatement of the 1876 constitution which gained widespread support throughout Macedonia, and members of the Third Ottoman Army threatened to march on the Sublime Porte to demand restoration of the constitution. In response, on July 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Sultan summoned the cabinet and announced the restoration of the constitution. The CUP made the political decision to leave the Sultan and his government in power, given the extent to which he retained the broad political and religious

support of Muslims in the Empire, and established an oversight committee to ensure full compliance with a ruling constitution. With the reinstatement of the constitution many members of the Empire, which included a diverse array of ethnicities such as Turks, Arabs, Kurds, Armenians, Greeks, and religions including Jews and Christians, celebrated a moment of shared Ottoman patriotism and citizenship.<sup>23</sup> In the ensuing November parliamentary elections, in which all taxpaying Ottoman men over the age of 25 had the right to vote with no religious or ethnic limitation, Armenians, Greeks, Jews, Bulgarians, and other ethnic and religious minorities won seats, with Turks winning the majority and the CUP being the predominant political party.<sup>24</sup>

However, the apparent triumph of secularism and liberalism by the victory of the Young Turks contributed to a severe backlash by conservative forces supporting the Sultan, and resulted in renewed large-scale attacks against Armenians. Conservative political opposition against the CUP centered in the Society for Islamic Unity, which by the spring of 1915 was calling for abandonment of liberal reforms and the full restitution of Islamic law. They were joined in opposition to the CUP by younger non-commissioned officers in the First Army who remained loyal to the Sultan, and liberal members of Parliament concerned by what they saw as the centralization of power by the CUP. On April 12, 1915, approximately three thousand Islamic theological students and soldiers from the First Army launched a counter-coup to restore the

Sultan and depose the CUP, attacking and invading the Parliament building and killing two legislators in the process. In response members of the CUP fled Istanbul, supporters of the Sultan took control of the army and navy, and the Sultan resumed his traditional authority. The government sent orders for the resumption of traditional Islamic law to governors throughout the Empire.<sup>25</sup> In Adana, a town of approximately 60,000 inhabitants where approximately half were Armenian, fears of violence between Christians and Muslims had been developing since the 1908 CUP coup, in part resulting from local Muslim resentment of visible Armenian and Greek economic success and ownership of local textile factories. When news of the counter-coup against the CUP arrived in Adana, Muslims joined by a local army unit supporting the Sultan attacked Armenians, killing approximately 20,000 in Adana and the surrounding area.<sup>26</sup> Although the CUP itself had not directed the killings, some locally appointed CUP leaders who had been involved in massacres of Armenians prior to the 1908 CUP ascension to power were responsible for ordering attacks.<sup>27</sup> Similar to many of the 1894-96 attacks, violence directed against Armenians was driven as much or more by local fears and resentments and issues than by orders emanating from Istanbul. The counter-coup in Istanbul was ultimately thwarted when CUP loyalists from the Third Army in Macedonia formed an Action Army, which marched on Istanbul and retook the capital from the conservative supporters of the Sultan on 24 April. Three

days later, the Parliament voted to depose Abdulhamid, replacing him with his brother, Sultan Mehmed V, and the CUP returned to power.<sup>28</sup>

The Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 led to an almost complete loss of Ottoman territory in Europe, provoking a demographic crisis as a result of the ensuing influx of Muslim refugees fleeing former Ottoman territory. European countries had taken advantage of the period of political upheaval surrounding the CUP's rise to power in 1908 to seize more territory from the Ottoman Empire. In October of that year in rapid succession Bulgaria declared complete independence from the Empire, Austria annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Crete unified with Greece.<sup>29</sup> In 1911 Italy, a relative latecomer to European imperialism in Africa, declared war on the Ottomans and invaded its remaining North African territories of Tripoli and Benghazi in Libya. Although the Sultan's government wanted to abandon the territory, the CUP made an independent decision to support a guerilla campaign against the Italians in Libya. Multiple CUP officers, including the future head of the Ottoman secret police Ismail Enver, traveled to Libya to fight alongside local Arab Muslims opposing Italy. Although Enver's political orientation was secular, he came to see the value of Islam as a force to unite various Muslim groups against enemies of the Empire. Taking advantage of the war between Italy and the Empire, in October 1912 the former Ottoman Balkan states of Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro and Serbia declared war on the Empire, using local overwhelming military ad-

vantage to defeat the Ottoman forces.<sup>30</sup> By the end of the second Balkan War the Ottoman Empire had lost almost all of its former territory in Europe, comprising sixty thousand square miles and four million inhabitants.<sup>31</sup> The Balkan Wars resulted in the deaths of 200,000 people, including massacres inflicted by both sides in the combat and the destruction of Christian and Muslim villages. Approximately one and a half million Muslim refugees fled the devastation in the Balkans and streamed into Anatolia, where they joined the thousands of other Muslim refugees who had been forcibly uprooted as a result of the Russo-Turkish War, needing to be resettled.<sup>32</sup> The refugees told stories of violence and displacement at the hands of Christians, and increasingly Turks spoke of vengeance. In 1913, Ismail Enver wrote to his wife, lamenting “the savagery the enemy has inflicted . . . a stone’s throw from Istanbul . . . But our anger is strengthening; revenge, revenge, revenge; there is no other word.”<sup>33</sup>

In the wake of the devastating loss of 40% of Ottoman territory between 1908 and 1913, the CUP turned to increasingly authoritarian governance and embraced a vision of Turkish nationalism as a means of combating the centrifugal loss of territory and increasing demands for ethnic autonomy. In 1913, taking advantage of the domestic political turmoil surrounding the Balkan Wars, the CUP staged a second coup and seized control of the government. In the aftermath of the 1913 coup, three members of the Committee for Union and Progress attained

the rank of “Pasha,” the highest level in civil and military service, and rose to supreme ruling authority within the Ottoman Empire, the triumvirate of Minister of the Interior Mehmed Talaat, Minister of War Ismail Enver, and the governor of Istanbul and later Minister of the Navy, Ahmed Djemal.<sup>34</sup> Following the Balkan Wars, the CUP became increasingly authoritarian in its effort to consolidate power in the fragmenting Empire, reducing the power of the Parliament, imposing censorship, and installing CUP members to all important positions within the government. In 1913, the German Ambassador to the Empire approvingly compared the actions of the CUP to those of the Kaiser’s government, describing it as a shift “from a true parliamentary system to a monarchical-constitutional system of governance.”<sup>35</sup> After 1910 the CUP had adopted a policy of cultural Turkification as a way of centralizing authority within a multi-ethnic empire, adopting Turkish as the official state language and requiring its use in schools and in official documents.<sup>36</sup> In the wake of the Balkan Wars, members of the CUP became more stridently ethno-nationalistic in their views of governmental authority, abandoning the more inclusive vision of multi-ethnic Ottomanism. A senior member of the CUP, Dr. Mehmed Nazim was quoted in a French paper in 1913 as saying:

The pretensions of the various nationalities are a capital source of annoyance for us. We hold linguistic, historical and ethnic aspirations in abhorrence. This and that group will have to disappear.

There should be only one nation on our soil, the Ottoman nation, and only one language, Turkish [...] The first Christian to move a muscle will see his family, house and village smashed to smithereens.<sup>37</sup>

The Ottoman internal weakness demonstrated by the Balkan wars led Russia to initiate plans to seize control of the Black Sea straits, and it worked to establish a dominant sphere of influence in the eastern Anatolian area populated by Armenians. By 1911 Russia shipped approximately 50% of all exports and 90% of grain exports through the straits controlled by the Ottoman Empire.<sup>38</sup> These exports were key to Russian efforts at financing its efforts at industrialization. In 1912, when the Empire temporarily closed the straits as part of its naval campaign against Italy, Russian exports dropped 45%, creating an unacceptable threat to Russian economic interests. In November of that year, as Bulgarian forces came close to taking control of Istanbul, Russia prepared an intervention force with plans to occupy and take control of the territory around the straits to prevent its seizure by the Bulgarians. Russia had already initiated a naval buildup in 1911 of eighteen ships including three dreadnoughts to counter the Empire's purchase of two dreadnoughts, and to prevent Ottoman or an outside power's uncontested control over the straits. Convinced that the Ottoman Empire would soon collapse, the Russian Naval Ministry developed plans to take control of the straits after the anticipated naval build up was complete,

estimated to take place between 1917 to 1919.<sup>39</sup> Russia also took up the cause of Armenian reform in eastern Anatolia, in part to establish a sphere of influence in the fragmenting Ottoman Empire and to prevent other powers such as Germany from expanding their influence, which had constructed part of the Baghdad railway in Eastern Anatolia.<sup>40</sup> Taking advantage of Armenian appeals for protection in the face of a renewed wave of violence by Kurdish tribes in eastern Anatolia, Russia proposed a reform agreement which by 1913 took the form of two Armenian provinces, each governed by an inspector appointed by the European powers and with a local council comprised of half Armenian and half Muslim deputies. Although the Ottomans and the European powers were both concerned this would ultimately lead to the Russian annexation of eastern Anatolia, the Ottomans reluctantly agreed after Russia proposed to send troops into the Ottoman city of Ezurum, allegedly to protect Armenians. The Ottomans signed the agreement on February 8, 1914. That same month Russian ministers reviewed the plans for seizing the straits, which they realized needed to be strengthened with improvements in transportation and weapons. The ministers came to the conclusion that the general conditions of the anticipated war would provide the ideal opportunity to attack and seize both Istanbul and the Black Sea Straits. Emperor Nicholas II approved the final plans for military preparation for the operation on April 5, 1914.<sup>41</sup>

Before the onset of the war, Russia initiated efforts to arm Arme-

nians as part of a military strategy to exploit Armenian anti-Ottoman sentiment. In August 1914, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Sazonov and Governor-General of the Caucasus Illarion Vorotkov-Dashkov decided to take advantage of Armenian pro-Russian sympathies and established four Armenian volunteer battalions to fight on the Russian side in the impending war with the Ottoman Empire.<sup>42</sup> Even before the Ottoman Empire entered the war, thousands of Armenian deserters fled the Empire into Russian territory, assisted by Dashnak guerillas, including 50,000 from Ezurum alone. In August Sazonov ordered the Russian army to begin arming Ottoman Armenians and Assyrians to support Russian operations against the Empire. General Nikolay Yudenich, Chief of Staff of the Caucasian Army, also argued for the need to arm Armenians in anticipation of likely Ottoman reprisals against Armenians for their military support to Russia.<sup>43</sup>

Despite the participation of some Armenians in Russia's efforts to build an insurrection capacity, most Armenians remained loyal to the Ottoman Empire.<sup>44</sup> In a desperate attempt to forestall Armenian collaboration with the Russian army, a senior member of the CUP, Bahaeddin Shakir, met with Dashnak leaders in August 1914, offering to establish an autonomous Armenian territory in combination with any Armenian territory seized from Russia in the war in return for Armenian support against the Russians. Although the Armenian political leadership declared their loyalty to the Empire and stated Ottoman Armenians would fight on its behalf,

they refused the CUP's offers, stating Armenians should remain loyal to their respective governments. The Armenian refusal deepened Ottoman suspicions of Armenians in the Empire, and Talat ordered his intelligence agency to begin following the Armenian political leadership in September.<sup>45</sup> Many Armenians in the summer of 1914 remained ambivalent whether they should support Russia or if their interests would be better served by remaining loyal to the Ottoman government; most chose the latter. The governor of Van, Tahsin Bey, sent a telegram to Istanbul on 25 August stating that "Among the local Armenians there are neither thoughts of revolt or even opposition to the government . . . On the contrary, among the Dashnaks one can see [an attitude of] vocal support for and assistance vis-à-vis the government in regard to the general mobilization and the war." The same day the governor of Bitlis also reported that the Dashnaks, Hunchaks and the Armenian church were supporting the Ottoman order for general mobilization.<sup>46</sup> Despite developing suspicions of Armenian disloyalty, CUP leaders still showed a willingness to collaborate with the Armenian leadership even shortly before the Ottoman entry into the war.

Armenian participation in the Russian military campaigns, combined with devastating Ottoman loss at Sarikamish, strengthened the CUP's suspicion of Armenians as a dangerous internal enemy. The Empire entered the war on the side of the Central Powers in November, issuing the declaration to holy war, or "jihad," designed to unite

Muslims against the Christian Entente and in hopes of fomenting Muslim uprising living in Russia and in British and French colonies. Between November and December of 1914, Armenian volunteer units fought alongside the Russian Army during initial Russian incursions into the Ottoman Empire in the area near Van and Ardahan; after their withdrawal in December Ottoman units engaged in extensive massacres of Armenian civilians and the destruction of villages in reprisals against Armenians for collaboration.<sup>47</sup> Ottoman massacres of Armenians remained localized at this point and were not extended to other parts of the Empire. In December, the Ottoman Third Army launched an offensive against Russia in the Caucasus hoping to recapture the provinces of Ardahan, Kars and Batum, which the Ottoman Empire lost to Russia in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-8. By January the Third Army had suffered a complete rout as a result of extreme winter weather conditions, aggressive tactics, and overextended supply lines; of the 100,000 soldiers committed approximately 82,000 died over the course of the campaign. The defeat of the Ottoman Army in eastern Anatolia and its inability to defend against a Russian assault contributed to the Allied decision to launch an attack on Istanbul from the straits and made the existence of pro-Russian Armenian groups in the area appear to be an even greater threat to the CUP.<sup>48</sup>

In the aftermath of the loss at Sarikamish, the Ottomans took steps to segregate and remove Armenians from Allied invasion routes and from Otto-

man combat units. In December 1914, the British ship HMS *Doris* fired on Ottoman railway lines off the coast of Cilicia, and Ottoman authorities suspected the Armenians of collaborating with the Allies in support of the attack. Beginning in February, Talaat ordered the forcible deportation of Armenians from the villages of Dortyol and Alexandretta to Adana. Villagers in nearby Zeytun planned an uprising in response to the deportations, which local Armenian officials informed the Ottoman authorities about as a demonstration of loyalty. Prompted by a local attack by Armenians on an Ottoman military unit, the government deported the entire population of 22,000 beginning in April, first to Koyna and ultimately into Syria. Although thousands ultimately died from disease and starvation as a result of this initial wave of deportations, the decision to forcibly remove the residents of the villages was not taken as part of a large-scale attempt to annihilate Armenians but instead made in response to the immediate circumstances of a potential Allied invasion.<sup>49</sup> On February 25, 1915, shortly after the rout of Ottoman forces at Sarikamish, the Ottoman General Staff issued Directive 8682, ordering all Armenians and non-Muslims serving in the Ottoman military disarmed and relegated to labor battalions, reflecting the CUP political leadership's view of all Armenians as a potential internal security threat.<sup>50</sup> Ottoman authorities later separated and killed the Armenians in the labor battalions after the genocide was initiated sometime in March or April.

In the spring of 1915, senior members of the Committee of Union

and Progress made the explicit decision to annihilate the Ottoman Armenians after high level consultations. At the end of February Bahaeddin Shakir, the commander of the Ottoman security service the Special Organization and senior member of the Central Committee of the CUP, traveled to Istanbul and met with Taalat and Dr. Mehmed Nazim. Shakir's view was that "it was as necessary to be afraid of the enemy within as with those outside the borders" due to "the oppositional stance that the Armenians had taken toward Turkey and the assistance that they were affording to the Russian army."<sup>51</sup> While there are no records of the specific details of this meeting, the timing of this meeting corresponds to the period in which the overall decision to annihilate the Armenians was taken at the highest level within the CUP.<sup>52</sup> On March 3, 1915, Shakir wrote to the CUP Plenipotentiary in Adana, Cemal Bey, stating the CUP had come to its final solution:

the Committee [of Union and Progress], as the bearer of the nation's honor, has decided to free the homeland from the inordinate ambitions of this accursed nation and to assume

the responsibility for the blemish that will stain Ottoman history in this regard. The Committee, which cannot forget [the country's] bitter and unhappy history and whose cup runneth over with the unrelenting desire for revenge, has decided to annihilate all of Armenians living within Turkey, not to allow a single

one to remain, and has given the government broad authority in this regard. On the question of how this killing and massacring will be carried out, the [central] government will give the necessary instructions to the provincial governors and army commanders. All of the Unionist regional representatives would concern themselves with following up on the matter in all of the places where they were found, and would ensure that not a single Armenian would receive protection or assistance.<sup>53</sup>

Shakir reiterated the decision to annihilate the Armenians taken by the CUP in a subsequent letter to Cemal Bey on 7 April.

The process to annihilate the Armenians was taken through a combination of massacres directed by senior military and political officials throughout the Empire and large-scale deportations into the interior of the country, which gathered momentum throughout the spring and summer of 1915. As the Allies initiated the attack on Gallipoli in March 1915, the Ottomans deported the Armenians living on the peninsula. On 15 March the CUP replaced Tahsin Bey, the governor of Van who had reported the relative calm among Armenians in August, with Cevdet Bey, Ismail Enver's brother-in-law. Cevdet, who had just participated in large-scale massacres of Armenians and Assyrians in Persia, stated "we must do the same with the Armenians of Van." Given his status as a senior member of the CUP

and closeness to the leading triumvirate it's likely he would have been fully informed of the annihilation order. Cevdet demanded 4000 Armenians report for military service in the labor battalions, but the ARF only provided 500. On 17 April Cevdet ordered his units, nicknamed "butcher battalions," to massacre Armenians in the surrounding area. A Venezuelan mercenary, Rafael de Nogales, wrote in his account of service in the area that he had spoken with a local official who had engaged in massacres. The official reported that he was carrying out the specific directives of the governor ". . . to exterminate all Armenian males of twelve years of age and over." The Armenians mounted a defense against the attacks in the city of Van, and Cevdet's forces massacred Armenians in surrounding villages. When Russian forces relieved the surviving Armenians in May, they reported finding 55,000 bodies, with 50 percent of the Armenians in the area killed by Ottoman forces.<sup>54</sup>

The CUP used a "two-track approach" of official orders and communications regarding the deportations and arrests, as well as a secret communication system to regional authorities to direct the mass killing.<sup>55</sup> On 24 April Talaat sent a telegram to the Ottoman High Command announcing the new Ottoman policy regarding Armenians. Using Armenian participation in the Russian volunteer units, the uprisings in Zeytun, Van and other locations as justification, he declared that the Armenians were now a fundamental threat to the internal security of the Ottoman Empire. He announced the clo-

sure of all Armenian political organizations and seizure of all documents, and he directed that all Armenian political officials and notables "judged harmful" be arrested. Overnight on 23-24 April, as the Allies were preparing the ground assault on the Dardanelles, Ottoman authorities arrested 240 Armenian Parliamentary officials, journalists, lawyers, doctors, and church officials in Istanbul consistent with Talaat's new policy. Talaat also ordered the convoys of Armenians whom the Ottomans had already deported from Zeytun, Dortyol, Alexandretta and other areas be sent south into the interior of the Empire into the Syrian deserts of Aleppo, Deir Zor and Urfa.<sup>56</sup> On 26 May Enver sent Talaat a note relaying the decision that Armenians were to be deported south but that they should constitute no more than ten percent of the population in any part of the Empire; by implication this would entail mass killing on a wide scale.<sup>57</sup> That day Talaat submitted his deportation bill to the Council of Ministers, which announced the "Deportation Law," ordering the forced relocation of all Armenians in eastern Anatolia. The CUP also issued secret directives to governors regarding the mass murder of deportees. The governors were assisted in these efforts by officials in Enver's Special Organization, which recruited released convicts, Kurdish tribesmen, and refugees from the Balkans and the Russian Caucasus to carry out a campaign of mass killing.<sup>58</sup> The heavy representation of refugees and their descendants among the irregular forces and the Ottoman mountain police forces involved in the

killing, who had lost their homes and were themselves violently deported by Christian nations, underscores the extent to which the genocide reflected larger patterns of long-term anti-Christian radicalization in Ottoman society in addition to the decisions made by the CUP in response to the contingencies of the war.<sup>59</sup>

Most of the Ottoman killing of deportees was conducted in a similar pattern. After making official announcements regarding deportations, Ottoman officials forced Armenians from their homes and killed all males ages twelve and up in orders that were similar to those de Nogales had heard near Van. The remaining elderly, women and children were forced onto extended marches on foot, primarily in the direction of the Syrian deserts, with minimal food and water, over the course of which they were expected to die in large numbers. Survivors of the deportations also reported facing massacres along the deportation routes.<sup>60</sup> Khanum Palootzian, an Armenian woman from the village of Darman in the Anatolian province of Erzurum, was twenty-one years old at the time of the deportation and described her own experience which was characteristic of so many Armenians:

It was in May 1915 that the Turkish Government uprooted us from all our villages and tried to destroy us all. Our houses, farms, sheep, cows, fuel, horses, donkeys, chickens, our furniture, beds, foods, and all belongings were collected and

forcefully confiscated. They didn't even give us one piastre as payment for all they took. My stepfather, when they were going to kill him, pleaded that they let him pray before dying. As he knelt and prayed, they took a sword and cut off his head. They marched us into the mountains, fields and gorges to die of hunger. All the Armenian men and boys were killed with axes and swords. And all the women and girls were killed through thirst, hunger and an even worse fate that I don't wish to say. Pregnant women were eviscerated, their stomachs cut open with swords and their babies ripped out, thrown against the rocks. These I saw with my own eyes . . . Darman consisted of a group of seven villages. All were uprooted— that's several thousand people. By the time we reached Harput, weeks later, some 45 miles away, there remained only a few hundred.<sup>61</sup>

By mid-summer it was clear to both the U.S. and German governments that the massacres and deportations of the Armenians were not simply localized actions but were part of a larger strategy designed to annihilate the Armenians. On 17 June, German Ambassador Wangenheim reported to Berlin that Talaat told him “. . . that the Porte is intent on taking advantage of the World War in order to make a clean sweep of internal enemies—the indigenous Christians—without being hindered

in doing so by diplomatic intervention from other countries.”<sup>62</sup> And the following month, U.S. Ambassador Henry Morgenthau Sr., who was in frequent contact with both Talaat and with U.S. consuls stationed throughout the Empire who had relayed a steady stream of reports of attacks on Armenians, sent a telegram to the U.S. State Department on 29 July and reported that “(d)eporation of and excesses against peaceful Armenians is increasing and from harrowing reports of eye witnesses it appears that a campaign of race extermination is in progress under a pretext of reprisal against rebellion.”<sup>63</sup> Although there is no exact number for the total number of Armenians murdered between 1915-18, Armenian historians estimate that between one and one-and-a-half million Armenians were killed as a result of the intentional actions of the Ottoman Empire during the Armenian genocide.<sup>64</sup>

The Armenian genocide was the result of a long-term dynamic of escalation in hostility and violence directed against the Armenian people by both the leaders and local populations in the Ottoman Empire, exacerbated by the fragmentation of the Empire and violence directed against Muslims in the former territories of the Empire seized by European nations, in particular since the Ottoman losses in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78. Hopes of political and civil equality for Armenians and all religious and ethnic minorities were destroyed by the centralizing ethnonationalist policies of the Committee for Union and Progress in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars. At the same time,

these policies did not turn genocidal until after the war began and the contingent circumstances surrounding the devastating losses by the Empire at the hands of Russia, which exploited Armenian antagonisms and hopes for autonomy resulting from Ottoman violence and discrimination in its recruitment of volunteer units and supply of arms to Armenians in the Empire. Although the Ottomans briefly sought Armenian collaboration against Russia before the outbreak of the war, the Russian use of Armenian units, in combination with localized Armenian resistance to Ottoman violence in winter and spring of 1915, led the senior members to make the decision to annihilate the Armenians in the Empire, believing them to be an internal threat to the Empire. This determination to kill the Armenians was carried out by Turks and Kurds who had also come to share this view of Armenians as, in the words of Bahaeddin Shakir, an “enemy within.” The Armenian genocide, while being a unique historical event, also shares common deep structural features with other modern genocides in the 20th century such as the Holocaust, the Holodomor, and the genocides in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda, and other locations. Understanding the causes of Armenian genocide not only in its uniqueness but also in its shared structures with other genocides contributes not only the possibility for recognition of and justice for the victims of the genocide, which the government of Turkey to this day refuses to recognize, but also allows for contemporary political leaders to recognize when the structural features for geno-

cide are being reproduced and to take preventative action to halt genocides before they occur, thus making real the vision of a world in which genocide is something that happens “never again.”

## Endnotes

- 1 Robert Melson, “Contending Interpretations Concerning the Armenian Genocide,” *Genocide Studies International* 9, no. 1 (Spring 2015): 12; Donald Bloxham, “The Armenian Genocide of 1915-1916: Cumulative Radicalization and the Development of a Destruction Policy,” *Past and Present*, no. 181 (November 2003): 142.
- 2 Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus* (New York: Berghahn Books 2004), 173.
- 3 *Ibid.*, 180.
- 4 Melson, “Contending Interpretations Concerning the Armenian Genocide,” 13-14.
- 5 Tanner Akcam, “When was the Decision to Annihilate the Armenians Taken?” *The Journal of Genocide Research* 21, no. 4 (2019): 461-2; *The Young Turks Crime Against Humanity: The Armenian Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2012), Kindle Edition 3411-3495.
- 6 Bloxham, “The Armenian Genocide of 1915-1916: Cumulative Radicalization and the Development of a Destruction Policy,” 143.
- 7 Melson, “Contending Interpretations Concerning the Armenian Genocide,” 14.
- 8 Norman N. Naimark, *A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Fatma Müge Göçek, Norman M. Naimark and Ronald Grigor Suny (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), xvi.
- 9 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 29-30; Orlando Figes, *The Crimean War: A History* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2010), 9.
- 10 Eugene Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans* (Basic Books: New York 2015), 3-4.
- 11 Ronald Suny, “*They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else*”: *A History of the Armenian Genocide* (Princeton: Princeton University Press: 2015), 95.
- 12 Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, 45.
- 13 “*Dzragir*” [Program (of the Hunchak party)], *Hnchak*, nos. 11–12 (1888), quoted in Suny, “*They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else*”: *A History of the Armenian Genocide*, 86.

- 14 Benny Morris and Dror Ze'evi, *The Thirty-Year Genocide: Turkey's Destruction of its Christian Minorities, 1894-1924* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2019), 39-40; Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, 50.
- 15 Suny, "They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else": *A History of the Armenian Genocide*, 103-4; Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, 47.
- 16 Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, 51; Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 11.
- 17 Quoted in Suny, "They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else": *A History of the Armenian Genocide*, 109.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 111.
- 19 Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, 52.
- 20 Quoted in Suny, "They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else": *A History of the Armenian Genocide*, 117.
- 21 Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 11-12; Suny, "They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else": *A History of the Armenian Genocide*, 123-5.
- 22 Suny, "They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else": *A History of the Armenian Genocide*, 150-53.
- 23 Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 4-7.
- 24 Sean McMeekin, *The Ottoman Endgame: War, Revolution, and the Making of the Modern Middle East, 1908-1923* (New York: Penguin Books 2015), 42.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 43-44.
- 26 Suny, "They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else": *A History of the Armenian Genocide*, 166-171; McMeekin, *The Ottoman Endgame: War, Revolution, and the Making of the Modern Middle East, 1908-1923*, 44.
- 27 Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, 61.
- 28 Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 8-9.
- 29 McMeekin, *The Ottoman Endgame: War, Revolution, and the Making of the Modern Middle East, 1908-1923*, 41.
- 30 Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 18-23.
- 31 Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, 62.

- 32 Morris and Zèevi, *The Thirty-Year Genocide: Turkey's Destruction of its Christian Minorities, 1894-1924*, 142; Bloxham cites a lower number for Balkan refugees of 400,000. See Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, 62.
- 33 Quoted in Suny, *"They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else": A History of the Armenian Genocide*, 186.
- 34 Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 21-22.
- 35 Suny, *"They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else": A History of the Armenian Genocide*, 190.
- 36 Ibid., 162-3.
- 37 Quoted in Suny, *"They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else": A History of the Armenian Genocide*, 188.
- 38 Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 32.
- 39 Michael Reynolds, *Shattering Empires: The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires 1908-1918* (New York: Cambridge University Press 2011), 31-37
- 40 Tanner Akcam, *A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC., 2006), Kindle Edition 1925-1939; Suny, *"They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else": A History of the Armenian Genocide*, 200.
- 41 Reynolds, *Shattering Empires: The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires 1908-1918*, 40.
- 42 Ibid., 115.
- 43 Sean McMeekin, *The Russian Origins of the First World War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2011), 154-8.
- 44 Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 105.
- 45 Suny, *"They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else": A History of the Armenian Genocide*, 222-3; Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 104-5.
- 46 Akcam, *The Young Turks Crime Against Humanity: The Armenian Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire*, Kindle Edition 4273-4284.
- 47 Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, 75-6.
- 48 Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 107-114.
- 49 Ibid., 166-7; Suny, *"They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else": A History of the Armenian Genocide*, 244-5.

- 50 Suny, *“They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else”*: A History of the Armenian Genocide, 243-4.
- 51 Quoted in Akcam, *The Young Turks Crime Against Humanity: The Armenian Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire*, Kindle Edition 4331.
- 52 Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 164.
- 53 Quoted in Akcam, “When was the Decision to Annihilate the Armenians Taken?” 465. In this essay Akcam also addresses arguments regarding the authenticity of this letter and the Shakir letter of 7 April, and explains why he believes these letters are authentic. While Akcam interprets Shakir’s letter as a final decision to initiate a broad-based genocide, he maintains that the planning for the annihilation of the Armenians began in the aftermath of the Armenian Reform Agreement in 1914.
- 54 Suny, *“They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else”*: A History of the Armenian Genocide, 256-9; Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, 77.
- 55 Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 173.
- 56 Suny, *“They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else”*: A History of the Armenian Genocide, 272-4.
- 57 Ibid., 283-4.
- 58 Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 171-173.
- 59 Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, 42.
- 60 Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 173.
- 61 Khanum Palootzian, Armenian Genocide Survivors’ Testimonies, United Armenian Council For the Commemoration of The Armenian Genocide Los Angeles, accessed August 14, 2021, <http://www.ucla.com/testimonies.html>
- 62 Suny, *“They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else”*: A History of the Armenian Genocide, 262-3.
- 63 Henry Morgenthau Sr., “Confidential Telegram, Ambassador Morgenthau to Secretary of State,” US Documents about Armenian Genocide, Armenian Studies At the University of South Florida Libraries, accessed August 15, 2021, <http://exhibits.lib.usf.edu/exhibits/show/armenianstudies/armenia-genocide/docs>
- 64 Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 183.

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