

“They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else”: Explaining the Armenian Genocide One Hundred Years Later

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This is the story of why, when, and how the genocide of the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire happened. It is a story of a moment of historical passage, when empires attempted to accommodate themselves to a transforming world in which nations and national states challenged their sources of power and legitimacy. Yet those empires were not ready to give in or give up; they were not prepared to surrender to what later would appear to be irresistible pressures of nationalism, popular empowerment, and regimes based on equality and merit rather than inherited privilege and hierarchy. Looking back from the future, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the emergence of subject nations appear to be historically inevitable. But for the actors in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first of the twentieth, there were many possible roads that could have been taken.

The recovery of a difficult past is a challenge to the “assassins of memory,” to those who would, through distorting sophistries, deny or minimize the enormity of a human tragedy.¹ Nations and states have long been in the business of fabricating, sometimes more honestly than at other times, myths and stories of their origins, golden ages, heroic deeds, victories, and triumphs, while eliminating the blemishes of defeats and failures, even mass murders. What appears to be new in our own time is the brazenness of what is claimed, the blatant cynicism of the perpetrators, and their potential reach through mass print and broadcast media, film, and the Internet. Historians inevitably have been pulled into this war of images and words. The only weapon against bad history deployed for political or personal vindication is scrupulous investigation that results in evidence-based narration and analysis of what it is possible to know.

TWO NARRATIVES

Revision of history is constant, even necessary; it is what historians do. But in some cases, like that of the fate of the Armenians in the last years of the Ottoman Empire, it has led to the creation of two separate, contradictory narratives that appear to defy reconciliation. On one side, the Turkish state and those few less-than-scrupulous historians who have rejected the notion of genocide and argued either that no deliberate mass killings ever took place or that the tragedy was the result of a reasonable and understandable response of a government to a rebellious and seditious population in time of war and mortal danger to the state's survival. In the more sophisticated version, which might be called "neo-denialism," *raison d'état* justified the suppression of rebellion, and mass killing is explained as the unfortunate residue of legitimate efforts to establish order behind the lines. Still, these denialists claim, despite the existential threat posed by the Armenians and their Russian allies to the survival of the empire, there was no intention or effort by the Young Turk regime to eliminate the Armenians as a people.²

On the other side, a counter-narrative has developed among the majority of historians, which accepts the framing of the events of 1915 as genocide. Yet many sympathetic to the Armenians, particularly those of ethnic Armenian heritage, have shied away from explanations that might place any blame at all on the victims of Turkish policies.³ Because a nuanced account of the background and causes of the Genocide seemed to concede ground to the deniers, Armenian scholars in particular were reluctant to see any rationale in the acts of the Young Turks.⁴ Explanation, it is claimed, is rationalization, and rationalization in turn leads to the denialist position of justification. When explanation has been offered, it is either an essentialist argument — Turks are the kind of people who employ massacre and systematic killing to maintain their imperial dominance — or related arguments that deep indelible cultural characteristics (religion and/or ethnicity) were the underlying causes of the killings.

The argument that I make is different: whatever else they were, the Young Turks who carried out the Genocide were never purely Turkish ethno-nationalists, never religious fanatics, but remained Ottoman reformers — one might say, modernizers — in their fundamental self-conception. They were primarily state imperialists, empire preservers, rather than the founders of an ethnic nation-state. There was no thought of giving up the Arab lands that they still controlled, or even eliminate totally their Christian and Jewish subjects, and when opportunity presented itself in 1918 the Young Turks were prepared to move north and east into Caucasia to create buffer states using other Muslim peoples. On the other hand, over time the Young Turks came to believe that Muslims, particularly Turks, were the appropriate people to rule the empire, were the most trustworthy supporters of the Ottoman state, and increasingly convinced themselves that egalitarian Ottomanism was a political fantasy. Their empire would be more Islamic, more Turkic, but still multicultural, marked by religious and ethnic differentiation, with some more equal than others.

In their ideal forms nation and empire stand at opposite ends of a political spectrum. The former (nation) is basically about homogenization of all members of its polity, as much as possible, and the establishment of equality of all citizens — a kind of horizontal equivalence, at least before the law. The later (empire) is about institutionalized difference and hierarchy, a ruling elite or people dominating their subordinates, their rule justified by conquest, divine sanction, their inherent superiority over their subjects, or a civilizing mission. Confronted by the mobilizing efficiencies of the new nation-states of Western Europe, both the Russian and Ottoman empires were determined in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to reform and nationalize their empires. These efforts were haphazard, sporadic, and ultimately futile, and in neither case was there a clear or even feasible program of creating an ethno-national state like France or the Kemalist Turkish republic. Their projects are better characterized as the creation of “imperial nations” within their empires. The empire was to continue but in a new form appropriate for the modern age, what has been called the age of nationalism and nation-states.

Because the eventual deportations and mass murder of Armenians, and the expulsion of Greeks, resulted in a relatively homogeneous population of Muslims and the foundation of a Turkish national republic, the history of the last stages of the Ottoman Empire have been subsumed into an organic nationalist narrative, which reads back the emergence of an original, authentic Turkish nation into earlier centuries. Kemal’s ethno-nationalism attempted to create an ethnically homogeneous Turkish nation, though ultimately that ambition was thwarted by the millions of Kurds who had lived in eastern Anatolia long before the first Turks arrived and who after 1915 spread onto lands formerly held by Armenians. What has been effaced in this narrative are the unique moments of attempted imperial regeneration in the Tanzimat, Hamidian, and Young Turk periods. My talk and my book are dedicated to reconstructing those moments, which involved new imaginings of the various peoples of the empire, efforts by state authorities to construct a new kind of empire, and ultimately the destruction of hundreds of thousands of Ottoman Armenians and Assyrians.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 1915

Some two million Armenians lived in the Ottoman lands, most of them peasants and townspeople in the six provinces of eastern Anatolia. In an Anatolian population estimated to be between fifteen and seventeen and one-half million inhabitants, Armenians were outnumbered by their Muslim neighbors in most locations, though they often lived in homogeneous villages, sections of towns, and occasionally dominated larger rural and urban areas. The most influential and prosperous Armenians lived in the imperial capital, Istanbul (Constantinople), where their visibility made them the target of both official and popular resentment from many Muslims. What has come to be known as “the first genocide of the Twentieth Century” had its origins in the aspirations of a small group of Ottoman politicians associated

with the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), popularly referred to as the “Young Turks.” Both the radicalization of their intentions and the final implementation of their plans occurred in the context of a deepening social and political crisis and the near destruction of the Ottoman state at the hands of external enemies. Having suffered territorial losses in the Balkan Wars (1912-1913), and forced to accept a European-imposed reform in the “Armenian provinces,” the Young Turks joined the Central Powers (Germany and Austro-Hungary) in 1914 as they waged war against the Entente (Great Britain, France, and Russia) in a desperate effort to restore and strengthen their empire. Armenians precariously straddled the Russian-Ottoman front, and both the Russians and the Ottomans attempted to recruit Armenians in their campaigns against their enemies. Most Ottoman Armenians supported and even fought alongside the Ottomans against the Russians, while Armenians in Russia, organized in volunteer units, joined the tsarist campaign.

Violence was inscribed in the Young Turk efforts to survive in power and secure their empire. The radicals who came to power in the January 1913 *coup d'état* — Enver, Talat, and Cemal — were convinced that politics was a kind of warfare; those who stood in their way — ministers, journalists, dissenters — had to be removed by force. Early in the Great War, in late 1914 and early 1915, massacres of Christians (Armenians and Assyrians) and Muslims occurred in the Caucasus and Persia where Russians and Ottoman forces faced each other. A major catalytic event occurred in early 1915: the Ottomans lost a major battle on the Caucasian Front at Sarikamış, and important Young Turks attributed the loss to Armenian treachery. In late February-early March 1915, the Young Turk government, led by Talat and Enver, ordered the disarming of Armenian soldiers and their transfer into labor battalions. The first victims of the state were the demobilized Armenian soldiers, who were easily segregated and systematically killed. Thus the muscle of the Armenian communities was removed. Almost immediately the government ordered the deportation of Armenians from cities, towns, and villages in the east, ostensibly as a necessary military measure to ensure the security of the rear. Soon Armenians throughout the country were forced to gather what belongings they could carry or transport and leave their homes at short notice. The exodus of Armenians was haphazard and brutal; irregular forces, local Kurds and Circassians, cut down hundreds of thousands of Christians, as civil and military officials oversaw and facilitated the removal of the empire’s Armenian subjects. When some Armenians resisted the encroaching massacres in the city of Van in eastern Anatolia, the Committee of Union and Progress had the leading intellectuals and politicians in Istanbul, several of them deputies to the Ottoman Parliament, arrested and sent from the city. Most of them perished in the next few months. Thus was the brain of the Ottoman Armenian people removed, the intellectual and political leadership, and the connective tissue that linked separate communities together. Women, children, and old men in town after town were marched through the valleys and mountains of eastern Anatolia. Missionaries, diplomats, and foreign

military officers witnessed the convoys, recorded what they saw, and sent reports home about death marches and killing fields. Survivors reached the deserts of Syria where they languished in concentration camps; many starved to death; and new massacres occurred.

The year 1915 was a gendered genocide. Men died in greater numbers. Many women and children were taken into the families of the local Muslims. Tens of thousands of orphans found some refuge in the protection of foreign missionaries. By the end of the war ninety percent of the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire were gone, a culture and civilization wiped out never to return. It is conservatively estimated that between 600,000 to over 1,000,000 were slaughtered or died on the marches. Other tens of thousands fled to the north, to the relative safety of the Russian Caucasus. Hundreds of thousands of women and children were compelled to convert to Islam and survived in the families of Kurds, Turks, and Arabs. Those who observed the killings, as well as the Allied powers engaged in a war against the Ottomans, repeatedly claimed that they had never witnessed anything like it. The word for what happened had not yet been invented. There was no concept to mark the state-targeted killing of a designated ethnoreligious people. At the time those who needed a word borrowed from the Bible and called it “holocaust.” My great grandparents were among the victims.

AFFECTIVE DISPOSITION

Historians love explanations and often pile them on top of one another, and a search for the causes of the Genocide, long term and immediate, easily yields a rich and varied crop. The environment in which Genocide occurred — the imperial appetites of the Great Powers, the fierce competition for land and goods in eastern Anatolia, the anticipated aspirations and aims of Armenians, and the ambitions and ideas of the Young Turks — provides the context in which mass killing became possible, but ultimately what needs to be explained is the mind set, the world view — what I will call “the affective disposition” — the emotional and cognitive universe in which the Young Turk leaders could imagine that they faced an existential threat from their Armenian and Assyrian subjects and were required to disperse, assimilate, and murder hundreds of thousands of them. Here I am using “disposition” to mean a tendency or proclivity to think or act in a certain way under certain circumstances, a collection of preferences, beliefs, attitudes, habits of mind, and their associated feelings and emotions that lead people or groups to certain kinds of actions under certain circumstances. In the context of war and invasion a mental and emotional universe developed that included perceived threats, the Manichaean construction of internal enemies, and a pervasive fear that triggered a deadly, pathological response to real and imagined immediate and future dangers. A government came to believe that among its subject peoples whole “nations” presented an immediate threat to the security of the state. Defense of the empire and of the “Turkish nation” became the rationale for mass murder.

Armenians also had their affective disposition, their own attitudes about Turks, Kurds, and other Muslims. Armenians were neither passive nor submissive victims — they had their own political and cultural ambitions — but their hopes lay with a reformed, tolerant Ottoman realm in which their particularities and privileges could be maintained. Few Armenians were actual rebels or dreamed of an independent state, but the leaders of the community sought protection from their rulers and a degree of self-rule, autonomy in eastern Anatolia where they could improve the lives of their compatriots. The power, however, to decide their fate was largely out of Armenian hands. In desperation Armenians appealed to the Great Powers to pressure the Ottoman regime to alleviate the oppression of Christians.

THE GENEALOGY OF AN AFFECTIVE DISPOSITION: FEAR, ANGER, RESENTMENT, AND ANXIETY

From the time of the formation of the Ottoman Empire in the fifteenth century Armenians in Anatolia were a subject people who had to accommodate to a ruling elite that was Turkish and Islamic. Even as Armenians, most notably in urban centers, succeeded in society, grew wealthy, and even entered state service, they understood that they had to adapt to the expectations of the ruling Ottoman elite in order to advance. The Armenian Church, itself institutionally tied into the Ottoman system of governance, usually preached acceptance of the fate befallen the Armenians, deference toward their rulers and social betters, both Muslim and Armenian, and opposed rebellion of any kind. Yet even as they legitimized the system in which their people lived, clerics remained aware of the special burdens they bore.

Armenians and Turks coexisted in an unequal relationship. The sheer power and confidence of the ruling Muslims worked for centuries to maintain in the Armenians a pattern of personal and social behavior manifested in submissiveness, passivity, deference to authority, and the need to act in calculatedly devious and disguised ways. It was this deferential behavior that earned the Armenians the title “loyal millet” in an age when the Greeks and Slavs of the empire were striving to emancipate themselves through revolutionary action. The Armenians in contrast worked within the Ottoman system and accepted the burdens of Muslim administration without much protest until the second half of the nineteenth century.

Linked primarily by religion and the church, which nurtured a sense of a lost glorious past and ancient statehood, Armenians before the nineteenth century made up a diffuse ethnoreligious community whose people were dispersed among three contiguous empires and scattered even further abroad by their mercantile interests and the oppressive conditions in eastern Anatolia. Armenians were much more divided than united, separated by politics, distance, dialects, and class differences. Yet the clerical elite worked to create a collective identity for Armenians, a notion of their distinction from their neighbors of

different linguistic and religious communities. Religious distinction was foundational to culture and identity, but local identities, a sense of place and where one came from, seem to have been extremely important to Armenians. At the same time Armenians, Greeks, Jews, and Muslims were also Ottomans, sharing in cultural commonalities, often speaking Turkish rather than their historic language. Separate but linked identities were institutionalized in the millets, the official communities recognized by the sultan as the instruments of his rule over his subjects, which were themselves officially sanctioned Ottoman institutions. Religion remained the principal official marker of difference, but the lines of distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims blurred in many other aspects of daily and official life.

The scanty evidence available provides isolated traces of the attitudes of Muslims towards Armenians and Armenians toward Muslims, but the narrative of Armenians as an alien and even subversive element within the empire appears first, most vividly, in the words of the sultan Abdülhamid II in the 1870s after the disastrous Ottoman defeat at the hands of the Russians. Abdülhamid brought the reform period of the Tanzimat to an end and eliminated moderate and liberal alternatives within the system. The sultan created a system of personal, autocratic rule and centralized power within the palace. A “shrewd tactician,” the sultan played off one religious community and one European state against another, desperate as he was to prevent the dismemberment of his empire.⁵ Abdülhamid was determined to counter “the disruptive forces of liberalism, nationalism and constitutionalism” by promoting the traditional, Islamic aspects of his realm.⁶ The sultan found sentiment in favor of his anti-reform, anti-Western stance among conservative and religious elements. Liberal and radical Christians and Turks opposed the “bloody sultan” and saw the restoration of the 1876 constitution as a principal political goal.

In an empire that after 1878, because of the loss of Balkan lands, had become more Muslim and was now primarily based in Asia rather than Europe, Abdülhamid deployed a conservative Islam as his state ideology. His solution to the imperial crisis was “to redefine Ottomanism and give it a Muslim coloring.”⁷ In November 1890 Abdülhamid institutionalized an alliance with the Sunni Muslim peoples of his realm by creating the *Hamidiye* regiments, similar to the Cossacks in Russia and made up primarily of loyal Kurds. Organized into official irregular armed regiments (*aşiret*), Kurdish villagers were trained by Turkish *yuzbashis* (officers) from the regular army, given special uniforms, and access to arms. Though the Kurds had been much more a threat to Ottoman unity than the Armenians in years past, Abdülhamid backed these fellow Muslims against Christian Armenians whom he considered the more disruptive element and one linked to his enemies abroad. In this way Abdülhamid attempted to secure Kurdish loyalty and at the same time create a force to extend state power to the Russian and Iranian borders of the empire.⁸ Formed to keep order and reinforce the presence of the state in the east, according to a historian of the institution, the *Hamidiye* “actually further antagonized the Armenian population and exacerbated the very conflict the organization was designed to quell.”⁹

If one accepts sociologist Max Weber's definition of the state — the institution that holds the monopoly of legitimate violence — then at the turn of the twentieth century the Ottoman state did not function effectively in the eastern reaches of Anatolia. There, *Hamidiye* units, Muslim refugees, and Kurdish and Turkmen tribes all competed with the regular army and police. Some Armenians decided that they had no alternative but to organize for self-defense. Inspired by the Bulgarian struggle for independence and frustrated by the failure of Europeans to come to the aid of supplicant Armenians, young radicals decided that organization, agitation, and resistance were required to push the Ottoman government to improve the condition of the Armenians. By the 1880s a significant minority of Armenians, many of them from Russian Transcaucasia, conceived of revolution as the only means to protect and promote the Armenians. A new idea of the Armenian nation as secular, cultural, and based on language as well as shared history challenged the older clerical understanding of Armenians as an ethnoreligious community centered on faith and membership in the Armenian Apostolic Church. Faced by what they saw as the imminent danger of national disintegration, the Armenian radicals turned toward “self-defense,” the formation of revolutionary political parties, and political actions that would encourage Western or Russian intervention into Ottoman affairs. For the young nationalists revolution to stimulate reform was the “logical conclusion” of the impossibility of significant reforms coming from the state. Against their conscious intentions, the Great Powers at the Congress of Berlin had sanctioned nationalist struggle as an effective means to European recognition of a people's right to political freedom. It had worked in the Balkans, why not in other parts of the Ottoman Empire?

The harsh equilibrium that had existed between Kurds, Turks, and Armenians in eastern Anatolia faltered in the 1880s and then collapsed in the 1890s. Armenian intellectuals and revolutionaries played a role in bringing Armenian acquiescence and acceptance of the existing order to an end, as did foreign travelers, western diplomats, and increased contact with the outside world. Abdülhamid's strategic decision to align the Ottoman state with the Kurds and back them against the Armenians was the final precipitating factor. A fierce, uneven struggle began in the 1890s between the autocratic state and the Armenian “committees.”

HAMIDIAN MASSACRES, 1894-1896

In 1894 Armenian refusal to pay taxes to Kurdish lords led to clashes between Kurds and Armenians in Sassun, the intervention of state troops, and the killing of hundreds of Armenians. Abdul Hamid decided to deal with the Armenian Question “not by reform but by blood.”¹⁰ Unlike the genocide, these massacres in eastern Anatolia in 1894-1896, which were largely carried out by Kurdish tribes and local lords, were part of an effort by the state to restore the old equilibrium in interethnic relations, in which the subject peoples accepted with little overt questioning the dominance of the Ottoman Muslim

elite. That equilibrium, however had already been upset by the sultan's own policies of centralization and bureaucratization, as well as his strategic alliance with Muslim Kurds against Christian Armenians. This pan-Islamic policy, which was institutionalized in the formation of irregular *Hamidiye* units of armed Kurds, helped to undermine the customary system of imperial rule as much as did the emerging revisioning of nationality borrowed from the West.

To religious Muslims the visibility of better-off Armenians in the capital and towns appeared as an intolerable reversal of the traditional Muslim-*dhimmi* hierarchy that, in turn, increased resentments toward Christians. Turkish patriots constructed Armenians as disloyal subjects suspiciously sympathetic to Europeans. Whatever resentments the poor peasant population of eastern Anatolia may have felt toward the people in towns — the places where they received low prices for their produce, where they felt their social inferiority most acutely, where they were alien to and unwanted by the better-dressed people — were easily transferred to the Armenians. In a particularly toxic mix, religion, anxiety about class status, xenophobia, and general insecurity about the impersonal transformations of modern life combined to create resentments and hostilities toward the Armenians.¹¹

Yet ethnic differences, hostilities, and even conflict need not have become genocidal. That would require a major strategic decision by elites in power. Though Abdülhamid used violence to keep his Armenian subjects in line, he did not consider the use of mass deportation to change the demographic composition of Anatolia. He remained a traditional imperial monarch prepared to use persecution when persuasion failed to maintain the unity as well as the multiplicity and diversity of his empire. More fundamental ideological shifts took place before the images of Armenians as subversive and alien appeared absolutely incompatible with the empire as it was being reconceived. The Hamidian massacres were designed to pacify a troubled region, repress a people (the Armenians) considered seditious and insurrectionary, and forge ties of mutual advantage between the state and the Kurdish tribesmen.

TURKISM AND THE “REVOLUTION” OF 1908

In the second half of the nineteenth century Turkic intellectuals, both in the Ottoman and Russian empires, stimulated interest in a new conception of a Turkish nation. Identification with a supranational community of Turks distinguished the “race” or “nation” of the Turks from the multinational Ottoman state.¹² Yet inherent in that identity with the Turkic was confusion about the boundaries of the nation and the location and limits of the fatherland (*vatan*). Was the homeland of the Turks Anatolia or the somewhat mystical Turan of Central Asia?

The “Young Turk ideology was originally ‘scientific,’ materialist, social Darwinist, elitist, and vehemently antireligious; it did not favor representative government.”¹³ Neither liberals nor constitutionalists, the Young Turks were statist who saw themselves as continuing the work of the

Tanzimat reformers and the work of the Young Ottomans. Earlier, Ottoman westernizers had hoped to secure western technology without succumbing to western culture, somehow to preserve Islam but make the empire technologically and militarily competitive with the West. Reform had always come from above, from westernizing statesmen and bureaucrats, a response to a sense that the empire had to change or collapse. The Young Turks shared those values, but steadily they added new elements of nationalism to their imperial statism. Ultimately, however, the launching of genocidal violence in 1915 came, not from the transmutation of identities and the accompanying stereotypes, not from the accumulating tensions, but from the initiative of the state. How was the mental universe, the affective disposition, of the Young Turk leaders, and many of their followers, transformed from Ottomanist tolerance to a Manichean view of us and them?

Only after the insurrection of July 1908 had taken place did people all over the empire come out in support of the “revolution.” Ottoman Armenians and other minorities joyfully greeted the restoration of the liberal constitution, hopeful that the new government would provide a political mechanism for peaceful development within the framework of a representative parliamentary system. People marched through Istanbul, Izmir, Jerusalem, Damascus, and other cities and towns, praising the sultan whom they thanked for restoring the constitution.¹⁴ The revolution was more a restoration than a radical turning point in Ottoman political life. The sultan’s power was reduced, though his continued presence gave a degree of legitimacy to the new men in power. A Chamber of Deputies, in which non-Muslims were well represented, was chosen in quite transparent elections. Prisoners were released. Exiled figures — most importantly for the Armenians, the deposed Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, Madteos III Izmirliyan, the writer Grigor Zohrap (1861-1915), and the liberal Prince Sabaheddin — were allowed to return to their homes, to great rejoicing of their followers.¹⁵ Workers expressed their pent up frustrations in a series of strikes, and peasants petitioned the government for redress of their grievances, most importantly directed at the perennial problem of arbitrary taxation and illegal land seizures by local notables and tribal chiefs. Security improved throughout the country; for a time Kurdish landlords ceased their seizures of peasant lands.

Society woke up. Dozens of newspapers appeared; socialists, feminists, and democrats all expressed their hopes for a freer, more just society. Women appeared more frequently in public, at concerts and at the theater, and women’s education became more available. Protestant missionaries, who the Hamidian regime had viewed suspiciously, were permitted to speak at Young Turk clubs as “pioneers of progress.”¹⁶ In their celebrations, ringing of church bells, and waving of flags, Armenians became more visible to the Muslim public. In the eyes of the more traditional Turks and Kurds the public display and new confidence of the Christians was confusing, offensive, even frightening. The revolution opened up a lively public sphere fed by the appearance of newspapers and journals, social clubs, and political

organizations. Town criers (*tellallar*) brought the news to far off places and to the vast majority who could not read.

Working within the embryonic constitutionalist order, Armenian politicians faced a dangerous dilemma: their future depended on the good will and policies of the Young Turks. No matter what policies were adopted or what positions were proclaimed by Armenians, suspicions ran high among Turks about their ultimate goals. The Young Turks sought ways to work with the Armenian political parties but did not trust them. The commitment of the Armenian parties to the territorial integrity of the empire did not shield Armenians from accusations of separatism and subversion. Armenians remained cautiously optimistic about the revolution's potential for significant change but remained doubtful and wary about the intentions of the Young Turks.

APRIL 1909: ADANA

Change came too rapidly and too radically for many, particularly the more religiously conservative. Resentment grew from liberals and non-Muslims that a small group was running things too exclusively. Indecision and inaction only intensified the tensions within the population. Expressing the fierce determination of his party, Enver declared, "All the heads dreaming of sharing power must be crushed. . . we have to be harsher than Nero as far as ensuring domestic peace is concerned."¹⁷ These massacres differed from those of 1894-1896 in that neither Abdülhamid nor the central government played a direct role. Rather local officials, intellectuals, and clerics inflamed the inchoate fears of the Muslims who, anticipating some action by the Armenians, preemptively launched brutal attacks on them. Even though the Young Turks in Istanbul were not involved, influential adherents of the CUP in Adana incited people to riot, and soldiers affiliated with the CUP participated in the massacres. In April 1909 Muslims in the Mediterranean town of Adana turned on their Christian neighbors. After days of rioting, with elements of the army involved, some 20,000 Armenians had been killed. Adana was more like an urban riot that degenerated into a pogrom rather than a state-initiated mass killing. Underlying the ferocity of the bloodletting were the hostile emotions of fear and anger directed against Armenians suspected of ambitions to dominate Muslim lands and peoples. The affective disposition of the instigators and the crowds, with its tightly twisted strands of fear, anger, and resentment woven together, had already been present in its embryonic form in the Hamidian massacres, articulated by the highest circles of the state, and would grow following Adana as the myth that Armenians caused their own destruction continued to fester through the nascent public sphere.

The events of 1909 were in a true sense a counterrevolution. The trend from the April events to the end of Young Turk rule was toward greater authoritarianism and eventually one-party dictatorship. Suspicions about the motives and aims of the Young Turks grew among Armenians after the massacres in

Adana, only to intensify during and after the Balkan wars of 1912-1913 and the January 1913 *coup d'état*. The massive displacement of Muslims from the Balkans, their migration eastward into Anatolia, brought with it stories of loss, humiliation, and violence perpetrated against Muslims. Pamphlets and books, illustrated with gruesome pictures of slaughtered Muslims, related horrific tales of atrocities by Christians against Muslims, and depicted rape, bayonetting of children, and crucifixion of Muslims. Many of the stories told of humiliation of the better-off and better educated at the hands of people of lower status. What Bulgarian Christians might have done to Turks in the Balkans bled over to calls for revenge against Christians within the empire. The Turkish-language press vehemently attacked Armenians and threatened boycotts and even massacres.¹⁸

Armenian political leaders protested against the turn toward nationalism among Turks, their cultivation of the Kurds (who had been largely indifferent if not hostile to the reforms of the Young Turks), and their flagrant neglect of their own initial constitutional impulses. Turkish writers referred to the Ottoman territory as “Turkish land.” Pamphlets in Turkish extolling the idea of the “National Economy” increasingly referred not to a cosmopolitan Ottoman economy but one that was Islamized or Turkified.¹⁹ The tone of the pamphlets was ferocious. Non-Muslims were “sucking the blood of Muslims,” and as cited in a report by the acting British consul-general in Smyrna, the unsuspecting, soporific Muslims were the victims of voracious Christians.

As Europe drifted through the last decade before World War I, the Ottoman government experienced a series of political and military defeats: the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by Austro-Hungary in 1908, the subsequent declaration of independence by Bulgaria, the merger of Crete with Greece, revolts in Albania in 1910-1912, and in Yemen, and losses to Italy in Libya (1911). Four Balkan states — Montenegro, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece — allied in October 1912 against the Ottomans. Ostensibly the war began over demands for reforms in Macedonia but ended with the quick defeat of the Ottoman army and the establishment of Albania as an independent state.²⁰ The Ottoman holdings in the Balkans were inhabited by over six million people, two-thirds of them Christian, one-third Muslim. The reformist strategies of the Young Turks had failed to convince the great European powers to support the empire’s claims to sovereignty in its European lands. Sensing the weakness of their imperial sovereign, Balkan Christians turned on the Ottomans and fought with the various Christian states. Armenians found themselves on both sides of the front lines: Balkan Armenians sided with their governments against the Ottomans, while Ottoman Armenians fought with the imperial forces. Important Armenian spokesmen joined rallies and spoke in favor of defending the fatherland.²¹ Defeat and the loss of territories deemed the patrimony of the Ottomans had a devastating emotional impact on the Young Turk leaders. They attributed their losses to the treachery of Christians, a trope that became dominant in the stories of the nationalist writer Omer Seyfettin, himself a participant and prisoner-of-war during the Balkan conflict.²²

The influential CUP member Dr. Nazim reported to the British consul in Izmir that “the nation” was filled with “the sentiment of hatred.”²³ Despair — that is, loss of hope in an acceptable future — colored the emotional world of the defeated. Loss mixed with an urge to revenge that loss.

The theme of revenge, the urge to set right the wrongs that had been done against Muslims and Turks, ran through the memories of those who suffered in the Balkan wars. Enver’s anger at the Balkan humiliations festered even when he became one of the three most powerful men in the empire. In a letter to his wife, he revealed his inability to come to terms with “the savagery the enemy has inflicted. . . a stone’s throw from Istanbul.” If she only knew what he knew, she “would understand the things that enter the heads of poor Muslims far away. But our anger is strengthening: revenge, revenge, revenge; there is no other word.”²⁴

The most important leaders of the Young Turks were veterans of the struggle to keep Macedonia, Bulgaria, and Albania within the Ottoman Empire. The losses of these territories were personally traumatic. When they turned their gaze to Anatolia, however, they continued to see the situation in that land, largely unknown to them, through eyes that had witnessed the losses in the Balkans. Both western Anatolia, where large Greek populations lived relatively harmoniously among Muslims, and eastern Anatolia, with its complex mix of Kurds, Turks, Armenians, and Assyrians, differed culturally and socially from the Balkans. Yet the sociological images the desperate leaders of the empire had of the varied lands over which they ruled had already been deeply influenced by their experiences in the Balkans.²⁵

For Turkish nationalists, both intellectuals like Ahmed Ağaoğlu and Ziya Gökalp and Young Turk officials and officers like Talat and Enver, saving the empire went along with strengthening the Turkish “nation” within the empire. Nationalism and imperialism were conjoined: within the boundaries of the state the Turkish and Islamic peoples would be favored and their demographic weight increased; outside the boundaries Turks and Muslims would be mobilized to join the Ottoman dream of a great Turanian or Islamic state. Those who did not fit in would assimilate or emigrate, remain subordinate to the ruling metropolitan “nation,” or be physically eliminated.

THE REFORM OF 1914

For the European powers preservation of the Ottoman Empire was more desirable than partition, which would mean dominance of the various parts by one power or another. For the empire to survive, they were convinced that reform in the Armenian provinces was vital. Agreement by the capitals of Europe was difficult, however, because the Great Powers were seriously divided diplomatically. The Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria, and Italy faced the Triple Entente of Britain, France, and Russia. All agreed, however, that the Ottoman Empire should neither be partitioned nor divided into spheres of

influence. The Russians submitted a reform plan in June, which called for the consolidation of the six eastern *vilayets* into an Armenian province to be administered by a Christian governor-general approved by the Great Powers and Istanbul, as well as a chamber of deputies made up equally of Muslims and Christians.

For centuries Russian rulers had dreamt and plotted to “recover” Constantinople and bring it into the Orthodox Russian Empire, but Europe had repeatedly frustrated that ambition. Both Russia and its Armenians wanted a reformed Armenia under some European supervision but were not prepared to go as far as a Russian protectorate or Russian occupation.²⁶ Turkish nationalists were distressed by the idea of foreign inspectors. The nationalist newspapers *Tanin* and *Jeune Turk* wrote about a new European crusade humiliating the empire at a moment when it needed to recover. The triumvirate stiffened its opposition to foreigners as administrators of parts of its territory.

The reform of 1914 pointed toward a different kind of Ottoman empire, one in which European Powers would supervise reforms, particularly land adjudications, in eastern Anatolia. Both Abdülhamid II and the Young Turks had ultimately sided with the Kurds against the Armenians and abandoned efforts to deal with land disputes. Had the World War not broken out, the possibility of a more decentralized Ottoman Empire may have succeeded. But the Young Turks hated the reform, and in their minds Europe wanted a divided and weak Ottoman Empire, and the 1914 reform was part of that plot against Istanbul.

THE GREAT WAR

What was then known as “the Great War” was a catastrophe for all the peoples of the Ottoman Empire and most completely for the Armenians and Assyrians. Of the more than twenty million subjects of the sultan, perhaps as many as five million would perish as a consequence of the CUP’s decision to join what was for them a war not of necessity but of choice. Most of the victims were civilians. Eighteen percent of Anatolian Muslims would die, the casualties of battle, famine, disease, and governmental disorganization. About ninety percent of the Armenians would be gone by the end of the war — deported, massacred, forcibly converted to Islam, or exiled beyond the borders of the new Turkey. The Young Turks entered the war to save, even enhance, their empire, only to preside over its demise. The war laid the foundations for the empire’s successor, the national state created by a Turkish nationalist movement, by ethnically cleansing what would now become the “heartland” of Turks and mobilizing millions of ordinary Muslims to fight for their “fatherland.” “In Turkey’s collective memory today,” a historian of the Ottoman war writes, “the Ottomans lost the First World War; the Turks won it.”²⁷

The Ottoman Empire fought from 1914 to 1918 on nine different fronts, from the Dardanelles and the Balkans to Palestine and Arabia to the Caucasus and Persia. Over three million Ottomans, mostly Turks, were conscripted to fight the war against the Entente. An estimated 771,844 were killed, over half

to disease. The mortality rate reached twenty-five percent.²⁸ Only Serbia suffered the loss of a higher percentage of its population than the Ottomans. The war blurred the distinctions between civilians and the military. Violence was visited upon all citizens in this total war. Civil society suffered enormously, while the state's power extended into society in unprecedented ways. The gross domestic product in Turkey in the 1920s was half the prewar level.²⁹ The urban populations of the region did not recover until the 1950s. Millions of people were moved, either conscripted or forcibly deported by their government. Every tenth person in the Ottoman Empire became a displaced person in the years of war.³⁰ Hundreds of thousands were slaughtered as a consequence of state policy, and other hundreds of thousands were forcibly converted to Islam, losing their original identity as Christians. In the twelve years from 1912-1924, the non-Muslim population in Ottoman Asia Minor fell from roughly twenty percent to two percent.³¹

As European states propelled one another into a ferocious and fratricidal war in 1914, the Young Turks became convinced that the survival of their empire required two related policies: an effective alliance with one or more of the Great Powers; and mobilization, indeed militarization, of Ottoman society in order to deal with the disruptive internal divisions that both weakened the state and provided opportunities for foreign actors to intervene in the empire's internal affairs. The Young Turks' foreign policy was intimately related to their domestic difficulties, their inability to find a solution to the discontents of their constituent peoples. War, it was thought by some, might provide an opportunity to free the empire from the aggressive appetites of the Great Powers and to effect a final solution to the seemingly insatiable aspirations of the empire's remaining non-Muslims. Ottomanism and European-style reforms had been tried, the young militants in power thought, but they had not strengthened the empire. Enver's recapture of Edirne in 1913 seemed to confirm that a strong military could repair what diplomacy failed to achieve. War and the creation of a truly sovereign state were necessary, and independence and security could be accomplished through a German alliance and war. To the Young Turks Germany was their ally of choice since their principal enemy remained Russia, a country with which the Ottomans had already fought twelve wars.

The fate of millions of people hung on the notes passed between envoys and their superiors. Had Ottoman and Russian decisions been different, had the Ottomans and their allies been able to proceed with the agreed-upon reforms in Anatolia, in all likelihood there would have been no Armenian Genocide. Decisions and timing were all. The fate of the Armenians was directly tied to the social disintegration and political radicalization of the Ottoman leaders who accelerated with the coming of war. Enver took personal command of the army in the east. The fighting raged for almost a month, from late December into mid-January. At first Enver was dramatically successful. The Ottomans moved closer to Sarikamis, and the Russians were about to pull back when General Iudenich decided to make a stand. The Ottoman

troops were not prepared for the harsh winter in the Anatolian highlands; they had marched for days through deep snow and thousands froze to death. Early in 1915 the Russians, accompanied by Armenian volunteer units, pushed the Ottoman army back. A disastrous defeat followed. The Ottomans lost more than 45,000 men killed; thousands more deserted or were taken prisoner. The Russians lost about 28,000 killed or wounded.³²

It was in this context of desperation and defeat that, beginning in the first months of 1915, the Ottoman authorities demobilized Armenian soldiers from the Ottoman Army, at first organizing them into work brigades and then forcing them to dig their own graves before being shot. As rumors spread of Turkish violence against Armenian villagers, Armenians in Van organized in April to protect themselves. Their activity was painted as a revolutionary uprising, and fighting broke out in the streets. The advancing Russians took the city, but those Armenians who lived behind Turkish lines now became the targets of a massive campaign to remove them from the region. To prevent any further organized resistance by the Armenians, the Ottoman government rounded up the leading Armenian intellectuals, political leaders, and even members of the Ottoman parliament in Istanbul and exiled them from the capital on April 24, the date that later would be commemorated as genocide day. Most of them perished at the hands of the authorities.

The argument often employed by Turkish leaders to the Western and German diplomats who inquired and protested against the treatment of the Armenians was that the precarious condition of the empire and the requirements of self-defense of the state justified the repression of “rebellion.” In a telling interview with the American ambassador, Henry Morgenthau, Talat conveyed the complexities of reasons that influenced the decision to eliminate Anatolian Armenians. “I have asked you to come to-day,” began Talaat, “so that I can explain our position on the whole Armenian subject. We base our objections to the Armenians on three distinct grounds. In the first place, they have enriched themselves at the expense of the Turks. In the second place, they are determined to domineer over us and to establish a separate state. In the third place, they have openly encouraged our enemies.”³³

GENOCIDE

The very word “genocide” conjures images of the most horrendous crimes committed by states against designated peoples. So powerful is the term itself — as a concept in international law, a claim by governments of their own victimization, and as powerful sources of national identification — that the term “genocide” has been extended to involve almost all instances of mass killing in our world. In this work I employ the word “genocide” in a specific way to designate what in German is called *Völkermord*, the murder of a people, and in Turkish *soykırım* or Armenian *tseghaspanutiun*, the killing of an ethnicity or, in an older understanding, “race.”

The purpose of the Genocide was to eliminate the perceived threat of the Armenians within the Ottoman Empire by reducing their numbers and scattering them in isolated, distant places. The destruction of the *Ermeni millet* was carried out in three different but related ways: dispersion, massacre, and assimilation by conversion into Islam. A perfectly rational explanation, then, for the Genocide appears to be adequate: a strategic goal to secure the empire by elimination of an existential threat to the state and the Turkish (or Islamic) people.

While an anti-Armenian disposition existed and grew more virulent within the Ottoman elite long before the war, and some extremists contemplated radical solutions to the Armenian Question, particularly after the Balkan Wars, the world war not only presented an opportunity for carrying out the most revolutionary program against the Armenians, but provided the particular conjuncture that convinced the Young Turk triumvirate to deploy ethnic cleansing and genocide against the Armenians. The moment at which disposition became action occurred after the outbreak of war when the leaders' fear that their rule was in peril focused on the Armenians as the wedge that the Russians and other powers could use to pry apart their empire. Had there been no World War there would have been no genocide, not only because there would have been no "fog of war" to cover up the events but because the radical sense of endangerment among Turks would not have been as acute. Without the war there would have been less motivation for a revolutionary solution and political opportunities for negotiation and compromise.

When it came, the Armenian Genocide was the result of long-term, deep-seated elite and popular hatreds, resentments, and fears intensified by war and defeat — an affective disposition in which Armenians were perceived as irredeemable enemies of Muslims — that in turn shaped the CUP's strategic considerations as to the most effective ways to save the empire. The Young Turks' sense of their own vulnerability — combined with resentment at what they took to be Armenians' privileged status, Armenian dominance over Muslims in some spheres of life, and the preference of many Armenians for Christian Russia — fed a fantasy that the Armenians presented an existential threat to Turks. Threat must be understood not only as an immediate menace but as perception of potential danger, of future peril. Within such imagery Armenians were helpless and soon became the victims of both their success within the *millet* system and their exposure as religiously marked, largely unarmed subjects.

War and social disintegration, the invasion of the Russians and the British, and the defection of some Armenians to the Russian side moved the leaders of the Ottoman state to embark on the most vicious form of "securitization" and social engineering: the massive deportation and massacre of hundreds of thousands of their Armenian and Assyrian subjects. For Ziya Gökalp, like so many others who saw the Genocide as necessary or even forced on the Ottomans, he could with confidence write, "There was no Armenian massacre, there was a Turkish-Armenian arrangement. They stabbed us in the

back, we stabbed them back.”³⁴ What was done had to be done in the name of national security, and so a kind of lawful lawlessness was permitted.

Reversing an older image of ethnic violence as bubbling up from the masses below, the decisions, permission, and encouragement of a few in power provoked and stoked emotional resonance below. It turns out that a few killers can cause enormous destruction. Thugs, sadists, fanatics, and opportunists can slaughter thousands with little more than acquiescence from the surrounding population. They in turn can inspire or let loose the rage of thousands of others who will carry out even greater destruction. Genocide in particular is an event of mass killing, with massive numbers of victims but not necessarily of massive numbers of killers. The thugs, set loose by the political elite, create a climate of violence that radicalizes a population, renders political moderates less relevant, and convinces people of the need to support the more extremist leaders. The context of war, with its added burdens and accompanying social disintegration, hardens hostile group identities, “making it rational to fear the other group and see its members as dangerous threats.”³⁵ Added to that, thugs and ordinary people use the opportunities offered by state-permitted lawlessness to settle other accounts with neighbors, take revenge, or simply grab what they can.³⁶

Some of the killers in 1915 simply obeyed orders; others were motivated by much more mundane feelings than duty or considered ideological preferences. Social and economic inequalities, when combined with ethnic and religious distinctions, bred resentment at those who received more than they deserved from those who had received less. Fear of the other and the future that it threatened one’s own; anger at what had been done to oneself and one’s compatriots; simple ambition and careerism all could be found among those who murdered Armenians. Fear, anger, and resentment metastasized into hatred, the emotion that saw the other as the essential cause of one’s own misery. Hatred required that the other be eliminated. Killing became familiar and justifiable for reasons of self-defense. A cumulative radicalization moved inexorably forward: sporadic, uncoordinated massacres along the eastern frontier gave way to planned deportations, first from frontline areas and then throughout the empire; deportations were accompanied with massacres and death marches; finally, at the end of the road, those who had reached the deserts were starved to death or brutally murdered.

The story as told here argues that the Genocide was not planned long in advance but was a contingent reaction to a moment of crisis that grew more radical over time. The Genocide was neither religiously motivated nor a struggle between two contending nationalisms, one of which destroyed the other, but rather the pathological response of desperate leaders who sought security against a people they had both constructed as enemies and driven into radical opposition to the regime under which they had lived for centuries. Yet the choice of genocide was not inevitable. Predicated on long standing and ever more extreme affective dispositions and attitudes that had demonized the Armenians as a threat that

needed to be dealt with, the ultimate choice was made by specific leaders at a particular historical conjuncture when the threat seemed to them most palpable. Threat is a perception, in this case the perception that one of the empire's subject peoples was as great a danger as invading armies.

The emotional universe in which the Ottomans constructed themselves and others, made possible the most brutal reprisals against perceived enemies. Although it had developed over nearly half a century, the emotional coloring of others need not have led to genocide. People made choices. In a particular conjuncture, when war and invasion threatened defeat and dismemberment of the empire, the Young Turk leaders made disastrous, even self-destructive, policy decisions that ultimately annihilated whole peoples and accelerated the fall of their regime.

What to denialists and their sympathizers appears to be a rational and justified strategic choice to eliminate a rebellious and seditious population, in the account presented here, is the outcome of the Young Turk leaders' pathological construction of the Armenian enemy. The actions that the Young Turks decided upon were based in an emotional disposition that led to distorted interpretations of social reality and exaggerated estimations of threats.³⁷ The conviction that Armenians desired to form an independent state was a fantasy of the Young Turks and a few Armenian extremists. The great majority of Armenians had been willing to live within the Ottoman Empire if their lives and property could be secured. They clung to the belief that a future was possible within the empire. Still, they had been socialized as Ottomans; this was their home and what they knew. Only when their own government once again turned them into pariahs did some of them defect or resist.

The Armenian Genocide, along with the killing of Assyrians and the expulsion of the Anatolian Greeks, laid the ground for the more homogeneous nation-state that arose from the ashes of the empire. Like many other states, including Australia, Israel, and the United States, the emergence of the Republic of Turkey involved the removal and subordination of native peoples who had lived on its territory prior to its founding. The connection between ethnic cleansing or genocide and the legitimacy of the national state underlies the desperate efforts to deny or distort the history of the nation and the state's genesis. Coming to terms with that history, on the other hand, can have the salutary effect of questioning continued policies of ethnic homogenization and refusal to recognize the claims and rights of those peoples, minorities or diasporas — Aborigines, native Americans, Kurds, Palestinians, Assyrians, or Armenians — who refuse to disappear.

NOTES

1. Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Les assassins de la mémoire* (Paris: La Découverte, 1987). In the interests of space, footnotes have been abbreviated. For full details of all sources see Ronald Suny, *They Can*

- Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else": A History of the Armenian Genocide* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015).
2. In the last ten years a more sophisticated “neo-denialism” has emerged, which elaborated the argument that the Armenians were involved in insurrectionary activity that necessitated a counter-insurgency response from the Young Turk government. See, Edward J. Erickson, *Ottomans and Armenians: A Study in Counterinsurgency* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); and M. Hakan Yavuz, “Orientalism, the ‘Terrible Turk’ and Genocide,” *Middle East Critique*, XXIII (2014), 111-126.
 3. See the pioneering work of Vahakn Dadrian, mostly importantly, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus* (Providence, RI: Berghahn Books, 1995). For a critical review of Dadrian’s *The History of the Armenian Genocide*, see Ronald Grigor Suny, in *Slavic Review*, LV (Fall 1996), 676-677.
 4. Genocide with a capital “G” will be used in this article to refer to the Armenian Genocide of 1915, while genocide with a lower case “g” refers to the phenomenon more generally. This usage is consistent with the now-conventional employment of Holocaust with a capital “H” to refer to the genocide of the Jews by the Nazis.
 5. M. Şükrü Haniöğlu, *A Brief History of the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 128.
 6. Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey, A Modern History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1997), 83
 7. M. Şükrü Haniöğlu, *The Young Turks in Opposition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 142.
 8. Joost Jongerden, “Elite Encounters of a Violent Kind: Milli İbrahim Paşa, Ziya Gökalp and Political Struggle in Diyarbekir at the Turn of the 20th Century,” in Joost Jongerden and Jelle Verheij (eds.), *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbekir, 1870-1915* (Boston: Brill, 2012), 61-62. For a view that emphasizes the repressive role that the *Hamidiye* played against Armenians, see Stephen Duguid, “The Politics of Unity: Hamidian Policy in Eastern Anatolia,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, IX (May 1973), 139-155.
 9. Janet Klein, “State, Tribe, Dynasty, and the Contest over Diyarbekir at the Turn of the 20th Century,” in Jongerden and Verheij (eds.), *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbekir*, 152.
 10. The words are those of the sultan as conveyed by Grand Vizier Said Pasha when he fled to the British Embassy in December 1895. Quoted in Stephan Astourian, “Testing World-Systems Theory, Cilicia (1830s-1890s): Amrmenian-Turkish Polarization and the Ideology of Modern Ottoman History” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, 1996), 606.
 11. For a particularly telling reading of Turkish attitudes toward the *giaour* (unbeliever) and Armenians, see Stepan Astourian’s analysis of Turkish proverbs in Astourian, “Testing World-Systems Theory, Cilicia (1830s-1890s),” 409-431.
 12. On the development of the separate nationalisms of the peoples of the Ottoman Empire, see Fatma Muge Gocek, “Decline of the Ottoman Empire and the Emergence of Greek, Armenian, Turkish and Arab nationalisms,” in *Social Constructions of Nationalism in the Middle East* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 15-84.
 13. Haniöğlu, *The Young Turks in Opposition*, 32.
 14. Bedross Der Matossian shows in great detail how the public sphere of the empire was revived in the heady months after July 1908 and contributed to the violence in Adana in 1909. “From Bloodless Revolution to Bloody Counterrevolution: The Adana Massacres of 1909,” *Genocide Studies and Prevention*, VI (Summer 2011), 152-173.
 15. On Grigor [Krikor] Zohrap, see A. S. Sharurian, *Grigor Zohrapı Kianki ev Gortsutneutian Taregrutiun* (Echmiadzin: Mayr At’or Surb Ējmiatsni Tparan, 1996).
 16. Matthias Bjørnlund, “Adana and Beyond: Revolution and Massacre in the Ottoman Empire Seen Through Danish Eyes, 1908/9,” *Haikazean Haiagitakan Handes*, XXX (2010), 125.

17. Raymond H. Kévorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: a Complete History* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 69; “Enver Paşanın Gizli Mektuparı,” ed. Şukru Hanioğlu, *Cumhuriyet*, October 9, 1989; cited in Bozarıslan, *Les Courants de pensée*, I, 210, n. 815.
18. Kévorkian, *Genocide*, 152; *Tanin*, 1/14 November 1913; *Taşfiri Efkiar*, 12/25 and 13/26 November 1913.
19. Y. Doğan Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement: Nationalism, Protest and the Working Classes in the Formation of Modern Turkey* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014), introduction, 7; chapter 1, 13.
20. Cemal Kafadar, “The Question of Decline,” *Harvard Middle East and Islamic Review*, 4 (1997-98): 30-
21. Kévorkian, *Armenian Genocide*, 135.
22. Omer Seyfettin, *Butun Eserleri* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1970), *passim*.
23. Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement*, chapter IV, 117; FO, 195/2458, File of “Anti-Christian Boycott,” (former reference 306/3080), Enclosure No. 6 (account of the conversation between Rahmi Bey, governor of Smyrna, and Dr. Nazım Bey), 553.
24. Uğur Ümit Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State In Eastern Anatolia, 1913-1950* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 45; Letter of May 8, 1913, from Enver Pasha to his wife, cited in M. Şükrü Hanioğlu (ed.), *Kendi Mektuplarında Enver Paşa* (Istanbul: Der, 1989), 242.
25. Erik-Jan Zürcher, “Macedonians in Anatolia: The Importance of the Macedonian Roots of the Unionists for Their Policies in Anatolia after 1914,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 50 (2014): 960-975.
26. Roderic H. Davison, “The Armenian Crisis, 1912-1914,” *American Historical Review*, LIII (April 1948), 488-490.
27. Mustafa Aksakal, “[The Ottoman Empire](#),” *The Cambridge History of the First World War*, ed. Jay Winter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 464.
28. *Ibid.*, 468; Erik J. Zürcher estimates 325,000 directly killed in action and between 400,000 and 700,000 wounded. [“The Ottoman Soldier in World War I,” in his *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk’s Turkey* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 186]
29. *Ibid.*, 478.
30. Yiğit Akın, “The Ottoman Home Front during World War I: Everyday Politics, Society, and Culture,” (Ph.D. diss., Ohio State University, 2011), 245.
31. Mustafa Aksakal, “‘Holy War Made in Germany’? Ottoman Origins of the 1914 Jihad,” *War in History*, 18 (2011) p. 12; Erik-Jan Zürcher, *Griechisch-orthodoxe und muslimische Flüchtlinge und Deportierte in Griechenland und der Türkei seit 1912*,” in Klaus J. Bade *et al.*, (eds.), *Enzyklopädie Migration in Europa Vom 17. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh/Wilhelm Fink, 2007), 623-627.
32. O. Arslan, “Les faits et les buts de guerre ottomans sur le front caucasien,” (Ph.D. diss., Montpellier 3, 2011), 175-176. Aksakal claims that 80-90 percent of Third Army was destroyed at Sarıkamış, which was the “worst military disaster in Ottoman history” (Aksakal, “The Ottoman Empire,” 467). Some historians estimated that Enver’s army suffered 70,000 to 90,000 casualties.
33. Henry Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau’s Story* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Page, 1918), 336-337.
34. J.P. Jonderden, “Elite Encounters of a Violent Kind: Milli İbrahim Paşa Ziya Gökalp and Political Struggle in Diyarbakir at the Turn of the 20th Century,” in *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbakir, 1870-1915* (Boston: Brill, 2012), 72.
35. David D. Laitin, “Violence and the Social Construction of Ethnic Identity,” *International Organization*, LIV (Autumn 2000), 871.
36. On the variety of killers, see Michael Mann, *The Dark-Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), especially chapter 2.
37. For interpretations of the Genocide that are compatible, though not identical, with my own analysis, see, for example, the thoughtful essay by Stepan Astourian, “The Armenian Genocide: An

Interpretation,” *The History Teacher*, XXIII (February 1990), 111-160; Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy*; Mark Levene, *Genocide in the Age of the Nation State*, 2 vols. (London: Tauris, 2005); Benjamin A. Valentino, *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005); and Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).