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# Deportation and Massacres in the Cipher Telegrams of the Interior Ministry in the Prime Ministerial Archive (Başbakanlık Arşivi)

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*Despite attempts at cleansing the Ottoman archives, after the armistice of 1918, of material incriminating the Young Turk government in planning to annihilate the Armenians, the prime ministerial archive (Başbakanlık Arşivi, or BOA) in Istanbul still contains invaluable documentation on the Armenian Genocide. Contrary to the common belief, which suggests that the Ottoman documents in the BOA were created solely in order to obscure the actions of the Ottoman government, the author argues that this archive contains information that runs completely counter to the official Turkish denial thesis and actually elucidates both the intent of Ottoman authorities and how the genocide was organized. Based solely on Ottoman materials, the author demonstrates that the treatment of the Armenian population during World War I was different from that of other minorities at the time.*

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Mirroring the dissent over the Armenian Genocide itself, two factions have formed around different assessments of the Ottoman materials in the Prime Ministerial Archive (BOA).<sup>1</sup> For those who defend the “official Turkish thesis,” the events of 1915 cannot be considered genocide but, rather, were unexpected consequences of the relocation of Armenians during the war years. To support this claim, they rely exclusively on the Ottoman documents in the BOA as the only trustworthy source. This faction distrusts not only American, British, German, and Austrian documents but also the materials documented by the Military Tribunal proceedings in Istanbul as politically motivated distortions of the events. On the other hand, some critical Western scholars maintain that only the Western archives are reliable, since some documents from the BOA were produced in order to color events, while others have been purged in order to cover up the genocide.

The common logic underlying both of these positions is that the two sets of documents are mutually contradictory. Each faction insists on the exclusive use of its own favored archival sources. I will argue here that both extremes are missing the point. It is erroneous to assume that the Ottoman documents from the BOA were created solely in order to obscure the actions of the Ottoman government. In fact, they contain information that runs completely counter to the official Turkish thesis, elucidating the intent of Ottoman authorities and documenting how the genocide was organized. Ottoman materials found in the BOA in Istanbul support and corroborate the narrative of the Armenian Genocide as documented in Western Archival sources.

Critical scholars regard the Ottoman documents as unreliable and trivialize their importance for six main interrelated reasons. First, as I have shown in a previous publication,<sup>2</sup> there is strong evidence suggesting that the archives were purged of documents relating to the Armenian Genocide. Second, the method by which some of these documents were produced is dubious. As Vahakn Dadrian has shown, during the preparation and implementation phase of the genocide, Ottoman authorities “resorted to questionable methods in securing the documentation for episodes involving the deportation of the Armenian population.”<sup>3</sup> Third, scholars cannot rely on the extant collections because of the selective publication of Ottoman documents that appear to support Turkish claims.<sup>4</sup> The “two-track” communication system used during the implementation of the genocide enabled such selective publication. The telegrams attributed to Talât Pasha sent to the local governors call for special attention in this respect (see below). Fourth, omissions in the cataloging of the archival materials raise suspicions that many documents have been consciously withheld from the public.<sup>5</sup> Fifth, working conditions in the Ottoman archives have been an issue in the past. Problems included difficulty in obtaining catalogs, the arbitrary rejection of requests to photocopy documents, the dismissal of “suspicious” people from the archives, and the theft of research materials from visitors.<sup>6</sup> The final reason is a natural result of some of the factors mentioned above: no scholars have had complete access to the documents, and so no one has been able to establish a general overview of their content.

As a result, most critical scholars maintain that the Ottoman documents have been purged in order to cover up the genocide, and are thus unreliable.<sup>7</sup> My central argument here is that we need to reassess the idea that Ottoman archival materials contradict Western archival materials. They are not mutually exclusive; on the contrary, they are in compliance with each other.

Despite attempts to separate official deportation practices from the annihilation and purging the official records of any trace of an intention to annihilate, the remaining documents in the BOA in Istanbul, especially the telegrams belonging to the Cipher Office of the Interior Ministry, show two important aspects of the Armenian deportations and killings. One is that the deportations and killings of Armenians were a part of a larger population policy. The other is that this population policy was implemented categorically differently toward the Armenians than toward other ethno-religious groups within the empire, a difference that can be characterized as genocidal intent.

## **Talât Pasha and His Telegrams**

Talât Pasha’s telegrams on the smooth operation of the deportation of the Armenians are used by Turkish sources as proof that state policy never envisioned the complete annihilation of the Armenians. First, the Committee for Union and Progress (CUP) made sure to maintain an appearance of a lawful framework during the execution of the policy, so as to create the image of legally justified action. Ottoman leaders felt compelled to disguise their actions from their own allies. However, as reports of slaughter from Anatolia started to multiply, the German and Austrian ambassadors began to make pointed demands in the very presence of the Ottoman state administration. The German state, for example, made very firm demands that at least the Protestant and Catholic Armenians be spared from the deportation. When their demands were not heeded, and the reports of killings continued unabated, they issued several diplomatic memos protesting the treatment of Armenians and requesting an improvement of their situation.<sup>8</sup>

This and other similar outside interference forced Talât Pasha to provide evidence of smooth operation in the region. He issued many telegrams, one after the other and presented them to foreign governments as evidence of the correctness of his policy. Despite all Talât's promises, the German consular offices continued to send out news of the massacres occurring in their regions. For example, German Ambassador Ernst Langenburg Hohenlohe, writing to Berlin on 25 September 1915, stated that "the news from the consulates . . . [is that] the orders which were supposedly sent by the Sublime Porte, aimed at amending the losses being suffered by the deported Armenians . . . are proven to have not reached their destinations."<sup>9</sup> Such incidents would be repeated, and Talât Pasha would continue to claim that the massacres were not happening and that he was doing everything he possibly could.

In the German ambassador's reports, Talât would be referred to as a liar, "heartless," and a "hypocrite."<sup>10</sup> For the Austrian ambassador, Count Johann Pallavicini, Talât was "playing both sides."<sup>11</sup> It is possible to gain an understanding of how these duplicitous games were played by reading the documents connected with German requests to spare Protestant and Catholic Armenians. The first document is a telegram sent by Talât to various regions on 4 August 1915. In this telegram he orders a stop to the deportation of any remaining Catholic Armenians.<sup>12</sup> A similar telegram was sent on 15 August 1915 concerning the remaining Protestant Armenians.<sup>13</sup> (It is worth highlighting the fact that, until these dates, Catholic and Protestant Armenians were deported without any consideration of their confessional ties.) In each case, Talât then immediately sent a second telegram to the regions, ordering that the first telegram be ignored and that the deportation of Catholic and Protestant Armenians continue.<sup>14</sup> In order to ensure the continuation of the deportations, and to avoid confusion about his intentions, Talât sent a telegram on 11 August 1915 to certain regions.<sup>15</sup>

The German regional consuls continued to express concerns about the deportation of Catholic and Protestant Armenians. Eventually, in response to this pressure, on 29 August 1915, Talât sent a new set of telegrams to the regions, calling for a halt to the deportation of Catholic and Protestant Armenians.<sup>16</sup> After sending this order, Talât took it to the German ambassador as evidence of his compliance.<sup>17</sup> Soon thereafter, however (on 2 September 1915), Talât sent a second coded telegram ordering the deportation of any remaining Catholic and Protestant Armenians with their families.<sup>18</sup> Leaving no room for confusion, on 24 October 1915 Talât sent a telegram confirming his earlier orders, issued on 5 August and 2 September 1915, to continue the deportation of Catholic and Protestant Armenians.<sup>19</sup>

We can further follow this duplicity in additional German sources that show that, unsatisfied with these telegrams, Talât sent special envoys to the regions to facilitate the continuing deportation of Catholic and Protestant Armenians. In a report sent by the German consul in Adana, we read that

The notification dated 29 August concerning the Armenians and given to the Imperial Embassy from the Porte is merely an audacious deception of the embassy, because, at the instigation of Inspector Ali Münif Bey, who was sent here, the Porte later completely revoked this order. The authorities, of course, are only carrying out the second instruction and continuing with the deportation without considering denomination or creed. The number of Armenians ordered to be murdered probably already exceeds the amount of victims in the Young Turk Massacre of 1909.<sup>20</sup>

In his memoirs, Ali Münif confesses that he prepared the list of Armenians to be deported himself. Some copies of those lists would end up in the hands of the British when they searched his home during the Armistice.<sup>21</sup>

Evidence of similar tactics used by Talât in other circumstances (the deportation of the Greeks)—that is, an initial formal telegram, sent to appease foreign ambassadors or minority members, followed by a coded telegram explicitly nullifying the previous one—can be found among the coded telegrams from the Interior Ministry. In a telegram sent on 16 April 1915 to the governor's office of Tekfurdağı (now known as Tekirdağ), Talât Pasha states quite openly,

Upon the application of the town of Vize's Bishop, a group of four to five people from the Patriarchate are being sent; the content of the actual notice sent by open telegram and the memo given to the group on yesterday's date to be ignored and the refugees from Ereğli are to be removed by ship with haste outside of Ereğli and all your efforts should be to ensure that the aforementioned group is kept under observation, that their efforts remain fruitless and that they have no hint of any of this.<sup>22</sup>

There are many other Turkish sources in which Talât is described as a liar; it seems that there is a consensus on Talât's personal character among Turkish writers. For example, noted Turkish historian and chronicler İsmail Hami Danişmend describes Talât as a man "whose special reputation as a liar... kept growing progressively (*bilhassa yalancılık şöhreti genişlemiştir*)."<sup>23</sup> The editor of the Turkish newspaper *Sabah* wrote that "Talât lied like a machine."<sup>24</sup> Süleyman Nazım, a famous writer, publicist, and governor of several provinces, after Talât's escape from Istanbul, described him in following way: "He, Talât, had no other talent than just being tricky" (*hileden başka meziyeti olmayan Talaat*).<sup>25</sup>

It should not be surprising, then, that Talât's close political friends did not hesitate to refer to him as a "liar." His closest friend, Hüseyin Cahit, remarked that Talât "would lie in both state and political matters."<sup>26</sup> According to Falih Rıfkı Atay, who worked in the Interior Ministry with Talât Pasha in 1913–1914, Talât was a person "who did not view lies or cruelty as immoral." Atay relates that the issuance of a second coded telegram nullifying whatever order Talât had just sent by official telegram was an ordinary, everyday occurrence.<sup>27</sup> We learn from the memoirs of Henry Morgenthau and Halil Menteşe that Talât, a former telegrapher, had a special private telegraphic line run to his house from which he directed his communications.<sup>28</sup>

The cancellation of an order sent by official telegram through the issuing of a second telegram was a method used quite frequently by Ottoman administrators. Hans Von Seeckt, who had served as the Ottoman Army's chief of staff, relates that it was a general rule that secret orders and clues to indicate invalidity would follow previously sent official orders.<sup>29</sup> In his memoirs, Ottoman officer Selahattin explains how Enver Pasha often canceled the official orders he had sent, by official channels, to appease the Germans by following them up with telegrams sent from the private telegraph office set up in his house.<sup>30</sup>

## The 5-10% Regulation

The documents available in the Istanbul archive explicitly show that the government ordered the regional authorities to ensure that any relocated group (Muslim or non-Muslim) not exceed 5–10% of the population in their new location. This is an important indicator that there was a calculated social policy behind the deportations. Until recently, some scholars, myself included, knew about this policy from a document cited in most official Turkish sources but interpreted it as a diversion tactic by the

Ottoman authorities.<sup>31</sup> However, newly discovered documents from the Interior Ministry archives indicate that this was not a diversion strategy but, rather, a calculated policy applied not only to the relocation of Armenians, but also that of Arabs, Kurds, Albanians, Bosnians, and others. For example, a telegram sent from the Interior Ministry to various provinces in May 1916 demands that the Kurds be separated from their religious leaders and sheiks and that they be settled in Anatolia in numbers not exceeding 5% of the indigenous population.<sup>32</sup> Another telegram, sent by Talât Pasha to Ankara on 1 October 1915, indicates that the Albanians and Bosnians should be dispersed among the Turkish population so as not to exceed 10% of the native population.<sup>33</sup>

Other telegrams also state that in regions where the number of Armenians is not significant, no relocation is necessary.<sup>34</sup> In each region, the government kept continual track of population percentages, constantly asking for the numbers both of expelled groups and of the remaining relocated groups in a particular place. For example, a telegram to Canik district asks how many Greeks have been moved out of the province, where they have been sent, and how many remain.<sup>35</sup>

In regions to which Armenians were deported, this rule ensured that they would not represent more than 10% of the population in their new location.<sup>36</sup> In the region of Der Zor, for example, the Armenian population exceeded 10%; the Interior Ministry sent telegrams to the governors of Adana, Erzurum, Bitlis, and Aleppo, saying that the percentage of Armenians in Der Zor had passed 10% and that it was not suitable to send more Armenians there.<sup>37</sup> German sources also confirm that the local Ottoman authorities in these areas followed this policy closely.<sup>38</sup>

I would like to point out two important consequences that can be inferred from the above-mentioned information. First, if the assertion is correct that Armenians should not represent more than 10% of the indigenous population of their new location, what was done with those Armenians in Syria and Iraq who were over the 10% limit? According to Ottoman statistics, the number of deported Armenians was around one million, a number that would far exceed 10% of the indigenous population of Syria and Iraq. The population of the Ottoman Empire's Arab provinces in 1914 (mostly modern Iraq and Syria) could be estimated at between 2 and 2.5 million, including the Christian population.<sup>39</sup> The Ottoman documents themselves speak against the Turkish state's thesis that there was no planned genocide, because they cannot answer the question of how approximately one million Armenians could fail to exceed 5–10% of the local population. If one adheres to this official thesis, the only way to explain the variation in numbers is to posit that the Armenians simply evaporated.<sup>40</sup>

The second important point that we can infer from these documents is that the loss of Armenian life was not due to logistical and wartime complications of the deportations, as the official histories claim, but was a direct consequence of this relocation policy. This becomes clear when we see that, according to Ottoman documents, the resettlement of roughly one million Muslims into the evacuated Armenian and Greek villages was largely successful and was accomplished without great loss of life.

## **Documents Revealing Different Treatment of Armenians**

The documents from the BOA paint a very clear picture of different treatment for the Armenians, some of which can be used as direct evidence of the genocidal intent of the Ottoman authorities. Among these records, Talât Pasha's coded telegram dated 12 July 1915 and sent to Diyarbekir is the most notorious. In this telegram he relates how the news has reached him that, along with the Armenians in the region,

other Christians are also being murdered. He states that he has heard that the number of dead has reached an estimated 2,000 and then adds,

Whereas it is categorically forbidden for other Christians to be included under the disciplinary and political measures adopted in regard to the Armenians, an immediate stop should be put to this sort of occurrence, which will have a bad effect on public opinion, and will indiscriminately place the lives of Christians in extraordinary danger, and the reality of the situation [should be] reported.<sup>41</sup>

The language could not be clearer. People, many of them employed as civil servants by the state, were being killed at the behest of the governor's office. This, however, was not really the point for Talât; in fact, he was complaining that a policy that was to have been applied to Armenians alone had in fact spread to other Christians. It is for this reason that the telegram demands that the killing of other Christians stop.<sup>42</sup>

The fate of the governor of Diyarbekir, Reşit Bey, reveals to a great extent the reality of state policy toward the Armenians. According to the BOA documents, the killing continued anyway, and so Talât sent additional requests (on 22 July and 2 August 1915) to Reşit Bey to cease the indiscriminate killing of Christians, reminding him of his personal responsibility in the matter.<sup>43</sup> Despite these threats, there was never any inquiry into the governor's responsibility for the deaths. However, Reşit was eventually taken to task for expropriating the wealth of his victims, especially the Armenians. In a telegram dated 6 October 1915, Talât inquires about the jewelry and other possessions taken from the deportees, demanding that the wealth be sent to Istanbul.<sup>44</sup> Later Reşit was promoted to Ankara. When he subsequently tried to buy a villa beyond his obvious means, he was immediately removed from his position. After the war, when Reşit Bey committed suicide, wartime governor and newspaper editor Süleyman Nafiz exposed this story in the former governor's obituary, commenting that Talât Pasha had no qualms about his capacity for killing but could not abide his theft.<sup>45</sup>

Other documents in the BOA can also be seen to show the genocidal intent of the Ottoman authorities. A telegram was sent from Istanbul by the Directorate of General Security (EUM) on 12 January 1916 to the regional office in Ankara, demanding "information as to whether the Armenians, whose names are known, are alive, and if so, their whereabouts following the deportation operation."<sup>46</sup> It reveals the kind of anxiety the administrators in Istanbul were experiencing. What they wanted to learn was whether those Armenians they had identified were alive, and, if so, where they were. Similarly, anxiety in the regions of Erzurum, Mamuretülaziz, Diyarbekir, and Bitlis is shown in a telegram stating that

there's word spreading that after the Armenians are annihilated in Dersim and the surrounding areas, the Kurds are going to be next. All precautions necessary must be taken to prevent the spread of these kinds of rumors.<sup>47</sup>

Besides the obvious anxieties shown above, the documents of the Cipher Office of the Interior Ministry also provide important circumstantial evidence of the genocidal intent of the Ottoman authorities. As we know, the 1948 UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide counts among the elements of genocide the forcible transfer of children of one group to another.<sup>48</sup> Among the documents in the BOA are many that show such intentional acts. We learn from these documents that Armenian children were taken from their families, sent to Muslim villages where there were no Armenians, married off to Muslims, or settled in orphanages with explicit instructions that they were to be raised in a manner

consistent with Muslim norms and customs. For example, a telegram sent by the Interior Ministry's Directorate of Tribes and Immigrants (AMMU)<sup>49</sup> to various provincial offices on 30 April 1916, after stating that "those families who have no one and are unprotected should be sent to villages and towns where there are no foreigners or Armenians," goes on to urge that

young and widowed women should be married off, children up to the age of twelve should be settled into orphanages, and if an adequate space in the orphanage is not available, then they should be settled with Muslim families and raised with that community's values and customs.<sup>50</sup>

A telegram sent by Talât Pasha himself, on 30 December 1915, to the governor's office in Niğde makes his demands quite explicit:

on the condition that they be raised as Muslims, the children should be settled in Muslim villages where there are no Armenians or foreigners, or settled into orphanages. The young women and girls must be married off to Muslims.<sup>51</sup>

The document shows that it was considered a necessity that the Armenians as a group be prevented from maintaining their identity. In yet another telegram, we see that the aim is to tear families apart by taking the men away. This telegram asks that those families who have had their males taken away be "moved to villages and towns where there are no Armenians or foreigners so that they can be settled away from each other."<sup>52</sup> These records show that the CUP leaders intended to destroy the conditions under which the Armenians had maintained their lives.

## **The Seizure of Armenian Property**

In addition to the issue of the deportation of Armenians themselves, it is important to understand what happened to their personal and real property. The treatment of Armenians' material goods shows the two-track organization of the deportations. On the one hand there are obvious and explicit legal and financial rules for the treatment of such property; on the other, we can see from the BOA documents that these goods were in fact controlled in other ways that contradict the legal framework. My argument here is essentially that the seizure of Armenian property, and the manner in which it was utilized, proves incontrovertibly that the CUP agenda was to rid Anatolia of Armenian life and culture by pulling them out by the roots.

The fact that many laws and regulations were promulgated for the purpose of managing the use of, sale of, and later compensation for the property the Armenians left behind is commonly used by Turkish authorities to argue that deportation was never meant to lead to annihilation. It is claimed that instances of abuse and unlawful seizure of goods were isolated incidents, and that the state took Armenian property and goods under its protection and later compensated the owners when they were settled at their ultimate destinations. It is true that, on the subject of protection and compensation, many temporary laws and regulations were issued.<sup>53</sup>

The first attempt at regulatory organization occurred on 30 May 1915, with a decision issued by the cabinet ministers. According to this decision, the Armenians would be "distributed property and land" in the places where they were resettled, and the "property and furnishings or valuables" they had left behind "would be returned to them in some shape or manner." In furtherance of this goal, in order to set out "the acquisition, protection and management of abandoned property and the treatment of, the settlement of, and effects to and organization, examination, and inspection of peoples," various commissions in the regions were to be established by the Ministries



of the Interior and of Finance. This instructional notice, issued by the Office of Tribal and Refugee Settlement (IAMM) of the Interior Ministry, contained fifteen separate clauses outlining how the settlement and maintenance of all these people was to take place.<sup>54</sup> On 31 May 1915 this instructional notice was sent, along with a letter, to the Ministries of the Interior, War, and Finance for the purpose of implementation of the regulations.<sup>55</sup>

The second organizational attempt took place on 10 June 1915.<sup>56</sup> The very long instructional manual was made up of thirty-four separate clauses. Because of the disorganization and confusion of the operational stage, and the frequent need for answers to questions from the local administrators, telegram after telegram was issued, and new instructions had to be sent out.<sup>57</sup> Besides the looting and embezzlement that occurred at the local level, there was a bigger problem that had not been addressed by the instructional manual. How were the many foreign companies—German ones being at the top of the list—to be compensated for their accounts receivable from the Armenians who had been deported? Germany, which had been making attempts to address the problem from the beginning and later issued an ultimatum on 8 August 1915 stating that it would “hold the Ottomans liable for the losses being suffered,” finally issued an official memo in protest on 16 September 1915, when it became obvious that previous attempts to be heard were futile.<sup>58</sup> Finally, on 26 September 1915, two days before the opening of the next Assembly session, the cabinet ministers issued a temporary law to organize the use of Armenian property. Later this law, which changed the decree of 30 May with the aim of “liquidating all Armenian goods and property,” would be harshly criticized in the Senate by Ahmet Rıza.<sup>59</sup> In order to execute the law, a new proposal would be put forth on 8 November 1915 and an official decree on the subject would be published.<sup>60</sup> The salience of these organizational efforts is that official status was accorded to the newly established regional commissions to manage the abandoned properties.

Those who argue that there was no intent on the part of the Ottoman rulers to annihilate the Armenians attribute great importance to these detailed and extensive regulations. This evidence is problematic, however, because there is not one document to verify that the policy was ever actually realized. Until now not a single record has been found in the Ottoman Archives to show that any Armenian who was forcibly moved ever received compensation from the sale of his property.<sup>61</sup>

There is no evidence to show that the land, houses, seeds, and tools that the laws and regulations promised to the Armenians once they were resettled were ever actually granted. One would expect thousands of records in the archives to document how many Armenians were resettled, and in what areas, and the kinds of difficulties they encountered. One would also expect thousands of documents on the amount of income realized, how that income was returned, the resources distributed to the Armenians in the places where they were resettled, and so on. But there is not one piece of paper to document any of this. While the telegrams sent by the Interior Ministry to the regions where Armenians were deported, asking “How many people have been sent away, how many Armenians remain?” number in the hundreds, it cannot be a coincidence that there is not a single telegram asking about their condition in the places where they were moved.

It is not a coincidence, then, that there are hundreds of records showing who received the Armenian properties that were left behind, how they were sold, what income was realized from their sale, and what was done with that income. The reality reflected in these records is that the Ottoman administrators pursued a very

systematic and orderly policy on how to manage the property and possessions left behind by deported Armenians. The only principle that cannot be found in this systematic and orderly policy is any intention to return just compensation of these properties to their rightful owners, or to make an effort to deal with their problems of settlement once they were deported.

What the records show is that the Ottoman administrators used Armenian property in five principal ways.

### 1. To Meet the Needs of Newly Arrived Muslim Immigrants

Property left behind by the Armenians was distributed among the Muslims resettled in the areas formerly occupied by Armenians. This intention was openly declared in both the 30 May and the 15 June organizational proposals. To illustrate this, here are several communications sent to various regional offices at the time:

- A telegram sent by the Office of Tribal and Refugee Settlement (IAMM) of the Ministry of the Interior to the regional offices of Ankara, Adana, Aleppo, Hüdavendigâr, and others, along with the governor's offices of Izmit, Urfa, Canik, and others, about assigning Armenians' empty houses to the coming immigrants.<sup>62</sup>
- A telegram sent by the IAMM to the Presidency of the Trabzon Commission for Liquidation, directing that the refugees in the region be clothed with the goods left behind in the warehouses and stores of the region.<sup>63</sup>
- A telegram sent by the IAMM to the regional offices of Ankara, Adana, Aleppo, and others, along with the governors' offices of Izmit, Eskişehir, Urfa, and others, directing that refugees from the war zone, who were in need and without support, be settled into abandoned properties and that they be provided with property and provisions and placed in a variety of jobs.<sup>64</sup>

### 2. To Support the Growth of a Muslim Bourgeoisie

Much of the property left behind by the Armenians was distributed among Muslim individuals or companies in the region for the purpose of creating a Muslim bourgeois class, often without demand for payment in kind or on terms of very low payment or payment in installments. Here are some examples of such activities from the Cipher Office of the Interior Ministry:

- A telegram sent by the IAMM to Adana (Dörtüyl) and from the Directorate of General Security (EUM) to Diyarbakir regional offices states that "it may be suitable that the properties of Armenians owned prior to the deportation be sold and transferred at a reasonable exchange to the Muslim population."<sup>65</sup>
- Telegrams sent by the IAMM to the regional offices of Erzurum, Adana, Edirne, and others; to the governors' offices of Urfa, Izmit, Kayseri, Maraş, and others; and the Presidencies of the Commissions for Liquidation in Tekfurdağ, Adana, Aleppo, Gemlik, and others, states that, for the purpose of increasing the number of Muslim businesses, the properties left by Armenians should be transferred by way of issuance of shares that may be acquired by business owners and farmers and that, in furtherance of this aim, whatever needs to be done should be done so that intra-Muslim trade is thereby developed.<sup>66</sup>
- A telegram sent by the IAMM to the Presidency of the Commission for Liquidation in Trabzon states that "in order to transfer the business of artisans

and trade to Muslims, abandoned contents of stores should be sold to honorable young people by installment.”<sup>67</sup>

- A telegram sent by the IAMM to the Presidency of the Commission for Liquidation in the district of Ordu outlines how the businesses of Armenian artisans and tradesmen should be transferred to Muslims, and to whom they should be transferred.<sup>68</sup>
- A supplemental telegram sent to the regional offices of Edirne, Adana, Ankara, and others, along with the governors’ offices of Kayseri, Canik, and others and the Presidencies of the Commissions for Liquidation of Adana, Aleppo, Izmit, and others, contains instructions for the low-cost rental of factories, stores, and manufacturing facilities left by the Armenians to Muslim companies, so that they do not lie vacant and unused.<sup>69</sup>

### 3. To Meet Military Needs

One of the most important needs met by Armenian properties was that of the armed forces. Military needs were met either by commandeering of buildings, which were used by the military during their operations, or by selling commodities produced by the fields and lands abandoned by Armenians. It must be added that the policy of using abandoned property for military purposes was not confined to Armenians; the abandoned property of Greeks met the same fate. Here are a few examples of the communications sent in connection with military use of abandoned property:

- A telegram from the IAMM to the governor’s office of Urfa discusses the milling and processing of abandoned crops transferred from the Armenians and the consignment of the resulting commodities to the military.<sup>70</sup>
- A telegram sent by the Office of Communications, Ministry of War, to the governor’s office of Kütahya asking, for the purpose of being used by the military, for the price, type, and amount of property and goods.<sup>71</sup>
- A telegram sent by the AMMU to the governor’s office of Kala-ı Sultaniyeye (modern Çanakkale), in furtherance of an official report, discusses the delivery to the military, after appraisal, of the value of grapes from abandoned vineyards.<sup>72</sup>
- A telegram sent by the AMMU to the regional offices of Aydin and Hüdavendigâr, along with the governor’s office of Karasi and the Presidency of the Commissions for Liquidation at Bursa and Karasi, pertains to the delivery of the harvest of grapes and figs from abandoned Greek properties to the military.<sup>73</sup>
- A telegram sent by the AMMU to the governor’s office of Menteşe directs that the abandoned properties of Greeks, in accordance with the proposal, be consigned to the Muslim refugees (*muhacir*) and the army, with the exception of live animals, which should be distributed to the local population.<sup>74</sup>

### 4. To Cover the Expense of Deporting the Armenians

The records in my possession show that income received from the sale of property left behind by the Armenians was used to compensate the state for the expenses associated with deporting them.<sup>75</sup>

- A telegram sent by the IAMM to the Presidency of the Commission for the Administration of Abandoned Property in Aleppo concerns the use of part of the

income received from the sale of abandoned livestock for the deportation and maintenance of Armenians.<sup>76</sup>

- A telegram sent by the IAMM to the Director of Immigrants, Şükrü Bey, in Aleppo orders the use of the income derived from the profits of abandoned property left in Aleppo, along with the monies to be sent from Eskişehir, for the purposes of meeting the expenses of deporting and maintaining Armenians.<sup>77</sup>
- A telegram sent by the IAMM to the office of the deputy governor of Aleppo directs that the income from the profits of abandoned property be consigned to the finance treasury for the purpose of meeting the expenses of maintaining and deporting Armenians.<sup>78</sup>

Some of these documents discuss the fact that some of the state's expenses in connection with deporting Armenians could not be met and explicitly indicate that Armenian properties would have to be used for this purpose and that state expenses would therefore be compensated:

Since the maintenance of the Armenians deported from Zeytunlu cannot be appropriately met by the state alone, they must provide their own sustenance. Please specify the amount spent for their maintenance thus far and how many *kuruş* [units of Ottoman currency] are needed to continue the resettlement.<sup>79</sup>

## 5. For Various Other State Needs

In some circumstances, Armenian-owned buildings were used either as prisons or for various other state needs. Examples of communications regarding the need for prison facilities are the following:

- A telegram sent by the Directorate of State Real Estate and the Office of Prisons to the regional and governors' offices of Edirne, Adana, Ankara, İçel, Niğde, and others inquires about the presence of abandoned buildings large enough to be converted to prisons and their state of repair.<sup>80</sup>
- A telegram from the General Health Office (Sıhhiye Müdiriyeti Umumiyesi) to local offices in Erzurum, Bitlis, and Sivas provinces, among others, reserves buildings and health equipment left behind after the deportation of non-Muslims for the use of health offices in these regions.<sup>81</sup>

What all these documents tell us is that the Ottoman government had a systematic policy toward the properties left behind—those that could be saved from looting—which was in furtherance of specific purposes. After the property, and the income that could be derived from it, had been used for the state's various needs, there was nothing left to be returned to its lawful owners, the Armenians.

## Investigating the Deportation

One of the primary pieces of evidence used to support the notion that the deportation was not a means to annihilate the Armenians of Anatolia are the investigations initiated during World War I. According to this argument, there were isolated incidents of abuse by local officials and administrators, but “by forming special investigative commissions . . . the guilty were prosecuted by administrative courts.”<sup>82</sup> Similarly, a large proportion of the 1,397 people who were investigated are supposed eventually to have been prosecuted and sentenced to various punishments, including execution.<sup>83</sup> The figure of 1,397, originally given by Kamurân Gürün, has been

repeated in every source. This repetition of unsubstantiated points has become one of the main arguments of official Turkish state policy. But Gürün has neither published any single document in support of this figure nor even quoted from any document. Repeating Gürün's number, Halaçoğlu asserts that the state officials found guilty for their crimes "were tried in Military Tribunals and were punished by hard sentences," including the death penalty.<sup>84</sup> Halaçoğlu cites twelve different documents in support of his thesis, but only their catalogue numbers; he neither reproduces nor quotes any part of any of these telegrams. Presumably this is because none of the documents that he cites supports his claim. In fact, none of these documents contains the information that any officer was either tried or sentenced for any crime against Armenian life.

The same documents, however, do make it clear that the sensitivity not shown toward Armenians as human beings was nevertheless exhibited by the Ottoman government toward their property. The state, which intended to make systematic use of the abandoned property, made every effort to prevent it from falling into the hands of individual looters. Prosecutions were, in fact, initiated against those accused of looting or abusing authority over property. The above-mentioned telegrams cited by Halaçoğlu all deal with embezzlement and malfeasance related to how to handle the remaining property. A telegram sent to Mamuretülaziz province, granting permission for the interrogation of the *Kaymakam* Besni Edhem Kadri Bey, can be given as an example.<sup>85</sup> The great expenditure of effort to prevent individuals from laying claim to Armenian property points to the state's intention to keep all of that property as booty.

It was, in fact, because state officials saw abuse of abandoned property, and recognized that they were losing control of the looting, that a spate of telegrams was sent from the central office to the regional offices with orders to form investigative commissions. The fact that these commissions were formed is used as evidence to prove that the government did not promote a policy of murder and annihilation of Armenians, asserting that the state did what it could to take control of the abuses. On the contrary, however, a statement made in December 1918, after the Armistice, by an official who worked in one of the commissions reveals that the earlier commissions were formed as a result of pressure by foreign governments and that their authority was limited to investigating the looting and abuses associated with abandoned property. Additionally, the commissions were not granted the authority to investigate high-ranking officials, nor to consign them to the investigating authority of the military tribunals. In fact, the commissions often did not even bother to investigate the regions for which they were supposedly responsible. The same official noted that

unfortunately the reports were not taken seriously at the time. Since the commissions were formed with officials appropriate for basic investigations only, with limited authority, only low-ranking civil servants, middle-level suspects, were sent to the military tribunals for prosecution. As for the others, one could say, the reports which were submitted had absolutely no effect.<sup>86</sup>

The ineffectiveness of these commissions was confirmed by testimony from the wartime Grand Vizier, Said Halim Pasha. In his testimony before the Parliamentary Investigative Commission, known as the "Fifth Branch," which had been formed in November 1918, Halim Pasha stated that,

following the massacres of the Armenians, investigative commissions were formed. Pursuant to their duties, these commissions turned in their findings. Nevertheless, the Interior Ministry did not want to reveal the results of the investigation. Despite all my urgings and persistence, they obstinately dragged their feet concealing the real facts.

So long as Talât Pasha was part of the Interior Ministry, it was obvious that there would be nothing coming from the investigations.<sup>87</sup>

As a result, these commissions, formed solely for the purpose of lessening pressure by foreign states, were not even successful in fulfilling their limited authority to investigate abuses and irregularities.

Another reality revealed by an examination of the records of the Interior Ministry's Cipher Office is that there were investigations brought against state agents who saved Armenians, albeit through bribery, from the deportations. The following records show the extent to which the Ottoman government acted with fastidiousness on the subject of Armenian property, a quality lacking in its actions toward the Armenians themselves. The last two examples are of investigations of civil servants accused of helping Armenians to escape.

- (1) A telegram was sent from the IAMM to the Mamuretülaziz regional offices and office of the Presidency for the Commission for Abandoned Property about the investigation of the news that officials and gendarmerie in Malatya and Akçadağ had looted abandoned property worth about five million lira.<sup>88</sup>
- (2) A telegram was sent by the EUM to *Muhtar* (Elder) Bey, Inspector of Civil Servants for Ankara, regarding the need to travel to Izmit for the investigation of irregularities and abuses arising in connection with the sale of property belonging to Armenians who had been expelled from Izmit, Adapazarı, and Bahçecik.<sup>89</sup>
- (3) A telegram sent from the EUM to the governor's office of Diyarbakir relates to the establishment of a commission to investigate abuse and neglect by civil servants during the expulsion of the Armenians and to submit these to the Military Tribunal for prosecution.<sup>90</sup>
- (4) A telegram sent from the EUM to the Konya regional offices concerns the investigation and prosecution of the deportation official of Konya station, Mülazım Tahsin Efendi, who was accused of smuggling Armenians to Istanbul using fake identification.<sup>91</sup>
- (5) A telegram was sent from the EUM to the Aleppo regional office in connection with transferring files to the military tribunal of gendarmerie guards who, in exchange for money, had released some Armenians on the road to Der Zor from Istanbul and Aleppo.<sup>92</sup>

## **The Matter of Deportees from Istanbul and Izmir**

One of the other main arguments used to refute the idea that the deportation of Armenians in 1915 was carried out with the purpose of ultimately annihilating them that there were no deportations out of Istanbul or Izmir.<sup>93</sup> However, the records of the Cipher Office in the Interior Ministry give ample evidence that, in fact, there were deportations from both these cities. (It is important to clarify that when we speak of deportations from Istanbul in particular, in this instance, we are not referring to the intellectuals arrested on 24 April 1915; that first group had been expelled to Ayağ and Çankırı.)<sup>94</sup>

There are extensive reports of a large deportation, apart from the initial arrests of intellectuals, in British, American, and German sources that can be confirmed by similar reports in the Cipher Office of the Interior Ministry. Below are some summarized accounts of various archival sources that confirm deportations from Istanbul and Izmir.

The first record is presented in the “Blue Book” published in 1916 by Arnold Toynbee. It is a letter written by the Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul, dated 15 August 1915. Speaking about the deportees from Istanbul, he states that

now it's Constantinople's turn. People are in a panic waiting for their bad luck to descend upon them. Innumerable people have been arrested and sent outside of Istanbul. Most will certainly die. Up until now those who had been deported were born in the provinces but now it is the shop owners of Istanbul . . . no matter what it takes, we are going to fight to save the Armenians of Istanbul from this horrible destruction . . .<sup>95</sup>

In another letter from the Balkan division of the Dashnak organization, dated 18 October 1915, information is given that

after giving everything they had, including their shoes to the gendarmerie, thousands of poor Armenians who had been deported from Istanbul were sent walking from Izmit towards Konya. Anyone who was rich enough to have money for the train was cheated out of it by the gendarmerie, who took everything they had.<sup>96</sup>

The American missionary William S. Dodd, who was in Konya at the time, repeated similar information:

another method of deportation was in making people walk and it was applied to a great extent to the males who were deported from Istanbul. Their families were living in the [Anatolian] villages and towns and they had been working in Istanbul, living without their families. While the Turkish government engages in continuous propaganda over how they haven't deported anyone from Istanbul, they arrest thousands [in Istanbul] who are working to support their families and deport them.<sup>97</sup>

German records from the same period document extensive deportations from Istanbul. On 5 December 1915, the German foreign affairs secretary, Gottlieb von Jagow, relayed news he had received from the Armenian Sofia Dashnak Committee to Ambassador Metternich. According to Jagow,

contrary to their earlier promises, the Turkish government has started deporting the Armenians from Constantinople. Supposedly 10,000 have been deported thus far, and most of them have been killed in the hills of Izmit. There's a list of 70,000 that's been drawn up.

Jagow sent Metternich the directive that “if this information is correct, please engage in a forceful protest.”<sup>98</sup>

Metternich, who responded to this telegram on 7 December 1915, reported that, according to the Directorate of Security (EUM) in Istanbul, the number of Armenians deported was around 30,000:

Based upon reliable information which I urge you to keep secret, after the 30,000 who have been deported and 30,000 who have escaped during the past summer months, there have been 4,000 Armenians deported from Constantinople to Anatolia and of the 80,000 who continue to live in Constantinople, it is planned that they be dispatched piecemeal.<sup>99</sup>

What can be understood from these documents is that the deportations from Istanbul occurred episodically. The newly available documents in the BOA support the claim that there were, in fact, deportations from Istanbul and that they were carried out according to specific criteria. We can infer from these documents that there were four categories of deportees: unmarried males, the unemployed, those born outside of Istanbul,<sup>100</sup> and those accused of having been associated with Armenian organizations such as the Dashnaks.<sup>101</sup>

We can also confirm the Istanbul deportations based on data from the various Istanbul military tribunals held between 1918 and 1922. For example, in the seventh hearing of the trial known as the Nahiye Directors Case, an Armenian gave testimony as to his experience of being deported, along with 200 others, in a convoy in July and August 1915. Similar statements were made in another trial, against a police officer named Hidayet Efendi. In this case the prosecution was brought for the crime of “causing the deportation of unmarried Armenians in the neighborhood of Üsküdar and seizing the property of some by entering the homes.” The accused was charged with the deportation of close to 350 unmarried Armenian males from Üsküdar.<sup>102</sup>

Other telegrams reveal that the deportations from Istanbul went through Konya to Der Zor. In an EUM telegram to the Aleppo regional office appears the report that “the gendarmerie guards are being prosecuted by the Military Tribunals for releasing Armenians on the way to Der Zor from Istanbul and Aleppo in exchange for money.”<sup>103</sup> Other examples include the following:

- (1) A telegram from the EUM to Edirne, Adana, Aydin, Ankara, Konya, and other regional offices and the governors’ offices of Bolu, Kayseri, and others concerns the dispatch of Armenians deported from Istanbul and other areas through Konya, Karaman, Tarsus, Kars, Maraş, and Pazarcik to Der Zor.<sup>104</sup>
- (2) A telegram sent from EUM to the governor’s office of Izmit grants permission from Dersaadet (Istanbul) for the expulsion of Armenians in Istanbul who originate from Izmit and the surrounding areas.<sup>105</sup>

There are similar accounts of deportations from Izmir in both Ottoman and German archival sources. A telegram from the EUM to the governor’s office of Karahisar-i Sahip relates to the deportation of Armenians from Izmir by way of Diyarbakir en route to Mosul.<sup>106</sup> A German report from Izmir dated 10 November 1916 confirms that the deportation continued.<sup>107</sup> It is well known that the deportation of the Armenians from Izmir was stopped by the intervention of German General Liman von Sanders.<sup>108</sup> Significantly, there is further evidence of his intervention because it was backed fully by the German Foreign Office.<sup>109</sup>

## **Some Concluding Remarks**

The documents available in the BOA confirm the impression given by British, German, Austrian, and American sources that the intention of the CUP’s policy toward Armenians was clearly not to relocate and reestablish the Armenian communities of Anatolia. What was intended was, in the CUP’s own words, “[e]şâslı bir suretde hal ve faslı ile külliyyen izâlesi”: “the total liquidation [of the Armenian question] in a manner that is comprehensive and absolute.”<sup>110</sup> For this reason, a reassessment of the BOA documents is necessary and timely.

## **Notes**

1. The Prime Ministerial Archives, or BOA (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri) are located in Istanbul and Ankara. However, the documents of the Interior Ministry in Istanbul are of primary concern here, since the collection in Ankara covers only the Republic Period. (For more information on the Başbakanlık Arşivi, see [www.devletarsivleri.gov.tr](http://www.devletarsivleri.gov.tr)) Another important state archive related to this issue is that of the General Staff’s Military History and Strategic Studies Institute, or ATASE (Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüd Bakanlığı) in Ankara. The Istanbul archive is open to researchers, but the ATASE archive has many restrictions; if one is able to get access to these materials, it is only with great difficulty.



The administrators control the materials very strictly and, in most cases, deny the requested files in whole or in part.

2. Taner Akçam, "The Ottoman Documents and the Genocidal Policies of the Committee for Union and Progress (İttihat ve Terakki) toward the Armenians in 1915," *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 1 (2006): 127–48.
3. See Vahakn N. Dadrian, "Ottoman Archives and Denial of the Armenian Genocide," in *The Armenian Genocide: History, Politics, Ethics*, ed. Richard Hovannisian, 280–310 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 288–89, 294–95.
4. Some examples from the Presidential office of the Ottoman Archives of the Turkish Republic include *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler (1915–1920) [Armenians in Ottoman Documents, 1915–1920]* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Basımevi, 1995), [http://www.devletarsivleri.gov.tr/yayin/osmanli/o\\_b\\_ermeniler/obermeniler.htm](http://www.devletarsivleri.gov.tr/yayin/osmanli/o_b_ermeniler/obermeniler.htm) (accessed 10 October 2006); *Arşiv Belgelerine Göre Kafkaslar'da ve Anadolu'da Ermeni Mezâlimi [Armenian Atrocities and Massacre in the Caucasus and Anatolia Based on Archival Sources]*, 4 vols. (vol. 1: 1906–1918; vol. 2: 1919; vol. 3: 1919–1920; vol. 4: 1920–1922) (Ankara: Başbakanlık Basımevi, 1995–1998), <http://www.devletarsivleri.gov.tr/yayin/osmanli/ermeniler/ermeniler2/ermeniler2.htm> (accessed 10 October 2006); *Ermeniler Tarafından Yapılan Katliam Belgeleri [Documents on Massacre Perpetrated by Armenians]*, 2 vols. (vol. 1: 1914–1919; vol. 2: 1919–1921) (Ankara: Başbakanlık Basımevi, 2001).
5. We know of the existence of various telegrams or documents that are mentioned in other sources, such as newspaper articles and memoirs, or exist in other archives, such as the German archives or the archives of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, but we do not know the whereabouts of these documents. An example is the different telegrams of Tahsin Bey, Governor of Erzurum, to Talât Pasha (May–June 1915), the copies of which he personally handed to an inquiry commission established in November 1918. Before his interrogation, Tahsin Bey told journalists that "I shall respond to inquires with documents and proofs" (*Zhamanak*, 12 December 1918). Tahsin repeated this information (that he sent different telegrams to Istanbul) on several occasions (for example, in the Harput trial in the second session, *Yeni Gazete*, 3 August 1919). Tahsin spoke of the content of some of these telegrams to the German Consul in Erzurum, Scheubner Richter (PA-AA/Bo.Kons./Band 169 and R 14088, report of Scheubner Richter, 22 June, 5 August 1915). Copies of some of these telegrams are available in the archives of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem (series 17, dossier H, nos. 519–20). Another example of cataloging that creates mistrust is the document published in *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler (1915–1920)*. Document no. 71 contains valuable information concerning the annihilation of the Armenian population; the catalog number of this document is 54/406, yet no such catalog number exists in the Ottoman archival catalogs; the catalog skips from 54/405 to 54/407. In other words, this document has been suspiciously excluded from the Ottoman archival catalogs. If the General Director of State Archives had not accidentally published this document in *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler*, we would not know of its existence. From these examples we can surmise that there are many documents, destroyed or not, which have been cataloged but not included in the archival catalogs. However, there is still hope that these documents will emerge over time through the ongoing process of cataloging Ottoman materials. Previously the telegram 28 September 1915 from Reşit Bey, governor of Diyarbakir to Talât Pasha, notifying him that 120,000 Christians had been deported from the province, was in this lost category. However, I found it in a catalog (Interior Ministry, Directorate of General Security, known as the Emniyet Umum Müdürlüğü [EUM], Second Department [BOA/DH/EUM 2. Şube]) recently made available to scholars in Istanbul.
6. We must add, however, that this picture of the Ottoman archives belongs to the past. Working conditions in the BOA in Istanbul have improved enormously in the past few years. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff, and specifically Mustafa Budak, for their generous help and openness during my last visit. This is a very hopeful

development, and all scholars interested in the period should use this new opportunity to examine these materials.

7. E.g., Dadrian, "Ottoman Archives," 280.
8. For more information on the demands of the German government, which began after June 1915, see Wolfgang Gust, *Der Völkermord an den Armeniern 1915/16, Dokumente aus dem Politischen Archiv des deutschen Auswärtigen Amts* (Springer: zu Klampen Verlag, 2005), 76–87.
9. PA-AA/R 14088, report of Ambassador Ernst Langenburg Hohenlohe, 25 September 1915. For the telegrams sent by Talât Pasha and the responses sent by the consulates, see Gust, *Der Völkermord*, 306–7J. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations to English are my own.
10. A.A. Türkei 159/3, vol. 4, A24679, report of Count Wolff-Metternich, 16 September 1916.
11. Haus und Hof Archiv, PA 12, carton 209, no. 72, report of Count Pallavicini, 3 September 1915; and PA 12, carton 209, no. 73, report of Count Pallavicini, 8 September 1915.
12. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 54-A/252/1333.N.22, telegram from Interior Minister Talât to the provinces of Erzurum, Adana, Ankara, Bitlis, Aleppo, Diyarbakir, Sivas, Trabzon, Mamüretülaziz, and Van and the districts of Urfa, Canik, and Maraş, dated 4 August 1915.
13. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 54/20/1333.L.4, telegram from Interior Minister Talât to the governors of Erzurum, Adana, Ankara, Bitlis, Aleppo, Hüdavendigâr, Diyarbakir, Sivas, Trabzon, Konya, Mamüretülaziz, and Van and the districts of Urfa, İzmit, Canik, Karesi, Karahisar-i Sahib, Maraş, Niğde, and Eskiş, dated 15 August 1915.
14. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 54-A/271/1333.N.23, telegram from Interior Minister Talât to the governor of Adana, İsmail Hakkı Bey, dated 4 August 1915; BOA/DH/ŞFR, 54-A/272, 1333.N.23, telegram from Interior Minister Talât to the district of Maraş, dated 4 August 1915.
15. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 54-A/384/1333.N.30, telegram from Interior Minister Talât to the governments of Adana and Aleppo, dated 11 August 1915.
16. BOA/DH/Ş, 55/292/1333.L.18, telegram from the Interior Ministry to the governments of Ankara, Konya, İzmit, Adana, Maraş, Aleppo, Zor, Sivas, Kütahya, Karesi, Niğde, Mamüretülaziz, Diyarbakir, Karahisar-ı Sahib, Erzurum, and Kayseri, dated 29 August 1915.
17. DE/PA-AA/Bo.Kons./Band 170, note from Göppert, chargé d'affaires of the German Embassy in Constantinople, to German Foreign Office, dated 31 August 1915.
18. BOA/DH/ŞFR/55-A/23/1333.L.22, coded telegram from Interior Minister Talât to the government of Adana, dated 2 September 1915.
19. BOA/DH/ŞFR, telegram from the Interior Ministry to the district of Maraş, dated 24 October 1915.
20. DE/PA-AA/Bo.Kons./Band 170, telegram from Consular Officer Büge in Adana, 10 September 1915. For the full English text see <http://www.armenocide.net/>, document no. 1915-09-10-DE-011.
21. Taha Toros, ed., "Eski Nafia Nazırı Ali Münif Yegane'nin Hatıraları, İstibdattan Cumhuriyet'e [The Memoirs of Ali Münif Yeğena, Former Minister of Public Works, from Despotism to the Republic]," *Akşam Gazetesi*, 26 October–21 December 1955, s. 47.
22. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 40/17/1332.CA20, coded telegram from Talât Pasha to the governor's office of Tekfurdağ, dated 16 April 1915.
23. İsmail Hamî Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi* (Istanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1961), 448. This and the following two examples are taken from Vahakn N. Dadrian, "The Pitfalls of a 'Balanced' Analysis: A Response to Ronald Grigor Suny," *Armenian Forum* 1, 2 (Summer 1998): 73–130, 125.
24. *Sabah*, 2/15 May 1915.
25. *Hadisat*, 5 November 1918.
26. Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, *Siyasi Anılar* (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 1976), 148.
27. Falih Rıfki Atay, *Zeytindağı* (Istanbul: Bates A.Ş., 1981), 24–25.

28. Halil Mentеш e, *Osmanlı Mebusan Meclisi Reisi Halil Mentешe'nin Anıları* (Istanbul: Hürriyet Vakfı Yayınları, 1986), 216; Henry Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1918), 140–45.
29. As transcribed by V.N. Dadrian, "Documentation of the Armenian Genocide in German and Austrian Sources," in *Genocide: A Critical Bibliographic Review*, vol. 2, ed. Israel W. Charny, 77–125 (New York: Facts on File Publications, 1991), 109–10.
30. İlhan Selçuk, *Yüzbaşı Selahattin'in Romanı*, vol. 1 (Istanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 1993), 292.
31. The 5–10% regulations are mentioned in a letter from the General Staff to the Interior Ministry dated 26 May 1915, published in Kamuran Gürün, *Ermeni Dosyası* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1983), 277.
32. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 63/188/1334.B.1, coded telegram from Interior Ministry, Directorate of Tribes and Immigrants (AMMU), to the provinces and districts of Ankara, Konya, Kayseri, Niğde, etc., dated 4 May 1916.
33. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 56/290/1333.ZA.26, telegram from Interior Minister Talât to Ankara, dated 1 October 1915.
34. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 55/59/1333.L.6, telegram from Interior Ministry to the district of Antalya, dated 17 August 1915; this document is also published in *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler*, 81.
35. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 72/83/1335.RA.30, telegram from Interior Minister Talât to Canik district, dated 22 January 1916.
36. BOA/DH/Ş, 54/315/1333.Ş22, telegram from IAMM to the provinces of Adana, Erzurum, Bitlis, Aleppo, Diyarbakir, etc., dated 5 July 1915; BOA/DH/Ş, 54/308/1333.Ş22, telegram from Interior Ministry to the Zor district, 5 July 1915. The Office of Tribal and Refugee Settlement (IAMM) of the Ministry of the Interior was established at the beginning of 1914 within the Ministry of the Interior, and transformed by a law passed on 14 March 1916. The new office had expanded authority and comprised many sub-offices; it would grow in power and influence as the years wore on. This new office was known as the Directorate of Tribes and Immigrants (Aşair ve Muhacirin Müdüriyet Umumiyesi, or AMMU).
37. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 54/413/Ş29, 12 July 1915.
38. DE/PA-AA/R14091/MF7145/56–60, report of Walter Rössler, German Consul in Aleppo, to Prime Minister of the Reich Bethmann Hollweg, dated 27 April 1916.
39. Kemal H. Karpat, *Ottoman Population 1830–1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 188–90; Justin McCarthy, *Population History of the Middle East and the Balkans* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2002), 174–210.
40. It must be added, however, that we need more research on the local level to find out how this 5–10% regulation was implemented, especially in some eastern provinces. There are strong indications, for example, that in some regions the entire Armenian population was evacuated and that in others the inhabitants were massacred on the spot, so that there were no deportations at all. This is an important indicator that the Armenian Genocide was not implemented according to a single model. More research at the local level is needed to paint a comprehensive picture.
41. *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler*, 69 (Record 71).
42. The German consulate reports cover these events. The governor of Diyarbakir, Reşit Bey, had the gendarmerie execute the massacres: "If precautions aren't taken, the 'riff raff' will start massacring Christians as well," reported the governor of Mardin, who was in Diyarbakir at the time. These news reports from the consular offices were transmitted to the German Embassy, which then immediately contacted Talât Pasha, demanding an explanation. In his telegram Talât describes events in terms of those used in the German reports. What he refers to as "public opinion" most likely was these demands by the Germans. See PA-AA/Bo.Kons./Bd. 169, reports from Walter Holstein, German Consul in Mosul, dated 10 and 15 July 1915; statement from the German Embassy to Talât (in French), dated 12 July 1915.

43. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 54-A/248/1333.N.21, telegram from the Directorate of General Security (EUM) of the Ministry of the Interior to Reşit Bey, Governor of Diyarbekir, dated 2 August 1915.
44. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 56/315/1333.ZA.27, telegram from the Directorate of General Security (EUM) of the Ministry of the Interior to Reşit Bey, Governor of Diyarbekir, dated 6 October 1915.
45. *Hadisat*, 8 February 1919.
46. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 60/288/1334.R.5, telegram from Interior Minister Talât in response to an inquiry from the Ankara regional office, dated 12 January 1915.
47. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 54-A/128/1333.N.13, telegram from EUM, Ministry of the Interior, to the Governor of Mamuretülaziz, dated 26 June 1915.
48. *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, 9 December 1948, 78 U.N.T.S. 277, art. 2(e).
49. See note 36.
50. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 63/142/1334.C.26, telegram from the Interior Ministry, AMMU, to the regional offices of Adana, Erzurum, Konya, Trabzon, Izmit, Canik, Urfa, and others and the governor's offices of Izmit, Canik, Eskişehir, Karahisar-i Sahip, Kayseri, and others.
51. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 59/150/1334.S.21, coded telegram from the Interior Ministry, IAMM, to the governor's office of Niğde, dated 30 December 1915.
52. BOA/DH/ŞFR., 63/60/1334.C.16, coded telegram from the Interior Ministry, IAMM, to the governor's office of Kastamonu, dated 20 April 1916.
53. For more detailed information see Taner Akçam, *A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006), ch. 3.
54. For the entire text see Azmi Süslü, *Ermeniler ve 1915 Tehcir Olayı* (Van: Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi Rektörlüğü Yayını, Yayın No. 5, 1990), 111–13.
55. For the complete text of the statement sent to the ministries mentioned, see *ibid.*, 115–16.
56. “Ahval-ı Harbiye ve Zaruret-i Fevkalade-i Siyasiye dolayısıyla Mahall-i Ahire Nakilleri İcra Edilen Ermenilere Ait Emval ve Emlak ve Arazinin Keyfiyet-i İdaresi Hakkında Talimatname,” *Askeri Tarih Belgeleri Dergisi* 31, 81 (December 1982): 149–62.
57. For the various statements issued by the Interior Ministry to the regional offices, see Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *Ermeni Tehciri ve Gerçekler (1914–1918)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2001), 68–69.
58. For more information on the subject see Hilmar Kaiser, “1915–1916 Ermeni Soykırımı Sırasında Ermeni Mülkleri, Osmanlı Hukuku ve Milliyet Politikaları,” in *İmparatorluktan Cumhuriyete Türkiye’de Etnik Çatışması*, ed. Erik Jan Zürcher, 123–57 (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2005).
59. Law No. 2303, titled *Âhir Mahallere Nakledilen Eşhâsm Emvâl ve Düyûn ve Matlûbât-ı Metrukesi Hakkında Kanun-i Muvakkat*, was published in the *Takvim-i Vekayi* on 14 Eylül 1331 (27 September 1915). For the debates in the Assembly see Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, *Türk İnkılabı Tarihi*, vol. 3, pt. 3 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1983), 45–46.
60. Hilmar Kaiser, “1915–1916 Ermeni Soykırımı,” 142.
61. It is worth noting here that when Yusuf Halaçoğlu, director of the Turkish Historical Institute, asserts in *Ermeni Tehciri*, 69, that “the compensation received on the sale of goods by the Commission for Abandoned Property was returned to their rightful owners,” he provides no evidence to support his statement. Halaçoğlu, while citing document numbers of telegrams from the Cipher Office in support of his argument, never actually quotes what is in those telegrams. As I show below, the very documents cited by Halaçoğlu prove just the opposite of what he asserts: these telegrams clearly indicate that the revenues from Armenian properties that were sold were *not* used to compensate the Armenians after they had been resettled; in fact, the income generated by the sale of those properties was to be used to compensate the government for the expenses associated with deporting the Armenians in the first place.
62. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 65/37/1334.17, 19 June 1916.
63. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 61/247/1334.R.28, 4 March 1916.

64. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 63/261/1334.B.7, 10 May 1916.
65. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 54/346/1333.Ş24, 4 September 1915.
66. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 59/239/1334.S.29, 6 January 1916.
67. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 60/129/1334.RA.20, 26 January 1916.
68. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 60/277/1334.R3, 8 February 1916.
69. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 64/39/1334.B.13, 16 May 1916.
70. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 54/382.Ş.27, 29 June 1916.
71. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 55-A/143/1333.L.28, 8 September 1915.
72. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 67/106/1334.L.27, 27 August 1916. For the transition from IAMM to AMMU see footnote 36.
73. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 68/178/1334.Z.6, 4 October 1916.
74. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 73/51/1335.RA.17, 11 January 1917.
75. As mentioned above, these are the same telegrams used by Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *Ermeniler Tehcir*. These documents show quite openly that the state used the income to cover its expenses for “deportation and maintenance.”
76. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 57/342/1333.Z.30, 8 November 1915.
77. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 57/348/1333.Z.30, 8 November 1915.
78. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 57/349/1333.Z.30, 8 November 1915.
79. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 52/292/1333C.24, telegram from Talât Pasha to the Konya regional office, dated 9 May 1915.
80. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 64/18/1334.B.11, 14 May 1916.
81. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 54-A/218/1333.N.20, dated 1 August 1915.
82. Gürün, *Ermeni Dosyası*, 288.
83. Ibid.
84. Halaçoğlu, *Ermeniler Tehcir*, 62 and n. 205.
85. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 61/165/1334.R.26, 2 March 1916. For another example of a similar crime, see BOA/DH/ŞFR, 59/196/1334.S.27, telegram from the Interior Ministry, EUM, to the district of Eskişehir, dated 4 January 1916.
86. *Ileri*, 20 December 1918.
87. Quoted in Osman Selim Kocahanoğlu, *İttihat ve Terakki'nin Sorgulanması ve Yargılanması* (Istanbul: Temel Yayınları, 1998), 84.
88. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 55/255/1333.L.15, 26 August 1915.
89. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 55/344/1333.L.20, 31 August 1915.
90. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 56/179/1333.ZA.17, 25 September 1915.
91. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 66/167/1334.L.8, 8 August 1916.
92. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 66/43/1334.N.19, 20 July 1916.
93. This is repeated in almost all works on the subject. Some examples are *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler*, 9; Gürün, *Ermeni Dosyası*, 312; Halaçoğlu, *Ermeni Tehciri*, 79; Yusuf Halaçolu, *Ermenilerin Suriye'ye Nakli: Sürgün Mü, Soykırım mı ? Belgeler* (Turkish Historical Society), <http://www.ttk.org.tr/yayinlar/fulltext/kitap/01.pdf> (accessed 11 October 2006), 12.
94. For some related documents, see *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler*, 24–25, 26, 27, 29 (Records 8, 11, 12, 15).
95. James Bryce and Arnold Toynbee, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire 1915–1916, Documents Presented to Viscount Grey of Falloden by Viscount Bryce*, uncensored ed. by Ara Sarafian (Princeton, NJ: Gomidas Institute, 2000), 55 (Record no. 7). Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul, letter dated 2/15 August 1915.
96. Ibid., 65 (Record no. 11). Letter written by the Balkan Division of the Dashnaksutyun Committee and transcribed by the Foreign Ministry in Washington to the American Relief Committee.
97. William S. Dodd, “Report of Conditions Witnessed in the Armenian Deportations in Konia, Turkey,” in *“Turkish Atrocities”: Statements of American Missionaries on the Destruction of Christian Communities in Ottoman Turkey 1915–1917*, comp. James L. Barton, 143–50 (Ann Arbor, MI: Gomidas Institute, 1998), 147.

98. DE/PA-AA/Bo.Kons./171, telegram from Jagow to Metternich, dated 5 December 1915.
99. DE/PA-AA/R14089, telegram from Ambassador Wolff-Metternich to Bethmann Hollweg, Prime Minister of the Reich, dated 7 December 1915.
100. Two of the many examples are BOA/DH/EUM 2. Şube, 15/16/1334.S.20; and BOA/DH/EUM 2. Şube, 15/57/1334.S.18, cited in note 5 above.
101. BOA/DH/EUM 2. Şube, 15/4/1334.M.26, cited in note 5 above.
102. For more information about the Hidayet Efendi trial see *Alemdar*, 17 June 1919, 19 June 1919, and 9 July 1919; *Yeni Gazete*, 25 June 1919 and 16 July 1919.
103. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 66/43/1334.N.19, 20 July 1916.
104. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 65/95/1334.Ş24, 26 July 1916.
105. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 54-A/343/1333.N.28, 11 July 1915.
106. BOA/DH/ŞFR, 58-247/1334.M.30, 8 December 1915.
107. PA-AA/BoKon174/MF7267/05-07, 12, report from Graf von Spee, German Consul in Smyrna, to the German Embassy in Istanbul, dated 10 November 1916.
108. For Liman von Sanders' personal report see PA-AA/BoKon174/MF7267/13-18, 21–22; R14094/MF7157/8, 21, 24–26, report from Sanders to the German Embassy in Istanbul, 12 November 1916.
109. PA-AA/R14094/MF7156/88, memo from the Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs to the Embassy in Constantinople, 14 November 1916.
110. Letter from Ministry of the Interior to the office of the Grand Vizier, dated 26 May 1915. For more information about this document see Akçam, "Ottoman Documents."

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