

THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE:  
NEW SOURCES AND RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

UĞUR ÜMİT ÜNGÖR

I. INTRODUCTION

The Armenian genocide is widely documented in official and unofficial documentary collections, private archives, parliamentary proceedings, memoirs, party protocols, consular correspondence, manuscripts, diaries, maps, photo collections, oral histories, and many other sources in Turkey. The bulk of these primary sources exists in the capitals of the states that chronologically ‘surrounded’ the genocide, most notably the Ottoman imperial archives in Istanbul and the Turkish Republican archives in Ankara. This corresponds to an enormous corpus of source material that is mostly stored in the official state archives in these cities. Significant sections of these archival collections have been published, and both of them are open for research, albeit under slightly differing conditions. Several libraries, too, bear importance for the study of this episode and need to be used as well.

The Ottoman archival material (kept in Istanbul) is overwhelming and encompasses material up to and including the end of the First World War. Intra-state correspondence between various bureaucratic stations generated a large amount of material such as reports, memoranda, and telegrams. It includes both top-down orders and bottom-up reporting. In 1994 a relatively arbitrary selection of these documents was published.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, the collections ‘Internal Ciphers’ (*Dahiliye Şifre*) and ‘General Security’ (*Emniyet-i Umumiye*) deserve particular attention, provided they are handled with the necessary care and source criticism. The Turkish Republican Archives in Ankara are also voluminous and relevant for this study. The proclamation of the Republic in 1923 saw the transfer of Ottoman state institutions to the new Anatolian capital and the further bureaucratization of the state. The research conducted in these archives offers an intimate view into the functioning of a one-party dictatorship.

A wealth of other sources can be tapped when studying Young Turk population policies.<sup>2</sup> These include, for example, newspapers, the ones of the armistice era (1918-1923) being particularly useful. In these years, the atmosphere of freedom brought veritable torrents of articles on the violence of the regime. The wartime newspapers that were tolerated by the Young Turk regime are useful insofar as they offer a glimpse of how the regime propagated its ideology to the masses. Memoirs of contemporaries are a relatively unreliable but nonetheless indispensable source of places, times, persons, and stories that can show how subjective perceptions of the world by political

elites shaped their attitudes and policies. These memoirs often contain information lost or censored in the etiquette of official correspondence, but most are also ridden with apologia. There is a large body of memoir literature of Young Turks, various European diplomats involved in Turkey, Armenian survivors of the genocide, and various nationalist activists. Furthermore, since in this period Eastern Turkey was a peasant society consisting mostly of illiterate villagers, there are few memoirs that describe the lives of these locals.

This article attempts to achieve two main objectives. First, it will canvass a selection of the extant Turkish Republican sources on the Armenian genocide. This will consist of a brief overview of the material, including examples of typical documents relevant to the destruction of Ottoman Armenians. Second, it will indicate some research directions, with a particular focus on existing problems in the current comparative genocide research. That part will consist of five sections: rank-and-file sources, oral history, provincial archives, property records, and the Interior Ministry archives.

## II. THE REPUBLICAN ARCHIVES IN ANKARA

The Republican Archives in Ankara (*Başbakanlık Cumhuriyet Arşivi*) are by far the most pertinent collection of historical documentation for modern Turkey. The appropriate collections are that of the Interior Ministry, as well as the Office of the Prime Minister, in particular, the ‘Catalogue of Cabinet Decisions’ (*Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları Kataloğu*), ‘Catalogue of the Prime Minister’s General Directorate of Proceedings’ (*Başbakanlık Mualemât Genel Müdürlüğü Kataloğu*), ‘Catalogue of the General Directorate of Land and Settlement’ (*Toprak İskân Genel Müdürlüğü Kataloğu*), ‘Catalogue of the Documents of the Republican People’s Party’ (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Evrakı Kataloğu*), and others. In this section I will map the extent of potentially relevant material and provide examples of files germane to (aspects of) the genocide.<sup>3</sup>

Before discussing some of the sources, a fundamental problem needs to be addressed. Historians have argued that significant amounts of source material in dictatorships are often destroyed, censored, culled, purified, or separated into sealed depots. This is generally as much a process of actively destroying incriminating evidence as it is of latent silencing in the making of sources, the creation of archives, and the narrating by contemporaries.<sup>4</sup> There is no reason to assume that the Young Turk regime was an exception, in fact there is compelling evidence that a series of serious destructions of source materials occurred. Not only was the scale of these processes of silencing and destruction considerable, but the period and type of documents that were destroyed pertain to key moments in the crucial period 1915-1938.<sup>5</sup> That the Armenian genocide was constitutive to the establishment of the Turkish nation state was airbrushed from history. The construction of a hegemonic nationalist historiography after 1923 compounded this process. But even though the Republic as a cultural system has been built on the absence of Armenians in

public memory and historical texts, traces of the genocide can be found in the post-1923 period.

Why would the Republican archives even be relevant for the 1915 genocide? After all, the genocide ended somewhere between 1916 and 1918, and Ankara only holds material after 1919. There are several ways of tackling this problem. First and foremost, societies that have experienced an episode of genocide bear the scars of the violence long after the immediate end of the violence. Few post-genocide societies manage to pass through a process of transition and reasonable closure. Most, however, struggle with its consequences for many years after the end of the killing and often carry the risk of recidivism. Serbia, Algeria, Iraq, Russia, Congo, and perhaps the triangle Turkey-Azerbaijan-Armenia are examples of the latter kind. For this reason, various societal consequences of the genocide can be assessed: the lives of genocide orphans, converts, survivors, or the afterlife of the perpetrators, or the social mobility that the genocide offered to ordinary Muslims. In this section I will use Republican archival material to shed light on three neglected aspects of the post-genocide era: survivors, perpetrators, and the politics of censorship.

### ***Survivors***

Armenian survivors of the genocide can be roughly grouped into converts and non-converts. During World War I, the CUP organized the forced conversion to Islam of countless numbers of Armenians and Syrians. These conversions have been characterized as: ‘voluntary’ conversions of individuals in the initial stages of the 1915 persecutions; selection of individual Armenians by individual Muslim hosts for absorption into Muslim households; distribution of Armenians to Muslim families by government agencies; and the use of government-sponsored orphanages as a direct means of assimilating Armenian children. As a consequence of this quadripartite policy, many Armenians were more or less forcibly converted to Islam.<sup>6</sup> Another aspect of this strategy was launched when, in the early winter of 1915, Talaat initiated a policy of forcibly marrying Armenian girls to Muslim men. These strategies denote the absence of biologicistic-racialist definitions of the target group and show that the indelibility of Ottoman-Armenian group identity could be tampered with. A cultural explanation for this porousness would be that: “Traditional society in the Middle East still looked upon women and children as chattel, persons lacking political personality and of transmutable ethnic identity. The cultural values of children and females could be erased or reprogrammed. Genetic continuity was a male proposition.”<sup>7</sup>

The Armenian response to the government’s conversion policies was ambivalent. It ranged from fearful acquiescence to adamant resistance. Many Armenians converted, some individually, and some families or villages collectively. Converts who survived the genocidal persecution often managed to live in Turkey for several decades, some migrating to Istanbul or Western

Europe. The famous story of Fethiye Çetin's grandmother must stand for tens of thousands of others.<sup>8</sup> The lives of these people merit attention not only for the study of the genocide itself. The existence of these people has also been important for the post-war history of Eastern Turkey: some converts lived in their villages and repressed their Armenian identities, whereas others lived as crypto-Christians. Openly living as an Armenian Christian was full of hardship, for, in later years, practising Christianity in the eastern provinces was made virtually impossible by the authorities.

This is where the Republican materials enter the debate. It becomes clear from Interior Ministry correspondence that the government increasingly distrusted the converts. At first, it targeted individual converts. For example, in September 1936 the authorities tracked down an Armenian named Nazif, who was working as a tailor in Diyarbakir city. According to the government, he had "converted to avoid the deportation" (*tehcirden kurtulmak için ihtida ettiği*), had sent his son Mehmet Reşad to Marseille for higher education, and his other son, Abdülhalim Kemal, had traveled to Aleppo and Qamishli. Apparently, transnational ties were considered suspicious. Nazif's entire family, including his four other sons, his wife, a daughter, a daughter-in-law, and his nurse were ordered deported to Çorum, a town north of Ankara. The order was signed by Kemal Atatürk.<sup>9</sup> Examples such as these, of individual and family deportations can easily be multiplied. A more radical solution followed on 8 July 1943, when the Young Turk government ordered all convert families deported from the border provinces, for "order and security".<sup>10</sup> In this sweeping decree, the Young Turks' anti-Armenian sentiments acquired an essentialist, racialized character: Armenians were now seen as unchanging and unchangeable in their supposed disloyalty. In the Young Turk mind, even sincere conversion and voluntary assimilation into the Turkish nation could not shake this conviction. Only more research would elucidate how the Kemalist regime had intimate knowledge of Armenian converts. How can we understand this apparent continuity? Was this information based on Talaat's 1915 order to keep detailed records of all converts? A thorough inquiry into the Republican materials might provide reliable answers to this question.<sup>11</sup>

From the Ankara materials one can also learn a great deal about Young Turk attitudes towards Armenian survivors who had not converted but had simply escaped through the murderous meshes of the genocide. Needless to say, the decades of Young Turk rule were very difficult times, most of all for Anatolian Armenians who had not converted yet survived. For example, internal correspondence reveals that the crisis of Hatay (Alexandretta) province was partly induced by Kemalist apprehension of a purported increase of Armenian settlements in that area. The intelligence reports explicitly mention that these settlements are intended to "reduce the density of Turkish Muslims" (*Türk müslüman yoğunluğunu azaltmak*).<sup>12</sup> These reports fueled existing fears of ethnoterritorial demographic dilution, for which Armenians

were often blamed. The regime leveled even stronger and more categorical accusations against Armenians when it came to the Kurdish resistance movements of 1925 in Diyarbekir, 1930 in Ararat, and 1937 in Dersim. Various reports indicate that the regime believed that (crypto-)Armenians were the real organizers of those movements, puppet masters who operated clandestinely behind the scenes to stir ‘rebellion’ in the east. This mindset reduced the complexity of the conflicts to an international Armenian conspiracy.<sup>13</sup>

These examples may count as typical for the tense political atmosphere of interwar Europe. But a new development was the reappearance of episodic state violence against Armenian civilians. On the night of 10 April 1929, the Armenian priest Yusuf Emirkhanian was murdered in his house in Diyarbekir city. When British diplomats inquired about the homicide, they characterized the Turkish government’s answer as “official hypocrisy”, because the government denied that the Diyarbekir police had taken part in the murder. The local authorities in Diyarbekir then arrested and violently mistreated Emirkhanian’s wife out of revenge for having appealed to foreign officials. The murderers were never found.<sup>14</sup> The killing of a prominent community leader and the ensuing indifference and impunity sent shockwaves through the tiny remaining and traumatized Armenian community of Diyarbekir. These archives can illuminate the ebb and flow of the Armenian community in the early Turkish Republic. Moreover, a closer look at this important homicide demonstrates that the murderers had emerged from the network of the genocide perpetrators, especially the Pirinçizâde and Müftüzâde dynasties. Only 14 years earlier, dozens of young and middle-aged men of both these families of Muslim notables had collaborated in the destruction of their own Armenian neighbors. Thus, the Republican archives may offer a useful insight into the lives of the perpetrators after the genocide.

### ***Perpetrators***

A second relevant aspect of the genocide one can encounter while conducting research in the Republican archives is the life of the perpetrators afterwards. In the bland bureaucratic correspondence of the 1920s and 30s one often comes across the names of men that struck terror into the hearts of Armenians in 1915. The murderers have blended into society as local mayors, school teachers, craftsmen, imams, doctors, businessmen, and government officials, continuing their lives in apparent normality. Republican archival material offers an interesting if disturbing window into their lives after genocide. It overcomes the historical break points of 1918, 1923, and 1934, helps knit the biographies together, and renders the past a less foreign country.

Historians have propounded the thesis that a clear continuity can be observed between the first Young Turk regime of 1913-18 (the Committee of Union and Progress) and the second of 1919-50 (the Republican People’s Party). The Republican archives offer material to assess how the cadre of the

second regime dealt with the crimes of the first, including the genocide. It becomes clear that the Kemalists offered full impunity to the perpetrators, rehabilitated their reputations, and widely reimbursed their families, often specifically with Armenian “abandoned property” (*emvâl-ı metruke*). For example, the family of district governor of Muş, Servet Bey, who in 1915 had annihilated the Armenians of that city, was awarded a composite package of Armenian property. The family of Cemal Azmi, the murderous governor of Trabzon, was also assigned considerable “reparation”, specifically from Armenian properties.<sup>15</sup> Hafız Abdullah Avni, a hotel owner who had collaborated in the genocide in Erzincan, was executed for his crimes in 1920 by the Istanbul tribunal. His wife Hatice Hanım was compensated with a house and a field from the Armenian villages of Şuhe and Kani.<sup>16</sup> The fanatical district governor of Boğazlıyan, Mehmed Kemal Bey, had left behind a family in Yozgat. It received an apartment and a house from the available Armenian property in that area.<sup>17</sup> Dr. Bahaeddin Şakir Bey’s family received a house in the up-market Şişli district of Istanbul.<sup>18</sup> And the list goes on and on: the files contain details on the recipients, as well as the nature, size, and location of the property.

A striking example of these types of compensation efforts concerns governor Dr. Mehmed Reshid (1873-1919), possibly the most zealous executioner during the genocide. Reshid was governor of Diyarbakir and was responsible for a veritable “reign of terror” in 1915 and the pillage of enormous amounts of property of Armenians. In September of that year, he was notably rebuked by Talaat for overshooting the norm and targets of the genocide. Reshid was arrested after the war and committed suicide, two days before his 47th birthday.<sup>19</sup> He left behind a family that took on the surname Şahingiray, derived from Reshid’s *nom de guerre* in the CUP (Şahin Giray – after the last Khan of Crimea).

In the summer of 1928, the Ministry of Economy allocated the following property to his wife Mazlume Hanım: two shops, with a total worth of up to 15,000 Turkish Lira, located on the Cadde-i Kebir,<sup>20</sup> numbers 105 and 187. The shops had been confiscated from the deported Armenians Anton and Abraham and their wives Sirpoohi and Astineh. Reshid’s family also received two houses, worth 6000 Turkish Lira, on Rasim Paşa Street, number 70/144 and 70/142, located in the Osman Ağa neighborhood of Kadıköy. In addition, 1000 Turkish Lira cash was remitted to them. The order was signed 21 August 1928 by the Minister of Economy and the Governor of Istanbul.<sup>21</sup> A year and a half later, the Prime Ministry decided to issue the following decree:<sup>22</sup>

Turkish Republic  
Prime Ministry  
Directorate of Transactions  
Number: 2855

DECREE

Supplement to order number 5394, dated 3 July 1927

In addition to the property worth 15,000 Lira, which was previously given to the family of the dignitary Doctor Reshid Bey, who was martyred by Armenian komitadjis, they will also be assigned: the house on Kır Street number 12/143 in Kadıköy, abandoned by Tahtaburunian, and the shop on Kurtuluş Road no.115, abandoned by Vicken Hokachian. General Directorate of Estates' proposal number 71877/122, dated 12 December 1929 was accepted and approved at the Cabinet's general meeting of 12 February 1930.

*signed* PRESIDENT  
Gazi Mustafa Kemal

Prime Minister İsmet	Justice Minister Mahmut Esat	National Defence Minister Mustafa Abdülhalik
Interior Minister Şükrü Kaya	Foreign Minister Tevfik Rüştü	Minister of Economy Şükrü Saraçoğlu

These documents on Dr. Reshid's family suggest a) that the redistribution of Armenian wealth was a matter of top cabinet meetings, not lower echelons; b) that the original owners of the property were known; and most importantly: c) that the génocidaires' families were generously compensated from Armenian property. Moreover, this document is signed by several veteran Young Turks who had been among the arch-perpetrators of the genocide. Was the allocation of property to their comrades' families a form of 'looking after their own'?

On the local level, the Republican archives can provide penetrating insights into the later lives of perpetrators. Having studied the political elites of Diyarbakir, I was able to trace their political maneuvers from the 1890s well into the 1940s.<sup>23</sup> Deeply embedded within Diyarbakir's social structure were overlapping and competing networks of influential families of Muslim notables who had historically played the role of local power brokers. These were, for example, the very powerful Cizrelizâde, Piriñçizâde and Müftüzâde, as well as the Ocak, Ekinci, Zazazâde, Yasinzâde, Ensarizâde, and Cemilpaşazâde. The competition between these families generated fierce competition over local government. This often resulted in severe forms of corruption and nepotism in the local political culture.<sup>24</sup>

Of these extended families, the Piriñçizâde merit particular attention for the genocide. MP Aziz Feyzi (1879-1933), the son of Piriñçizâde Arif, was a Young Turk hardliner known for his anti-Armenian sentiments. He had often verbally assaulted Vartkes Serengulian (1871-1915) in parliament, and reportedly had Ohannes Kazazian, a Catholic Armenian from Mardin and his political rival in the elections, assassinated in 1913. During the genocide, Aziz Feyzi played a crucial role in the organization of the destruction process in

Diyarbakir with his particularly ferocious cousin Pirinçizâde Bekir Sıdkı (1888-1973). The cousins recruited the Kurdish tribesmen who murdered the Armenian elite of the city, expanded the genocide into the vast countryside, and amassed a fortune by plundering the Diyarbakir Armenians. Following the 1918 Ottoman surrender, the Pirinçizâde threw their lot in with the Kemalists. Aziz Feyzi was promoted to Minister of Public Works and was assigned a spacious house in Kadıköy, “on the tram road, on the left side before Altiyol”.<sup>25</sup> During the 1925 Kurdish conflict and ensuing massacres and deportations of Kurdish civilians, he provided logistical support and manpower to the government. In May 1927, Aziz Feyzi was decorated with the red Independence Medal by chairman of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, Mustafa Abdulhalik Renda (1881-1957), for his “devoted service to the National Struggle”.<sup>26</sup>

Cousin Pirinçizâde Bekir Sıdkı had enriched himself from Armenian property to the extent that he could afford to send his son to Paris for higher education, amidst the economic crisis of the 1930s. (The young man grew up to become Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı [1910-1956], one of the most celebrated poets of modern Turkey.) According to friends of the family, in the 1930s and 40s, Sıdkı Tarancı owned apartments and shops in Istanbul’s Eminönü and Beyoğlu districts, where all property accorded to “the fashion of the day: seats, comfortable and high-backed chairs; from the fork in your hand to the tablecloth; from the chandelier that catches the eye to the crystal vase, everything displayed indulgence and money”. The family was living in “glaring wealth” (*göze batan zenginlik*).<sup>27</sup> They went on to play a vital role in Diyarbakir’s political life and open a lucrative travel bureau in Istanbul. All in all, the Republican archives contain a wealth of material on the later life of low-level genocide perpetrators like Aziz Feyzi and Bekir Sıdkı.

### ***Censorship***

The Young Turks meted out a new identity and a new memory to Turkish society. During the 1920s and especially 1930s the Young Turk treatment of the past ranged from the organization of oblivion regarding the traumatic past to construction of an official narrative that included heroic and eternalized images of the nation. Orders were given to write new histories all over the country. These official textbooks, nationalist canons, and city histories not only imposed broad silences on critical historical issues, they also banished all ethnic minorities from (regional) histories. In a peasant society where illiteracy figures were as high as 80%, the official texts were not only the first ones the population would read, they were also the only ones available to the population. The organization of a hegemonic canon through exclusion and inclusion aimed at the formation of a *closed circuit of knowledge*. This information dam precluded the possibilities of a participatory memory and identity formation, especially in the eastern provinces. The regime warded off both external penetration and internal criticism of their belief system by

banning and destroying texts on a massive scale. ‘Turkishness’ was measured by the level of exposure to that body of knowledge as subsequent studies of cities and regions were to quote the “classics” of Young Turk historiography in order to be “scientific” enough for publication.<sup>28</sup>

In this vein, the Republican archives also provide insights into the memory of the genocide in the young Republic. Ever since its rise to power, the Kemalist dictatorship continued the CUP policy of suppressing all information on the 1915 genocide. Examples are so abundant a few will suffice. When the regime caught wind of the memoirs of Garabed Tapikian, subtitled *What We Saw During the Deportation from Sivas to Aleppo* (Boston: Hairenik, 1924) the book was prohibited from entering Turkey for “containing very harmful writings”.<sup>29</sup> Marie Sarrafian Banker, a graduate of the İzmir American College, had written her memoirs in 1936.<sup>30</sup> Her book too was prohibited entry to the country. All existing copies were ordered confiscated and destroyed for containing “harmful texts”.<sup>31</sup> When Armen Anooosh, an Armenian survivor living in Aleppo, wrote his memoirs titled *The History of a Ruined City: Urfa*, the volume was prohibited from entry and existing copies that had found their way into the country were ordered confiscated.<sup>32</sup>

At times the policy extended beyond the prohibition of genocide memoirs and included ‘normal’ history books. When Turkish customs intercepted Arshak Alboyajian’s classic, two-volume “History of Armenian Kayseri” (1937), sent from Syria to Istanbul by surface mail, it was ordered confiscated, destroyed, and prohibited.<sup>33</sup> An Armenian-language book published in Cairo in 1940 on the small town of Bahçecik (Bardizag) was prohibited simply for the fact that it produced a history of a region which fell under Turkish national jurisdiction.<sup>34</sup> What is striking about these prohibitions is that they generally limited themselves to the Turkish Republic. For the regime it did not matter much that Armenians wrote and circulated memoirs among themselves – as long as memory was produced and consumed within an Armenian milieu and did not trickle back into Turkey. One of the exceptions to this rule was the September 1935 incident between the United States and Turkey over plans by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer to film Franz Werfel’s novel *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*. The Young Turks officially prohibited the book itself a year after the Nazis, in January 1935.<sup>35</sup> The same fate befell Paul du Vêou’s less fictional book on the Musa Dagh Armenians on the eve of the Young Turk annexation of Hatay province.<sup>36</sup> That book, too, was blacklisted and barred from entry to the country.<sup>37</sup> Besides these books, all foreign Armenian periodicals and newspapers (e.g. *Haratch* and *Baikar*<sup>38</sup>) were individually identified and categorically banned. The regime probably did not want to run the risk of these narratives entering local history and memory, over which it claimed hegemony.

‘Turkey denies the Armenian genocide’ goes a jingle in genocide studies. The Turkish Republic’s memory policy towards the Armenian genocide was/is indeed characterized by denial. But we know little about how the human

destruction wrought by the First World War and the wider Ottoman imperial apocalypse of population transfer and mass violence against civilians (including the Armenian genocide) was handled in the official memory of society.<sup>39</sup> The interwar imposition of collective amnesia on Turkish society has been understudied, and the Republican archives might offer some fresh perspectives on this problem.

On a very basic level, the study of the Republican archives may also contribute to understanding modern Turkish-Armenian relations in general. To my knowledge, there exists no thorough study of the Armenian experience in the Turkish Republic, such as Rıfat Bali's hefty studies on Turkish Jews.<sup>40</sup> As soon as the Ministry of Education files are disclosed, we will be able to study how Armenians were represented in state education. The Foreign Ministry documents can elucidate with greater precision the development of Turkey's international official position on the genocide. And the government's citizenship and naturalization policies may demonstrate how the regime envisioned the future of Armenians in Turkish society.

### III. RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Compared to other modern genocides, Armenian genocide studies suffer from at least five significant lacunae, chiefly related to the problem of source base. The Republican archival material can go a long way to filling in some of the blanks. These lacunae are: rank-and-file sources, oral history, provincial archives, the land registration and cadastre archives, and the two Interior Ministry archives. The following outline attempts to survey the known, the unknown, and the desirable within these six areas.

#### ***Rank-and-file Sources***

In studies of the Armenian genocide and accounts of the killings, the perpetrators, from the organizing elites to the rank-and-file executioners, have too often figured as evil faceless killers, undifferentiated and unexplained. The guerrillas, tribesmen, and villagers appear in the Anatolian killing fields *ex nihilo* and murder people for no apparent reason other than innate (Turkish or Islamic) cruelty and malignance. This essentialist convention needs to be challenged by problematizing the experience of Ottoman Muslims and Young Turk elites through biographical investigation and sociological contextualization. Following Alexander Hinton, we have to ask the question: Why did they kill? More research on rank-and-file perpetrators can also be expected to facilitate further integration of the Armenian genocide into comparative genocide studies, in which the Armenian case is often the stepchild.

Comparative research on perpetrators of genocide is gradually reflecting common ground and increasing sophistication.<sup>41</sup> One of the cornerstones in the field was undoubtedly Christopher Browning's bestseller *Ordinary Men*. This powerful study is famous for adopting a social-psychological model of

obedience to authority to explain the behavior of German perpetrators. For our purposes, it might be relevant to highlight another aspect of the book. Browning's research is based on a substantial primary source base of the Central Office for State Justice Administrations (*Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen*) in Ludwigsburg near Stuttgart. He benefited from an extensive collection of records that included later interrogations of the perpetrators who carried out the massacres. Browning writes: "Never before had I encountered the issue of choice so dramatically framed by the course of events and so openly discussed by at least some of the perpetrators. Never before had I seen the monstrous deeds of the Holocaust so starkly juxtaposed with the human faces of the killers."<sup>42</sup> Another example of exemplary perpetrator research can be drawn from the Yugoslav wars. In a chapter of her book *They Would Not Hurt A Fly*, the Croatian author Slavenka Drakulić uses ICTY court transcriptions to paint a moving picture of Dražen Erdemović. Erdemović is a Bosnian Serb who, through trials and tribulations, ended up shooting almost 100 Bosniak men in the Srebrenica massacre of 13-22 July 1995.<sup>43</sup> What emerges from Browning's and Drakulić's treatment of perpetrators is a nuanced and complex discussion of dispositional and situational factors. Understanding and explaining the mind of the perpetrator requires a source base that is nearly lacking in the Armenian case.

In 2003, Norman Naimark wrote: "As far as I know, we have learned next to nothing about the 'ordinary' Turk or Kurd who engages in this murderousness and why."<sup>44</sup> Seven years later, we are still in the dark as to the actual perpetration of the genocide. What do we even know about ordinary gendarmes, militiamen, and soldiers charged with deportation and massacre? In comparison with other cases, we immediately notice a dire lack of rank-and-file sources on the Armenian genocide perpetrators. If we assume that Ottoman gendarmes were around 20 to 25 years old during the deportations, they could have lived well into the 1960s or 70s. However, I am not aware of any useful material that can shed light on the bottom-end of the genocide. Despite the rising literacy levels, it would be naïve to expect manuscripts of various kinds to have surfaced, especially because we know that perpetrators keep their silence about their violent pasts. With four decades of subsequent Young Turk censorship the memory of the genocide was censored and silenced. Armenian and Syriac survivor materials might be much more useful in shedding light on the perpetration aspect of the genocide. Research into oral history materials and memoirs might be able to move the debate further.

For lack of sources, we might have to resort to perpetrator accounts of other episodes of Young Turk mass violence, of which I will provide one example. In the late 1980s, the Kurdish journalist Ahmet Kahraman traveled through Anatolia in search of Turkish soldiers who had served during the interwar anti-Kurdish campaigns. In Trabzon he found one of his respondents, Dursun Çakiroğlu, a retired sergeant living in Ankara. After initial

reservations, Çakıroğlu began to trust Kahraman and spoke of an operation in a valley in which he participated in 1925:

We besieged the valley in the middle of the night. Movements were detected early in the morning in the valley. One way or the other they found out about us. They started to flee with cries of “the soldiers are coming!” Our commander Deli Kemal Pasha ordered breakfast to be served. We had breakfast. Then we thoroughly surrounded the valley and advanced slowly. It was visible that there were very few men among them. They had probably fled. There were women, children, and elderly around. Some young men among them... When they finally saw us in front of them, a sudden outcry broke out. Women and children were running around, crying, groaning. Deli Kemal Pasha ordered the soldiers: “Take position!” We took position. Then he yelled: “Fire at will!” We let loose at random. The valley turned into doomsday. Screams, moans, cries, fleeing, flights, yelling... [...] It was very bloody. Many died. Afterwards they said 600 casualties. I think there were more. There were tiny children among them. [...] For four hours we combed the place with rifles and machine guns. Except for the 20 to 30 people we captured, nobody got out alive. In the volley of firing even dogs and horses were shot. I don’t know what those valley people had done wrong. They said they were Kurds. They rebelled against the government. When the sounds and twitches died down, we entered the tents. Corpses everywhere... [...] Children, women and elderly had clung on to each other, dropped everywhere and died. Some friends searched the clothes of the dead and took their gold and money. [...] We set fire to the tents and left.<sup>45</sup>

Çakıroğlu also noted that prisoners were taken away and executed at a nearby ravine. According to the interviewer, the old man’s body language and facial expression – not captured in the text – revealed feelings of guilt and shame. This quote suggests top-down coercion, an argument that takes us to the obedience to authority model. The mass killing was not gender-differentiated but categorical, including children; as Jacques Sémelin has argued, whenever children are indiscriminately killed, we are approaching a genocidal process.<sup>46</sup> We know little about the chain of command: was it the commander who gave the order on his own behalf or did he act upon central orders? Further research on Turkish perpetrators needs to address questions such as these.

### ***Oral History***

Oral history is an indispensable tool for scholars interested in mass violence. A considerable collection of Armenian and Syriac oral history material has been studied by colleagues.<sup>47</sup> The existing body of oral history research in Turkey, though gradually developing, has hardly addressed the genocide. A potential research field was politicized by successive governments and the Turkish Historical Society. Several documentaries about the victimization of Ottoman Muslims in the eastern border regions have included

shots of elderly Muslims speaking about their victimization at the hand of Armenians (and presumably Cossacks) in 1918. It seems unmistakable that the Turkish-nationalist camp fears that the local population of Anatolian towns and villages might ‘confess’ the genocide’s veracity and disclose relevant details about it. For example, the 2006 PBS documentary *The Armenian Genocide* by Andrew Goldberg includes remarkable footage of elderly Turks speaking candidly about the genocide. One of the men remembers his father told him that the *génocidaires* had mobilized religious leaders to convince the population that killing Armenians would secure them a place in heaven. Another middle-aged man recounts a recollection of his grandfather’s that neighboring Armenian villagers were locked in a barn and burnt alive.<sup>48</sup>

In the past eight years, I have searched (and found) respondents willing to relate their personal experiences or their family narratives related to the war and the genocide. In the summers of 2002, 2004, and 2005, 2006, and 2007, I conducted several dozens of interviews with (grand-)children of contemporaries in Eastern Turkey, all semi-structured and taped. Oral history has its methodological pitfalls, especially in a society where the memory of modern history is overlaid with myth and ideologies. Many are unwilling to reflect about their family histories, because they have grown accustomed to ignoring inquisitive and critical questions, not least on their own moral choices in the face of their neighbours’ destruction. Others are reluctant to admit to acts considered shameful.<sup>49</sup> But while some were outright unwilling to speak once I broached the taboo subject, others agreed to speak but wished to remain anonymous, and again many others were happy to speak openly, with some even providing me access to their private documents. Even though direct eyewitnesses to the crime have most probably passed away, these interviews proved fruitful. Elderly Turks and Kurds often remember vivid anecdotes from family members or villagers who had witnessed or participated in the massacres. My subject position as a ‘local outsider’ (being born in the region but raised abroad), facilitated the research as it gave me the communicative channels to delve deep and recede at the appropriate moments. It also provided me with a sense of immunity from the dense moral and political field in which most of this research is embedded.

Here are some concrete examples. A.D., a Kurdish writer from Varto (Muş) recalled a childhood memory when in 1966 an earthquake laid bare a mass grave near his village. The villagers knew the victims were Armenians from a neighboring village. According to A.D., when the village elder requested advice from the local authorities what to do, within a day military commanders had assigned a group of soldiers to re-bury the corpses.<sup>50</sup> Interviews with elderly locals can yield considerable useful data about the genocide itself as well. For example, a Kurdish man (born 1942) from Diyarbekir’s northern Piran district, related that his father told him how their fellow villagers would raid Armenian villages and dispatch their victims by slashing their throats wide open. As they operated with daggers and axes, this

often led to decapitations. After the killing was done, the perpetrators could see how the insides of the victims' windpipes were black because of tobacco use.<sup>51</sup> Morbid details such as these are also recorded by the following account of a Kurdish man from the Kharzan region:

My grandfather was the village elder (*muhtar*) during the war. He told us when we were children about the Armenian massacre. There was a man in our village, he used to hunt pheasants. Now the honorless man (*bêşerefo*) hunted Armenians. Grandpa saw how he hurled a throwing axe right through a child a mother was carrying on her back. Grandpa yelled at him: "Hey, do you have no honor? God will punish you for this." But the man threatened my grandfather that if he did not shut up, he would be next. The man was later expelled from the village.<sup>52</sup>

Here is another account from a Turkish woman (born 1928) from Erzincan:

Q: You said there were Armenians in your village too. What happened to them?

A: They were all killed in the first year of the war, you didn't know? My mother was standing on the hill in front of our village. She saw how at Kemah they threw (*döktüler*) all the Armenians into the river. Into the Euphrates. Alas, screams and cries (*bağırın çağırın*). Everyone, children and all (*çoluk çocuk*), brides, old people, everyone, everyone. They robbed them of their golden bracelets, their shawls and silk belts, and threw them into the river.

Q: Who threw them into the river?

A: The government of course.

Q: What do you mean by 'the government'?

A: Gendarmes.<sup>53</sup>

These examples may suggest that there still might be something meaningful gained from interviews with elderly Turks and Kurds. Needless to say, had a systematic oral history project been carried out in Turkey much earlier, e.g. in the 1960s, undoubtedly a wealth of crucial information could have been salvaged. Interviews by individual researchers are at best a drop in the ocean.

There might still be avenues for oral history research. Father Patrick Desbois is a French Catholic priest who travels to Ukraine in a concerted effort to document the Shoah through the use of oral history. His team locates mass graves and interviews contemporary witnesses about the mass shootings of Jews, which often took place just outside the Ukrainian villages they visit. The elderly respondents often remember the slaughter in vivid detail.<sup>54</sup> Desbois' work on the Ukraine has proven helpful in completing the already comprehensive picture historians have of Nazi mass murder in that region. During a private conversation, Desbois intimated that he would be interested in launching a similar project in Turkey, if a viable initiative was proposed.<sup>55</sup> It

might be worthwhile to gauge what place the Armenian genocide occupies in the social memory of Turks and Kurds, even after nearly a century.

### ***Provincial Archives***

An important theme in recent genocide research has been the implementation of mass political violence at the local level, including the micro-situation of actual killing. In-depth research on how the genocidal process evolves at the provincial, district, city, or even village level has proven to be a fruitful endeavour. It can teach us a great deal about how the local shifts in and dynamics of power can influence the course and intensity of genocidal processes, of which we know that some are more regionally disparate than others. Local political or social elites can precede, expedite, intensify, or delay and resist genocidal destruction steered from above. A micro-focus can also follow the deterioration and ultimate disintegration of inter-communal relations as a result of external pressures, amidst a drastically worsening security situation and life condition for the victims.<sup>56</sup>

In this subfield of genocide studies, again the Armenian genocide lags behind, with a few notable exceptions about Erzurum, Urfa, Trabzon, Cilicia, Smyrna, and the South Marmara area. These case studies have used different approaches, developed different interpretations, and have drawn different conclusions. Nevertheless, their sum has been more than patchy.<sup>57</sup> Still, we need more detailed studies on specific areas: provinces, cities, if possible villages, using the full depth of Armenian materials, Ottoman documentation, and European/American materials. An interesting case would be Bitlis province: Mustafa Abdülhalik Renda's *in situ* mass murder of the densely populated plain of Muş still awaits thorough empirical recreation and interpretation. Another captivating case would be Trabzon, where the interplay between Greeks, Turks, Laz, and Armenians contributed to a complex scenario of paramilitarism, expulsion, mass murder, occupation, revenge, and hegemony. In the spirit of setting an example, I hope to contribute to this burgeoning and promising field with a forthcoming monograph on Diyarbakir under four decades of Young Turk rule.<sup>58</sup>

This issue is closely tied to sources as well. It is hard to credit that major Ottoman provincial capitals such as Sivas, Diyarbakir, Erzurum, Van, Konya, Bitlis, and Trabzon hold no provincial archives on the war. Neither do certain important district towns such as Develi (Everek), Tatvan, Sason, Midyat, Süleymanlı (Zeytun), Kozan (Sis). In my perhaps naïve searches in various Turkish cities I have come across no provincial archives. Time and again I was referred to the Ottoman archives in Istanbul. Again, Diyarbakır may be the example I am most versed in. The Ottoman administrative center of Diyarbakir province was in the fortified citadel in the north-eastern corner of the city. Several important structures still stand here, including the former governor's office (*valilik*), various judicial bureaus, police headquarters, and most importantly the infamous prison of Diyarbakir.<sup>59</sup> During the genocide, Dr.

Mehmed Reshid had his offices here (Young Turk propaganda photographs show captured Armenian ‘rebels’ in front of the prison’s barred windows), and in 1925 the show trials for Sheikh Said’s men were held in this compound. Important provincial decisions and city council debates must have been produced at this site. In the summer of 2007, the area had been cleared of security forces and was being converted by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism to an open-air “Atatürk Museum”. In the light of these facts, the non-existence of provincial materials may be considered as puzzling. What exactly happened to the records held at this important site?

A similar investigation in Kozan in the north of Adana province in July 2007 generated similar results. According to the mayor, there were some records of the late Ottoman and early Republican period, but the extent and nature was unknown to him, plus the records were uncatalogued and undisclosed. Access for external researchers was denied. These inquiries reinforce the impression that local archives, if existent, are poorly kept and not ordinarily frequented for research. One can only hope that they will be made accessible for research in the near future.

#### ***Land Registration and Cadastre Archives***

The Republican archives in Ankara are vital for studying the sequestration and redistribution of Armenian property. They demonstrate that the dispossession of Armenians served the interests of the Young Turk regime, which assigned the movable and immovable property to Turkish refugees and settlers, and used it for government purposes. The interrelated nature of property confiscation initiated by the Young Turk regime and its cooperating local elites can offer new insights into the functions and beneficiaries of state sanctioned robbery.<sup>60</sup>

In June 1915, the Young Turk government established the ‘Abandoned Properties Commission’ (*Emvâl-ı Metruke Komisyonu*), charged with carrying out the management and distribution of properties and lands belonging to deported Armenians. The decree specifically ordered the committees, set up in 33 locales, to keep detailed books including the names of the deported owners, the remaining types of goods, the quantities and values. The committee chairmen were instructed to register which goods were sold or rented to whom and for what price, and all records were to be kept in special notebooks. According to article 3 of the regulation, one copy of the book would be delivered to the local government and one to the land cadastre office. This state of affairs suggests that if we include the copies, about 100 notebooks should be currently available. But since it is unclear where these records are kept, this raises several important questions. First of all, how certain are we that these registers have actually been kept in an assiduous way? Second and most importantly, assuming they have been kept in one form or another, where are they stored? Why has the academic community not heard more of these collections so far?

The property records have been a source of contention in the Turkish press. In a 2007 newspaper article, Yusuf Halaçoğlu contended that “because of the war situation, the records held in the provinces could not be sent to the center. As for the provincial archives, due to the National Struggle period after the great war, they were destroyed or perhaps have passed into the hands of the invaders.”<sup>61</sup> This is a highly dubious claim, unsubstantiated by balanced argumentation and reasonably informed conjecture. Even if all specimens of the two copies of the records submitted to local governments and land cadastre were lost, those forwarded to Istanbul should be at hand. Moreover, if the books had indeed passed into the hands of Greek, Russian, Armenian, French, or British forces, they would have been revealed by now.

In September 2006, a news report provided an even stronger indication that the records were not lost but are kept somewhere. The General Directorate of Cadastre (*Tapu Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü*) announced that it was developing a project to digitize their Ottoman deed records in order to ultimately transfer them to the state archives. The Directorate had asked the National Security Council (*Milli Güvenlik Kurulu*, MGK) for its opinion in this matter. The MGK’s answer of 26 August 2005 was stamped ‘secret’ and argued that “the information on issues such as ownership can be exploited in championing the unfounded allegations of genocide”. It strongly advised that the materials not be made public but retained by the General Directorate of Cadastre.<sup>62</sup> When this communication leaked to the press, the director of Cadastre hastened to announce that the MGK was not opposed to their project of making the records public, but the damage had been done: the property records were most probably in their possession and they were most probably highly relevant for the study of the genocide.<sup>63</sup> Presumably, the digitization project is an ongoing process, but considering the MGK intervention, its outcome is uncertain. A colleague in Istanbul who wrote to the General Directorate of Cadastre in January 2008, asking whether they stored the Abandoned Property Commissions’ reports, received the reply that no such records were kept at that archive.

The Republican Archives also offer a window into the regime’s thinking on Armenian property. The late 1920s saw a heightened activity and heated correspondence between Ankara, diaspora Armenians, and the League of Nations over sequestered property.<sup>64</sup> There is evidence that after these exchanges, the Kemalist government ordered Armenian property to be closely monitored. The archives contain files with many photos. Why did the regime begin registering the status quo of Armenian properties? Did it fear that Armenian claims for restitution would resonate in the international community? Once these files are investigated, we might obtain a clearer picture of this problem.

### ***The 'Interior Ministry' Archives in Ankara***

In 2006, Soner Çağaptay published an interesting book on Turkish nationalism in the Young Turk era.<sup>65</sup> The book covers the policies of nation formation in the post-1923 era and argues that the Ottoman millet system functioned as a matrix that defined nationhood in Turkey. It includes discussions of immigration and resettlement policies, as well as cultural assimilation projects under 'High Kemalism'. From the footnotes and the bibliography it is understood that the author benefited from an unusual archive in Ankara he quotes on page 223 as "DV: Dahiliye Vekâleti - İçişleri Bakanlığı (Ministry of Interior)", adding: "I used many individual files from the 1920s and the 1930s in this archive. However, since the documents at this depository were not catalogued, I developed my own system of reference, giving as much information about these documents as possible. (See examples in the notes.)" From the many references one can gather that the archive holds records on the gendarmerie, police, and other security forces in general, cited as 'Directorate for General Security' (*Emniyet-i Umumiye Müdüriyeti*) of the Republic. The archive in question is most probably the modern 'General Directorate of Security' (*Emniyet Genel Müdürlüğü*) archive, i.e. the police.

One cannot escape the conclusion that this seems to be a highly relevant collection for studying violence in the Young Turk era. For example, correspondence between Ankara and the security forces in the eastern provinces during the assaults on minorities in the 1920s and 1930s is stored here. To quote from the book, p. 135: "In September 1938, the Interior Ministry wrote to the First Inspectorate-General about an Armenian guerrilla bandit who had been caught in Nusaybin. This man had confessed that the priest of the Armenian Derikira church in the Beşiri district had collaborated with him. Because the priest had supported banditry, he was to be sent to Beşiri, and his church was to be vacated." Another example is the 6 March 1932 government report to the First Inspectorate-General about the recent election of Ignatius Afram I Barsoum as the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch. The order noted: "the government does not recognize an entity under the name of the Patriarch of the Syriacs", and the assignment of that post was not acknowledged (p. 130). This communication is a profound commentary on the Young Turk regime's attitude towards Syriac Christians. Hundreds of other files describe the daily process of arrests, persecutions, and deportations of Kurds, Armenians, Circassians, Syriacs, and others. But access to the materials seems to be shrouded in mystery and secrecy; so far I have not been able to come any closer to this 'depository'. Colleagues in Ankara advised me that access to it is virtually impossible to obtain. The research field, however, does need more scrutiny, transparency, accountability, and falsifiability.

While searching for this archive in November 2006, I accidentally came across the archive of the Interior Ministry (*İçişleri Bakanlığı*).<sup>66</sup> When I was finally granted permission to view one file, I chose that of Şükrü Kaya (1883-1959). The dossier consisted of various employment records, an identity card,

and internal ministerial correspondence. It referred to his family background and education, his leading role in the deportation process, and his internment on Malta.<sup>67</sup> According to either myth or informed speculation, Kaya wrote a voluminous memoir, but this was suppressed by his adversary İsmet İnönü after the latter's ascendancy to the post of president. If this is true, it would be a major loss and a challenge for historians, because the embodiment of continuity in Young Turk mass violence might well be Şükrü Kaya. His involvement with the Young Turk movement and regime ranges from school teacher to civil servant to wartime director of the deportation apparatus, up to Minister of Culture and Interior Minister. During his tenure, he was operationally responsible for a) the destruction of Ottoman Armenians, during which he travelled into the field (i.e., Aleppo) and supervised the concentration of deportees in camps along the Euphrates; and b) the persecutions and deportations of Kurds in the 1920s and 1930s, during which he travelled into the field again for several research trips.<sup>68</sup> If more documents can be found on this powerful bureaucrat, it would potentially offer a solid contribution to the field.

These six research desiderata could possibly expand both our knowledge and understanding of the Armenian genocide. They are by no means meant to be an exhaustive evaluation or comprehensive program, but merely a suggestion for possible future research into certain relevant directions. After all, to quote Donald Rumsfeld: we don't know what we don't know.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

In this article I examined a selection of new sources on the Armenian genocide and discussed potential research avenues. I argued that the Republican Archives in Ankara can offer insights into at least three aspects of the genocide: survivors, perpetrators, and the problem of censorship. The second part of the paper explored five directions of research: the absence of rank-and-file accounts, the (im)possibilities of oral history, the issue of provincial archives, the relevance of the land registration and cadastre archives, and the two mysterious Interior Ministry archives.

It is hoped that these approaches will contribute to the normalization of the study of mass violence in Ottoman-Turkish, Armenian, Kurdish studies, a formidable challenge still. The topic remains underresearched, both in Middle Eastern studies and in genocide studies in general.<sup>69</sup> The study of violence in the (post-)Ottoman era is slowly wresting itself from the dense moral field and reaching the sense of normality that reigns in scholarly discussions on mass violence under e.g. Nazism or Stalinism. That approach which is most convenient or conventional may not be the most productive, comparable, representative, or analytically useful. Digging deeper into unmapped territory may help us gain new interpretations and a richer context of the Armenian genocide.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler (1915-1920)*, Ankara: T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 1994.
- <sup>2</sup> A brief note about terminology is in order. In this article I will follow Erik-Jan Zürcher's use of the term 'Young Turk era' to bundle together the Committee of Union and Progress (*İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti*) and its descendant the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*), which ruled the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic in the period 1913-1950. This article advances the argument that a strong continuity of population policies can be observed between the CUP era (1913-1918) and the Kemalist era (1919-1950). Erik-Jan Zürcher, "The Ottoman Legacy of the Turkish Republic: An Attempt at a New Periodization," *Die Welt des Islams*, vol. 32 (1992), pp. 237-53. 'Eastern Turkey' will refer to the area east of the line Adana-Giresun, more or less bounded by the former Ottoman provinces of Sivas, Erzurum, Trabzon, Van, Bitlis, Mamuret-ul Aziz, Aleppo, and Diyarbakir.
- <sup>3</sup> Two further collections in Ankara have not been sifted through exhaustively yet for Armenian genocide related materials: the Turkish Grand National Assembly Library (which includes Republican People's Party collections and Armenian-language materials), and the Turkish Historical Society (which holds personal files of Young Turks).
- <sup>4</sup> Tzvetan Todorov, *Mémoire du Mal, Tentation du Bien: Enquête sur le Siècle*, Paris: Laffont, 2000, chapter 3; Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, Boston: Beacon, 2007, pp. 52-3, 82.
- <sup>5</sup> This argument is discussed for the Armenian genocide in: Ara Sarafian, "The Ottoman Archives Debate and the Armenian Genocide," *Armenian Forum*, vol. 2, no. 1, 1999, pp. 35-44; Vahakn N. Dadrian, "Ottoman Archives and Denial of the Armenian Genocide", Richard G. Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian Genocide; History, Politics, Ethics*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992, pp. 280-310; Taner Akçam, *'Ermeni Meselesi Hallolunmuştur': Osmanlı Belgelerine Göre Savaş Yıllarında Ermenilere Yönelik Politikalar*, İstanbul: İletişim, 2007, pp. 15-36.
- <sup>6</sup> Ara Sarafian, "The Absorption of Armenian Women and Children into Muslim Households as a Structural Component of the Armenian Genocide," Omer Bartov and Phyllis Mack (eds.), *In God's Name: Genocide and Religion in the Twentieth Century*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 209-21; Matthias Bjørnlund, "A Fate Worse Than Dying': Sexual Violence During the Armenian Genocide," Dagmar Herzog (ed.), *Brutality and Desire: War and Sexuality in Europe's Twentieth Century*, London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008, pp. 16-59.
- <sup>7</sup> Rouben Adalian, "The Armenian Genocide," in Samuel Totten, Parsons & Israel Charny (eds.), *Century of Genocide: Eyewitness Accounts and Critical Views*, New York: Garland, 1997, pp. 41-64, at p. 52.
- <sup>8</sup> Fethiye Çetin, *Anneannem*, İstanbul: Metis, 2004.
- <sup>9</sup> *Başbakanlık Cumhuriyet Arşivi* (Republican Archives, Ankara, hereafter BCA), 030.18.01.02/68.77.9, decree dated 28 September 1936.
- <sup>10</sup> BCA, 030.18.01.02/102.54.17, decree dated 8 July 1943.
- <sup>11</sup> In August 2007, former director of the Turkish Historical Society, Yusuf Halaçoğlu, claimed he had lists of Armenian converts in his possession. He added that a substantial number of Kurdish Alevis were crypto-Armenians and threatened to publish the list to make his point. Halaçoğlu was summarily dismissed from his job after fierce public outrage from Alevi interest groups. "TTK Başkanı Halaçoğlu: Dönme Ermenilerin Listesi Var", *Radikal*, 22 August 2007. However, the content of some Republican archival material raises questions about the nature of Halaçoğlu's 'list'.

- 
- <sup>12</sup> BCA, 30.10/108.710.17, file 94A47, 27 May 1928.
- <sup>13</sup> BCA, 30.10/113.771.9, file 96B298, 16 September 1929.
- <sup>14</sup> *National Archives UK* (Kew), FO 424/272, p. 116, no. 68, Edmonds to Henderson, 21 May 1930, “Notes on a Tour to Diarbekir, Bitlis and Mush”.
- <sup>15</sup> BCA, 30.18.1.1/25.38.4, file 137-78, number 5331, decree dated 15 June 1927.
- <sup>16</sup> BCA, 30.18.1.1/23.7.1, file 137-74, number 4699, decree dated 2 February 1927.
- <sup>17</sup> BCA, 30.18.1.1/23.7.12, file 137-75, number 4710, decree dated 2 February 1927.
- <sup>18</sup> BCA, 30.18.1.1/23.7.18, number 4716, 13 February 1927.
- <sup>19</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser, “Dr. Mehmed Reshid (1873-1919): A Political Doctor”, Hans-Lukas Kieser & Dominik J. Schaller (eds.), *Der Völkermord an den Armeniern und die Shoah*, Zürich: Chronos, 2002, pp. 245-80.
- <sup>20</sup> Also known as Grand Rue de Pera in the Pera district, currently the İstiklâl Caddesi in Beyoğlu.
- <sup>21</sup> BCA, 272.0.0.11/23.125.8, decree dated 21 August 1928.
- <sup>22</sup> BCA, 030.18.01.02/8.7.7, decree dated 12 February 1930.
- <sup>23</sup> Uğur Ümit Üngör, “Genocide en Lokale Elites: Over Massaal Geweld in Turkije, 1913-1918”, Ward Berenschot (ed.), *Etnisch Geweld: Groepsconflict in de Schaduw van de Staat*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009, pp. 27-52.
- <sup>24</sup> Uğur Ümit Üngör, “Family Matters: Local Elites and Mass Violence”, *The Armenian Weekly*, 25 April 2009, pp. 32-5.
- <sup>25</sup> For details on Pirinçizade family life in the 1930s, see the correspondence between Tarancı and a close friend: Ziya Osman Saba, “Cahit’le Günlerimiz,” Cahit Sitki Tarancı, *Ziya’ya Mektuplar 1930-1946*, Istanbul: Varlık, 1957, pp. 5-6.
- <sup>26</sup> BCA, 030.10/196.342.11, decree dated 26 May 1927.
- <sup>27</sup> Saba, “Cahit’le Günlerimiz”, p. 27.
- <sup>28</sup> For a brief overview of Kemalist memory politics see: Uğur Ümit Üngör, “Organizing Oblivion in the Aftermath of Mass Violence”, *The Armenian Weekly*, vol.74, no. 16, 26 April 2008, pp. 23-7.
- <sup>29</sup> BCA, 030.18.01.02/46.49.5, Prime Ministry decree, 10 June 1934.
- <sup>30</sup> Marie Sarrafian Banker, *My Beloved Armenia: A Thrilling Testimony*, Chicago: Bible Institute Colportage Assoc., 1936.
- <sup>31</sup> BCA, 030.18.01.02/79.82.14, Prime Ministry decree, 28 September 1937.
- <sup>32</sup> BCA, 030.18.01.02/118.98.20, Prime Ministry decree, 10 February 1949.
- <sup>33</sup> BCA, 030.18.01/127.95.11, Prime Ministry decree, 31 December 1951.
- <sup>34</sup> BCA, 030.18.01.02/95.60.3, Prime Ministry decree, 10 July 1941.
- <sup>35</sup> BCA, 030.18.01.02/51.3.2, Prime Ministry decree, 13 January 1935.
- <sup>36</sup> Paul du Véou, *Chrétiens en Péril au Moussadagh!: Enquête au Sandjak d’Alexandrette*, Paris: Baudinière, 1939.
- <sup>37</sup> BCA, 030.18.01.02/90.12.7, Prime Ministry decree, 25 January 1940.
- <sup>38</sup> *Haratch* was an Armenian daily newspaper published in Paris from 1925 to 2009; *Baikar* was an Armenian newspaper published in Boston between 1922 and 1993.
- <sup>39</sup> For a comparative study of this phenomenon see: Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Die Kultur der Niederlage*, Berlin: Fest, 2001.
- <sup>40</sup> Rıfat N. Bali, *Musa’nın Evlatları Cumhuriyet’in Yurttaşları*, Istanbul: İletişim, 1999; id., *Devlet’in Örnek Yurttaşları: Cumhuriyet Yıllarında Türkiye Yahudileri*, Istanbul: İletişim, 2009.
- <sup>41</sup> Olaf Jensen & Claus-Christian W. Szejnmann (eds.), *Ordinary People as Mass Murderers: Perpetrators in Comparative Perspectives*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

- <sup>42</sup> Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, New York: HarperCollins, 1992, p. XVI.
- <sup>43</sup> Slavenka Drakulić, *They Would Never Hurt A Fly: War Criminals on Trial in The Hague*, New York: Viking, 2004, p. 106 ff.
- <sup>44</sup> Norman Naimark, “The Implications of the Study of Mass Killing in the 20th Century for Analyzing the Armenian Genocide”, paper presented at the conference “Vectors of Violence: War, Revolution, and Genocide: Turkish-Armenian Workshop,” University of Minnesota, 27-30 March 2003.
- <sup>45</sup> Interview conducted with Dursun Çakıroğlu by Ahmet Kahraman in Ankara in 1990, transcribed in: Ahmet Kahraman, *Kürt İsyanları*, Istanbul: Evrensel, 2003, pp. 215-6.
- <sup>46</sup> Jacques Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy: The Political Uses of Massacre and Genocide*, London: Hurst, 2009, p. 231.
- <sup>47</sup> Donald E. Miller & Lorne Touryan-Miller, *Survivors: An Oral History of the Armenian Genocide*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993; David Gaunt, *Massacres, Resistance, Protectors: Muslim-Christian Relations in Eastern Anatolia During World War I*, Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2006, appendix.
- <sup>48</sup> Andrew Goldberg, *The Armenian Genocide*, Two Cats Productions, 2006.
- <sup>49</sup> For parallel issues see: Orlando Figes, *The Whisperers: Private Life in Stalin's Russia*, London: Penguin, 2007, p. XXXV.
- <sup>50</sup> Interview conducted with A.D. (from Varto district) in Heidelberg, 24 November 2009.
- <sup>51</sup> Interview conducted with M.Ş. (from Piran district) in Diyarbakır, 15 July 2004.
- <sup>52</sup> Interview conducted with Erdal Rênas (from the Kharzan area) in Istanbul, 18 August 2002.
- <sup>53</sup> Interview conducted with K.T. (from Erzincan) in Bursa on 28 June 2002 and 20 August 2007, partially screened in the documentary “Land of our Grandparents” (Amsterdam: Zelović Productions, 2008).
- <sup>54</sup> Patrick Desbois, *Porteur de Mémories: Sur les Traces de la Shoah par Balles*, Paris: Michel Lafon, 2007. Also, see the website: <http://www.shoahparballes.com/>
- <sup>55</sup> Personal communication with Patrick Desbois at the conference “The Holocaust by Bullets”, organized by the Amsterdam Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at the Nationaal Museum Vught (Netherlands), 11 September 2009.
- <sup>56</sup> Recent examples of innovative local studies of genocide are: Tomislav Dulić, *Utopias of Nation: Local Mass Killing in Bosnia and Hercegovina, 1941-42*, Uppsala: Uppsala University Press, 2005; Wendy Lower, *Nazi Empire-Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005; Lee Ann Fujii, *Killing Neighbors: Webs of Violence in Rwanda*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009; François-Xavier Nérard, “The Levashovo Cemetery and the Great Terror in the Leningrad Region”, *Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence* (27 February 2009), at: <http://www.massviolence.org/The-Levashovo-cemetery-and-the-Great-Terror-in-the->
- <sup>57</sup> Hilmar Kaiser, “‘A Scene from the Inferno’: The Armenians of Erzerum and the Genocide, 1915-1916”, Hans-Lukas Kieser & Dominik J. Schaller (eds.), *Der Völkermord an den Armeniern und die Shoah*, Zürich: Chronos, 2001, pp. 129-86; Kerem Öktem, “Incorporating the Time and Space of the Ethnic ‘Other’: Nationalism and Space in Southeast Turkey in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries”, *Nations and Nationalism*, vol. 10, no. 4, 2004, pp. 559-78; Kevork Yeghia Suakjian, *Genocide in Trebizond: A Case Study of Armeno-Turkish Relations During the First World War*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981; Raymond H. Kévorkian, *La Cilicie (1909-1921): Des Massacres d'Adana au Mandat Français*, Paris: RHAC III, 1999; Hervé Georgelin, *La Fin de Smyrne: Du Cosmopolitisme aux Nationalismes*, Paris: CNRS, 2005. The recent monograph by Ryan Gingeras on the South Marmara region is a major

- 
- contribution to this field (Ryan Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912-1923*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
- <sup>58</sup> Uğur Ümit Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia, 1913-1950*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- <sup>59</sup> Not to be confused with the equally notorious Republican prison of the late 1970s and 80s.
- <sup>60</sup> For an introduction to the plunder of Armenian property see: Uğur Ümit Üngör and Mehmet Polatel, *Confiscation and Destruction: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property*, London/New York: Continuum, 2011.
- <sup>61</sup> Yusuf Halaçoğlu, “Korkusuzca Tartışmak Yararlı”, *Radikal*, 27 September 2007.
- <sup>62</sup> “Tapu Arşivlerini ‘Sınırlı’ Kullanın”, *Hürriyet*, 19 September 2006.
- <sup>63</sup> “MGK Yazısı Tartışılıyor”, *Radikal*, 20 September 2006.
- <sup>64</sup> E.g.: Gilbert Gidel, *Confiscation de Biens des Réfugiés Arméniens par le Gouvernement Turc*, Paris: Massis, 1929, pp. 83-6.
- <sup>65</sup> Soner Çağaptay, *Islam, Secularism and Nationalism in Modern Turkey: Who is a Turk?*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2006.
- <sup>66</sup> The Interior Ministry sits across the Turkish Grand National Assembly in central Ankara and does not have a regular research archive either. But as I (wrongly) insisted that their files had been quoted in Çağaptay’s book, they sent me to the basement to speak to the archive director. A cold, concrete staircase led into a huge underground hall with dozens of archive cabinets, stuffed with folders. When I smelled smoke, I suspected a fire and called security, but when we walked into the cellar, we saw three archive staff grilling a mackerel on a small barbeque; the fishbone was dumped on one of the shelves of the archive closet. (Skeletons in the closet?) After speaking to the uncooperative archive director, I learnt that this was the archive of personnel files of the Turkish Republic’s Interior Ministry bureaucrats.
- <sup>67</sup> *Interior Ministry Archive* (Ankara), Personnel file of Şükrü Kaya, document no. 1041, *passim*.
- <sup>68</sup> Hilmar Kaiser, “Shukru Kaya and the Extermination of the Ottoman Armenians” (unpublished paper, 2000).
- <sup>69</sup> Notable exceptions are: Erik-Jan Zürcher (ed.), *Türkiye’de Etnik Çatışma*, Istanbul: İletişim, 2005; Dominik J. Schaller & Jürgen Zimmerer (eds.), *Late Ottoman Genocides: The Dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and Young Turkish Population and Extermination Policies*, London: Routledge, 2009; Hamit Bozarslan, *Une Histoire de la Violence au Moyen-Orient: De la Fin de l’Empire Ottoman à Al-Qaida*, Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 2008.

**ՀԱՅՈՑ ՑԵՂԱՍՊԱՆՈՒԹԻՒՆԸ. ՆՈՐ ԱՂԲԻՒՐՆԵՐ,  
ՈՒՍՈՒՄՆԱՍԻՐՈՒԹԵԱՆ ՆՈՐ ՈՒՂՂՈՒԹԻՒՆՆԵՐ  
(Ամփոփում)**

**ՈՒՂՈՒՐ ՈՒՄԻՏ ԻՒՆԿԷՕՐ**

Ի պատասխան այն հաւաստումներուն թէ Անգարայի արխիւները կը վերաբերին 1919էն ետք պատահած դէպքերուն, հեղինակը կը բացայայտէ թէ ինչպէս կարելի է օգտուիլ անոնցմէ եւ նորութիւններ բերել Յեղասպանութեան ուսումնասիրման:

Հեղինակը կը հաւաստէ որ Յեղասպանութեան ուսումնասիրման խնդրով Անգարայի Հանրապետական Արխիւը կրնայ լոյս սփռել երեք ուղղութիւններով՝ ա. Վերապրողներու (հաւատափոխ թէ ազգութիւնը պահպանած հայեր), բ. Յեղասպանութիւնը ծրագրողներու եւ կատարողներու (ասոնցմէ շատեր վարձատրուեցան հայոց թողօններով, եւ շարունակեցին իրենց կեանքը նոր տուեալներով), գ. Գրաքննութեան խնդիրներուն (Թուրքիոյ Հանրապետութիւնը արգիլեց Յեղասպանութեան վերաբերեալ յուշագրական հատորներու կամ այլ նիւթերու մուտքը Թուրքիա):

Յօդուածին Բ. մասով հեղինակը կը կարեւորէ Հայոց Յեղասպանութեան յաւելեալ 5 ոլորտներ՝ 1. Յեղասպանութիւնը կատարող շարքայիներու վկայութիւններ (ասոնց կենսագրական տուեալներէն, յուշերէն կարելի է տեսական համապատասխան եզրայնագումներու երթար), 2. Բանաւոր պատմութեան (ան)կարելիութիւն (թուրք եւ քիւրտ ականատեսներէ, բնակավայրերէ ժառանգուած դրուագներու-յիշողութիւններու ուսումնասիրում), 3. Գաւառական արխիւներ (ինչ իւրապատկութիւններով Յեղասպանութիւնը կը դրսեւորուի գաւառէ գաւառ, մանաւանդ որ անհամոզիչ կը թուի չգոյութիւնը գաւառային արձանագրութեան տոմարներու), 4. Կարուածային արձանագրութիւններու արխիւներ (33 շրջաններ ունէին լքեալ գոյքերու յանձնախումբեր, որոնց արձանագրութեանց տոմարները պիտի ունենային 1 բնօրինակ եւ 2 օրինակ, ընդհանուրը՝ 100 կարուածատոմարներ), 5. Ներքին Գործոց Նախարարութեան խորհրդաւոր երկու արխիւներ (որոնց ոչ-բոլորը հրապարակուած են կամ մշակուած):

Ըստ հեղինակին, այս նիւթերը նոր եւ յաւելեալ լոյս կը սփռեն օսմանագիտութեան-թրքագիտութեան, հայագիտութեան եւ քրտագիտութեան: Անոնք կը խորացնեն բունութեան եւ բրտութեան ուսումնասիրման միջին արեւելեան ծիրը եւ առաւել կ'ամբողջացնեն Միջին Արեւելքի եւ Յեղասպանութեան մասին գիտութիւնը: