

# Patterns of Organization and Genocide: The 1915 Deportation of Armenia

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A thesis  
Submitted in partial fulfilment  
Of the requirements of the degree of  
Master of Art in the Department of History  
Idaho State University  
Fall 2016

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Dedicated to my deceased friend and brother, Kent Farley

### Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Justin Stover, for inspiring me to study this painful subject, for his steady advice, and for his patience with me in the process of writing this thesis. I would like to thank the faculty of the Idaho State University Geosciences Department for tips and advice on building a geodatabase and analyzing spatial data. I would also like to thank Kat Brown, for opening my eyes to the world of genocide at Utah Valley University. I am grateful for the help of family and friends, namely: Renee Winkler, Matthew Winkler, and Carole Rivers. And of course, I could not have done this without the support and helpful advice from my Favorite, Laura Farley.

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## **Patterns of Organization and Genocide: The 1915 Deportation of Armenia**

### **Thesis Abstract – Idaho State University (2016)**

Nearly two million Armenians were removed from Anatolia in the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1916. With control of the Ottoman Government, the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) ordered the removal of the Armenians. This removal was done by deportation. The deportations were carried out by three distinct sets of organizations. The Special Organization (SO), the army, and local governments. Using Geographic Information Systems, data concerning the deportations show that the deportation methods differed regionally. Additionally, the methods used regionally correlated to the organization in charge of the deportations in the region. An analysis of deportation data using GIS reveal elements of coordination in the Armenian deportations of 1915-1916.

## Introduction

The Armenian Genocide was executed under the cloak of the Great War. The government of the Ottoman Empire orchestrated the removal and destruction of the Armenians within the empire. Nearly two million men, women, and children were forcibly deported from their homes to the deserts of Syria and Mesopotamia. Along the deportation routes, many of these victims were killed. The methods of slaughter ranged from shoving people off cliffs and bridges to executions by gun, axe, or machete. From April of 1915 to March of 1916 at least 90% of Ottoman Armenians had been removed from Anatolia, at least half of them killed.<sup>1</sup>

The Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) party, better known as the Young Turks, committed the genocide. The culmination of events can be better understood by exploring how the CUP used internal organizations to carry out the deportations over the eleven-month period. Nearly two million civilians were removed from Anatolia in the Ottoman Empire during this short amount of time. Completing this task required planning and implementation. The CUP delegated and assigned tasks to organizations on the ground throughout the Ottoman Empire. The deportations were carried out by three distinct sets of organizations. The first was the Special Organization (SO), which the CUP developed to eliminate internal threats. It consisted primarily of hardened criminals, and was aided by disadvantaged ethnic groups, including Kurds and Circasians. The second was the army, which played a primary role in areas threatened by Russian invasion to speed up the process of deportation. The third consisted of local governments, which acted under the direction of the CUP to deport the Armenian population under

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<sup>1</sup> Hilmar Kaiser "Genocide at the Twilight of the Ottoman Empire," in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, ed. Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 382.



their governance. The deportation methods employed varied from region to region. This is because the regions differed greatly concerning the overall Armenian population, Armenian cultural significance, and industrial development. This work argues that the organization, methods, and execution of the genocide produced patterns that reveal elements of coordination, using geovisual data to demonstrate the scope and impact of the deportations. Geovisual data illustrates the CUP's use of violent organizations to kill most of the Armenian population in eastern Anatolia. Geovisual data also illustrates the primary use of local governments to deport, in relative safety, the Armenian population in western Anatolia. We can use analysis of available data to demonstrate how a deliberate attempt to remove and eliminate a group of people was successfully carried out based on the needs of each region.

The CUP, a party of young idealists, brought about a revolution in 1908 that put themselves into power over the Ottoman Empire. They established constitutional law and by 1914 the empire was ruled by the Ministers of War, Navy, and Interior. Taalat Pasha, Djemal Pasha, and Enver Pasha formed this triumvirate, which history has recognized as "the Three Pashas." The CUP was led by the Central Committee, made up of the leaders of the party. These three men were the most important in the Central Committee. Any direction given by the central government of the Ottoman Empire during the Great War was done with their approval. The empire was old and diminished, and it had lost much of its territory over the previous century. In addition, it had a weak infrastructure, lagged in industrial development, and was in debt to various European empires. In November of 1914, in an attempt to address these problems and regain lost territory, the Ottoman Empire entered the Great War as allies of the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires. At

this point the empire controlled Anatolia, East Thrace, Syria, Mesopotamia, Palestine, Arabia, and Libya. These regions contained a complex mosaic of ethnicities. Syria, Meopotamia, and Arabia were dominated by Arabs. Anatolia however was viewed as the domain of the Turks by the CUP. Turks did make of the majority population in Anatolia, especially in western Anatolia. However, there were significant minority populations that had been scattered throughout Anatolia for millennia, especially Greeks, Armenians, and Kurds. Armenians were heavily concentrated throughout eastern Anatolia, as well as Cilicia and the large cities of western Anatolia.

The first six months of the Ottoman involvement in the Great War was devastating for the empire. An offensive into the Russian-controlled Caucasus in the winter of 1914-15 failed spectacularly, losing up to ninety percent of the Ottoman soldiers who fought in the battle of Sarikamish, which was followed by a successful Russian offensive. The Ottomans could not gain control of the neighboring Black and Aegean Seas, and were facing an imminent attack against Constantinople, their capitol. To consolidate the Ottoman Empire and change the tide of war a desperate attempt at spreading Turkish nationalism was then employed. By propagating the greatness of Turkishness above all else, the CUP hoped to reinvigorate their decaying empire and ignite a positive response from their Turkish population, in the face of such precarious circumstances.<sup>2</sup>

The devastating defeats from the Russians, combined with the manufactured Turkish pride, led the CUP to blame the Armenians for the empire's troubles. Armenians

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<sup>2</sup> Ronald Grigor Suny. "Religion, Ethnicity, and Nationalism: Armenians, Turks, and the End of the Ottoman Empire." In *In God's Name: Genocide and Religion in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Omer Bartov and Phyllis Mack, (New York: Berghen Books, 2001): 55-56.

were an ethnic group of two million, making up about 10% of the overall population of Anatolia. They resided mostly within eastern Anatolia. The Ottoman Armenians were deemed responsible by the CUP for the losses to the Russians because their political leaders had refused to try to foment discord among Russian Armenians. In addition, the Russian Armenians had volunteered to fight for the Russians. The Armenians also stood as a road block to increasing Turkish nationalism within the Ottoman Empire and beyond its borders to Turkish lands under Russian control. On top of these issues, the Armenians were considered non-Muslims, they desired greater rights and reform, and they enjoyed socio-economic success.<sup>3</sup> In May of 1915, the CUP decided to declare a law to deport all “enemies of state,” or those who were considered a threat to the interior, for national security purposes. This was a pretense to deport all Armenians within Anatolia and East Thrace to the deserts of Syria and Mesopotamia. This action was followed by a law that allowed for the seizure of “abandoned property” in August of 1915.<sup>4</sup>

When the Ottoman Empire first joined the Great War in October of 1914, all Armenian men between the ages of 20 and 45 were conscripted into the Ottoman military. By April of 1915 the draft had expanded to include Armenian men, ages 18 through 60. At this point, all Armenian soldiers were consolidated into labor battalions, without weapons. These battalions were eliminated over the course of the next year, and the men were often forced to dig their own mass graves.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> James J. Reid "Total War, the Annihilation Ethic, and the Armenian Genocide, 1870–1918," In *The Armenian Genocide: History Politics Ethics*, ed. by Richard G. Hovannisian (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 39-40.

<sup>4</sup> Uğur Ümit Üngör, “Turkey for the Turks”: Demographic Engineering in Eastern Anatolia, 1914–1945,” In *A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Ronald Grigor Suny, et al, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 296-98.

<sup>5</sup> Reid, *Total War 1870-1918*, 41-42.

Beginning in late April of 1915, massacres of Armenians took place throughout the province (*vilayet*) of Van; this was followed by a successful resistance by Armenians in the city of Van. Many of those rebels were able to escape into Russia.<sup>6</sup> In May, Armenians throughout eastern Anatolia were deported, mostly women and children. Up to 90% of these people were murdered en route to the deportation camps, commonly tossed from bridges over deep river gorges.<sup>7</sup> Beginning in June and July most of the Armenians in western Anatolia and East Thrace were deported with many of them arriving safely to the deportation camps, despite being riddled with disease, starvation, and thirst.<sup>8</sup> By February of 1916 all of the deportations had been completed with 800,000 Armenians deceased. Those that remained were either in the deportation camps or had escaped into neighboring regions. Later that year, several hundred thousand more of the deportees would die of disease or massacre. In all, it is estimated that between one and one-and-a-half million Armenians were killed at the direction of the CUP authorities between April of 1915 and December of 1916.<sup>9</sup>

### Historiography

The Armenian Genocide was a “crime against humanity” of such horrific magnitude that the poet Avetic Isahakian claimed “there are no words in dictionaries that describe the hideousness of the terrors.”<sup>10</sup> The twentieth century is known as a period of great brutality, with many crimes against humanity. The Armenian Genocide was the

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<sup>6</sup> Raymond Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History*, (New York: I.B.Touris, 2011), 319-35.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 289-467.

<sup>8</sup> Kaiser, *Genocide aft the Twilight*, 378-79.

<sup>9</sup> Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide*, (New York: Berghan Books, 2003), xviii.

<sup>10</sup> Sir Martin Gilbert, "Twentieth-Century Genocides" In *America and the Armenian Genocide of 1915*, ed. Jay Winter, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 15-16.

second genocide committed in that century, however, it was the first to target a civilian population by its own government. Its historiography has developed as scholars have attempted to detail a horror that cannot be adequately related. The opinions and assertions surrounding the Armenian Genocide are contentious, diverse, and tenuous. These contentions have revolved mostly around proving or disproving that a genocide took place, due primarily to Armenian nationalism, Turkish denial, and the laws stipulated in the United Nation Genocide Convention of 1948.

Today the Armenian Genocide is a popular topic of study. The genocide's centenary renewed interest throughout the world about what happened and why it matters. This has not always been the case since the study of the genocide in the past has had vast gaps of interest and scholarly work. Literature focused on the events of the Armenian Genocide began nearly as soon as the events took place. This literature was published in diverse forms, such as on the ground newspaper reporting, memoirs, historical fiction, and compilations of primary source documents. Yet it was not until the end of the Second World War that a nascent historiography developed.

There was very little discussion by scholars concerning Armenian atrocities in the decades following the establishment of Turkey, Greece, and the Caucasian states by 1923, in which a Soviet state of Armenia emerged. In 1945 a territorial issue would bring the Armenian question into international affairs. Joseph Stalin, looking to secure USSR's southwestern borders, demanded that the pre-war territories occupied by Russia in Anatolia be returned. This included Kars and Ardahan which had been seized by the Turkish state from Russia while the Bolsheviks consolidated power in 1918. In so doing, Armenian and Georgian territorial claims were deployed to further justify Stalin's

demands.<sup>11</sup> Turkey held firm, rebuffed Stalin, and simultaneously obtained the backing of the United States which was under the anti-communist Truman administration.

Furthermore, the fear of Soviet penetration into Middle-Eastern affairs compelled the United States to take up Britain's imperial mantle in the region. By doing this, one of the earliest actions taken related to the Truman Doctrine of 1947 was to establish Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan as the northern tier barrier against the USSR.<sup>12</sup>

As these events took place, Esat Uras wrote a massive book published in Turkey in 1951, and later translated as *The Armenians in History and the Armenia Question*.<sup>13</sup> Uras' work systematically removed Armenians from Ottoman history while simultaneously providing a misrepresentation of Armenian activism. It has become the key historical work for Turkish nationalist historiography concerning Armenians.<sup>14</sup> It should be noted that Uras was closely involved with the Armenian deportations of 1915 as a senior official in the public security directorate of the Interior Ministry.<sup>15</sup>

Lewis Thomas, the father of Armenian Genocide denial in America, and a contemporary of Uras, wrote for the American Foreign Policy Library series and co-produced a book concerning foreign policy entitled *The United States and Turkey and Iran*. To present Turkey in a positive manner, Thomas argued that the Ottomans were acting in the interest of national safety by deporting and massacring Armenians. He

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<sup>11</sup> David J. Alvarez, *Bureaucracy and cold war diplomacy: the United States and Turkey, 1943-1946*. Vol. 190. (Institute for Balkan studies, 1980); Ronald Grigor Suny, "Return to Ararat: Armenia in the Cold War," *The Armenian Review* 42, no. 3/167 (1989): 2-6.

<sup>12</sup> Suny, "Return to Ararat," 16.

<sup>13</sup> Esat Uras, *The Armenians in history and the Armenian question*, (Istanbul: Documentary Publications, 1988).

<sup>14</sup> Clive Foss, "The Turkish view of Armenian history: a vanishing nation," in *The Armenian Genocide: History Politics Ethics*, ed. by Richard G. Hovannisian (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992.), 258.

<sup>15</sup> Vahakn N. Dadrian, "The Secret Young Turk Ittihadist Conference and the Decision for the World War 1 Genocide of the Armenians," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 7 (1993), 175-76.

specifically argued that it was inevitable, that there could only be one winner in Anatolia, and that Turkey benefited greatly from being a homogenous state.<sup>16</sup> Thomas' work is an extreme example. However, scholarly work concerning US-Turkish relations during this period was influenced by the Cold War and was directly affected by that political context. Additionally, Thomas would go on to advise Stanford Shaw, who would later supervise Justin McCarthy and Heath Lowry as they did their doctoral work. Each of these scholars are well known for their Armenian Genocide denial stance and have produced many works that deny a genocide of Armenians took place.

The work of Raphael Lemkin, a Polish Jew, is especially important in the development of how the Armenian Genocide has been perceived. He is the architect of the legal understanding of the basis of genocide. By 1933, Lemkin had made it his mission to convince the League of Nations that destroying ethnic and religious groups was a crime. He had been greatly influenced by the Armenian massacres and other similar events such as Turkish massacres of Kurds, Soviet-directed starvation of Ukrainians, and other intentional destructions of ethnic and religious groups. In 1944, Lemkin's voice became significant. He wrote a momentous article entitled "Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation"<sup>17</sup> for a journal concerning possible government redress after World War II if the Allies were victorious. In this article the word "genocide" was coined and defined. Lemkin asserted that genocide was the intentional

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<sup>16</sup> Lewis Victor Thomas, and Richard Nelson Frye, *The United States Turkey and Iran* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997) 61-62.

<sup>17</sup> Raphael Lemkin, *Axis rule in occupied Europe: laws of occupation, analysis of government, proposals for redress* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Division of International Law, 1944)

destruction of a religious or ethnic group, and that this should be a crime under international law.

The Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust inspired Lemkin, as he crafted the definition for genocide. As a result of the Holocaust, genocide quickly entered the lexicon and became the pre-eminent term to describe such events. In 1948 the United Nations held the Genocide Convention, in which genocide was defined by international law as “acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.”<sup>18</sup> The criminality and accountability applied to genocide at the Genocide Convention has had a primary impact on the study and interpretation of genocide over time, and certainly colors the historiography of the Armenian Genocide, which is evident in the commemorative turn of the 1960s.

The Armenian diaspora and Soviet Armenians developed a framework in which the experience of 1915-16 could be understood and characterized by Lemkin’s work and the UN Genocide Convention as the fiftieth anniversary of the genocide approached. It became accepted that the epithet of genocide was appropriate nomenclature to define the event, used rapidly by the Armenian National Committee of America in 1947.<sup>19</sup> More widely used epithets, by scholars and laymen alike, such as “the great massacre” were mostly replaced with genocide by 1965. Because Turkish denial was still in its infancy, there was no need to justify using the term genocide, which was applied in the flurry of literature published as the commemoration approached.

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<sup>18</sup> “Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,” *Human Rights Web*, 2/17/2015, <http://www.hrweb.org/legal/genocide.html>

<sup>19</sup> ANCA, A Memorandum on the Armenian Question, 1947.



Two aspects of the commemorative turn are worth noting. The first being that demands of territorial restitution according to the terms of the Sevres Peace Agreement should be delivered, as a kind of punishment upon the Turkish perpetrators.<sup>20</sup> The second aspect involved the idea that the Jewish Holocaust in some way occurred because the perpetrators of the earlier crime against the Armenians went unpunished. The major link in supporting this claim was Hitler's justification to his military commanders that they would go unpunished for being ruthless in the invasion of Poland. He reasoned that ruthlessness would be necessary, because "who now remembered what the Ottoman Turks had done to the Armenians?" It is still argued that if the CUP had been punished, Hitler would not have attempted his campaign of annihilation.<sup>21</sup> Claims for restitution of territory and the lack of punishment of the CUP emboldening Hitler reverberated through scholarly and secular work on the Armenian Genocide, with the adoption of the term genocide to define the event as the most obvious impact of the commemorative turn.

The Turkish response to the commemorative turn directly impacted much of the scholarly work done from that point forward. As Turkish denial increased so did the scholarly work proving that the genocide occurred. Scholars trying to prove genocide during the 1960s and 1970s were willing to use any verifiable source that promoted their stance. However, as Turkish denial continued, this would change greatly in the 1980s as Vahakn Dadrian, one of the premier Armenian Genocide scholars, began to dominate the field.

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<sup>20</sup> Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 216.

<sup>21</sup> Kevork Bardakjian, *Hitler and the Armenian Genocide*, (Cambridge, Mass: Zoryan Institute, 1985).

The single most apparent attribute that sets Dadrian apart from others is his command of many languages including German, English, French, Turkish, Ottoman Turkish and Armenian. Each language is important for the study of the Armenian Genocide, because these are the primary languages in which firsthand sources were written. Dadrian could work with and connect many more sources to corroborate proof of genocide. In addition, Dadrian placed his work within the framework of genocide theory. He took this a step further by arguing that to prove genocide it was necessary that only sources which would bear no ill will against the Ottoman Empire during World War I be used, particularly Turkish, German, and Austro-Hungarian sources. Dadrian made it his work to bring these kinds of sources to light with multi-language publications of books and journal articles such as *Documentation of the Armenian Genocide in German and Austrian Sources*, *Documentation of the Armenian Genocide in the Turkish Sources*, and *Textual Analyses of the Key Indictment of the Turkish Military Tribunal Investigating the Armenian Genocide*.<sup>22</sup> In his major publication, *The History of the Armenian Genocide*,<sup>23</sup> which has gone through seven editions, he weaves much of his work together to create what is considered one of the most masterful studies of the Armenian Genocide. This work among his many journal articles and publications, has since the early 1980s, been the primary touch point for Armenian Genocide scholarship.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Vahakn N. Dadrian, *Documentation of the Armenian Genocide in German and Austrian Sources*, (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1994); Vahakn N. Dadrian, *Documentation of the Armenian Genocide in the Turkish Sources*, (Jerusalem: Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide, 1991); Vahakn N. Dadrian, *Textual Analyses of the Key Indictment of the Turkish Military Tribunal Investigating the Armenian Genocide*, (Jerusalem: Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide, 1991).

<sup>23</sup> Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus*, (Providence, RI: Berghahn Books, 2003).

<sup>24</sup> Thomas De Waal, *Great Catastrophe: Armenians and Turks in the Shadow of Genocide*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 47-48.

Due to the brazen and bold nature of Dadrian's work, he has also received much criticism that has in turn improved the overall scholarship on the genocide. Primarily he has been accused of misleading sources, supporting non-authentic sources and willfully mistranslating the works of others. However, he is most often praised for his scrupulous discovery and honest use of sources among scholars throughout the world. The contentiousness of his work has helped fuel future work. His efforts have been partially responsible for the vast and diverse scholarship that has developed during the past two decades. The longest lasting effect of his work was the concept of proof using only Turkish-friendly sources. He and his contemporaries argue that the genocide was not a religious event, stating instead that it was a product of Turkish nationalism and nation building with religion playing a minor and subsidiary role.<sup>25</sup>

With a surge in Armenian Genocide prominence at the hand of scholars such as Dadrian, as well as much work and lobbying by Armenian societies in the west, Turkey saw an increase in scholarship that repudiated an Armenian Genocide. Beginning in the 1980s, and especially from the 1990s, the Turkish state funneled a lot of money into studies that fuel denial. In 2001, the Turkish government established the Institute for Armenian Research in Ankara which functions almost entirely as a genocide denial think tank. Tactics taken by scholars in the institute include an attempt to diminish the number of Armenians killed, focus on incidents in which Armenians attempted to resist the Turkish authorities to argue that the event was not genocide but in fact a civil war, and accuse Armenians of attempting to commit genocide against the Turks. Several western

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<sup>25</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 4-6.

scholars also follow this line of inquiry; however most consider this to be revisionist history akin to neo-Nazi denialism.<sup>26</sup>

Guenter Lewy and Justin McCarthy stand at the forefront of modern western historians of this line of thinking. Lewy, who has been called the “David Irving” of Armenian Genocide denial, argued in his 2007 book *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey: A Disputed Genocide*,<sup>27</sup> that there is no smoking gun. Specifically, that there is no single document in which the CUP claims direct intent to wipe out the Armenian people, therefore it was not genocide due to lack of proven intent. He also utilizes a host of other arguments that many genocide scholars call fallacious, to cast doubt on the trove of documentation which other Armenian scholars utilize. Lewy, McCarthy and others argue that even though what the Armenians went through is deplorable it is not comparable to what the Jews experienced at the hands of the Nazis and therefore the Armenians did not suffer from genocide; this is sometimes called Holocaust Exceptionalism.<sup>28</sup> These publications, whether they are books or articles in journals, are frequently refuted in subsequent journals and books such as Taner Akcam’s article *Guenter Lewy’s The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey* which targets Lewy’s methods of selective sources and other embellishments.<sup>29</sup>

A turn back to using all sources began in 2006. By this time the Armenian Genocide had become an accepted fact by almost all scholars, and had been accepted as historical fact by many states including Switzerland, Russia, and Greece. Raymond

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<sup>26</sup> Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, 219-27.

<sup>27</sup> Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey: A Disputed Genocide* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2007).

<sup>28</sup> Jennifer Glaser, "Of Superheroes and Synecdoche: Holocaust Exceptionalism, Race, and the Rhetoric of Jewishness in America," *Jewish Rhetorics: History, Theory, Practice* (2014), 231-248.

<sup>29</sup> Taner Akcam, "Guenter Lewy’s *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey*," *Genocide Studies and Prevention*, 2008, 111-43.

Kevorkian, in his 2006 book *Le Génocide des Arméniens* (published in English in 2011 as *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History*<sup>30</sup>), acknowledged the incredible work done by Vahakn Dadrian. However, he claimed that it was now time to utilize more than just Turkish friendly sources. Much of this book used Armenian sources that had been little used previously and corroborated the sources used by Dadrian. In addition, Kevorkian focused on the CUP leadership, Armenian political leadership, detailed phases of the genocide, and the aftermath in Ottoman courts. He endeavored entirely to prove the genocide in a clear and concise manner. However, this book opened the scholarship to focus on other works related to the study of the genocide. The scholarship was now more than ample enough to prove genocide; it was time to return the scholarship to what actually happened and how the Armenian and Turk populations were affected.

A significant contributor to this ensuing scholarship is Taner Akcam who is one of few Turkish scholars who has wholly accepted the reality of the genocide. In his 2007 book *A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility*,<sup>31</sup> he did not question the fact of the genocide but instead focused on what denial of the genocide has done to Turks over time. He emphasized the importance of how acceptance would bring an understanding of the past and improvement of the future. Along the same lines of not attempting to prove but instead study different aspects of the genocide, Akcam provided an incredible study into CUP confiscation of Armenian

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<sup>30</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 7-8.

<sup>31</sup> Taner Akcam, *A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility*, (New York: Picador, 2006).

property in his 2015 book *The Spirit of the Laws: The Plunder of Wealth in the Armenian Genocide*.<sup>32</sup>

To reemphasize, today there is a rapidly expanding historiography on the Armenian Genocide fueled in part by greater acceptance of the event in academic and international circles. Many memoirs and stories of individual experiences or singular events are more prominent today than at any point in the past, even compared to the years immediately after the genocide. Other topics of study include Armenian participation in the Wilsonian Moment, Armenian relief and popular response, Armenian Genocide in the media, denialism, and others. With this recent increase of scholarship, the historiography is likely on the cusp of more turns and the understanding of the past may become clearer.

The historiography is bereft of work on the regional aspects of the genocide. Kevorkian's aforementioned work is the first attempt at a large scale consideration of how the genocide was carried out regionally. Taner Akcam stated in a book review "the book presents the story of deportation and killings by individual cities. This is also a first."<sup>33</sup> Even though there are several studies looking at specific cities, these are primarily in the Armenian language which has prevented many of the best sources from influencing the overall historiography. Kevorkian laid the groundwork for greater inquiry along these lines with his extensive use and translation of previously unused Armenian sources. Despite the lack of work in this part of the Armenian Genocide historiography, there is a lot of work that discusses what took place in various places, especially in discovering who was involved in carrying out the deportations.

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<sup>32</sup> Taner Akcam, *The Spirit of the Laws: The Plunder of Wealth in the Armenian Genocide*, (New York: Berghahn Books, 2015).

<sup>33</sup> Taner Akcam "The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History," *Studies In Ethnicity & Nationalism* 15, no. 1 (April 2015), 198.

The scholarship of the Armenian Genocide has taken many turns in approach, argument, and stance. The study of the Armenian Genocide is significant because of denialism concerning the event, its nature as a crime committed by a government against its own people, and its role in the development of a nation state from a multi-ethnic empire. The consensus among genocide scholars and scholars of violence is that if we cannot accept and understand diverse horrific events such as the Armenian Genocide, how are we to come to grips with our present violence in places such as Syria and Myanmar to pave a brighter path into the future? Study of the Armenian Genocide is only one piece of this significant, complicated, and contentious puzzle. However, as one of those pieces, it is evident from the historiography that it is becoming better understood, more informative, and increasingly appreciated.

This thesis paper does not attempt to prove that genocide took place. Though this work certainly contributes to that overall literature, for our purposes it is assumed that genocide happened. Instead the focus is on quantifiable information that helps illustrate the processes utilized by the CUP, without attempting to point out how these processes insinuate that a genocide took place. Baseline information from Kevorkian and other sources with disparate information are utilized to contribute to the overall understanding of the regional considerations of the deportations. By using this approach, we cut through the web of nationalistic debate, and focus more intently on what happened and why it matters.

### Methods of Analysis

The Armenian Genocide is characterized as the intentional removal and destruction of the Armenian people from Anatolia to the deserts of Syria and

Mesopotamia by the government of the Ottoman Empire during the Great War.<sup>34</sup>

Raymond Kevorkian, as part of his seminal work *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History*,<sup>35</sup> integrated into his global study of the event a region-by-region presentation of information that helps illustrate the processes used to carry out the genocide. This information allocated by region includes how many Armenians there were before the war began in 1914, the number of people deported, the number of people who arrived to deportation camps, dates of deportation, routes of deportation, methods of killing during deportation, and organization charged with deportation.<sup>36</sup> Kevorkian's work is the most complete regional study on the deportations and it was chosen carefully to be the main source for this geospatial analysis. Information was pulled out of the narrative form provided by Kevorkian and placed into a geodatabase, with the purpose of spatially placing the deportation data and assigning this information into a quantifiable form.

These details are ideal for placing in a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) database allocated by administrative unit because they detail, in data form, the process and scale of deportation. Each of these details can either be measured numerically (people deported), by date (date of deportation), or by category (organization charged with deportation). The primary source information can be used to represent and analyze the development of the genocide as it took place in each administrative unit in Anatolia. The three major forms of administrative units in the Ottoman Empire on the eve of WWI were provinces (*vilayets*), counties (*sancaks*), and townships (*kazas*). The information

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<sup>34</sup> Peter Balakian, *The Burning Tigris* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003), 10.

<sup>35</sup> Raymond Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*.

<sup>36</sup> Raymond Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 2.



can be easily represented and studied in polygon form by allocating the data to these administrative units.<sup>37</sup>

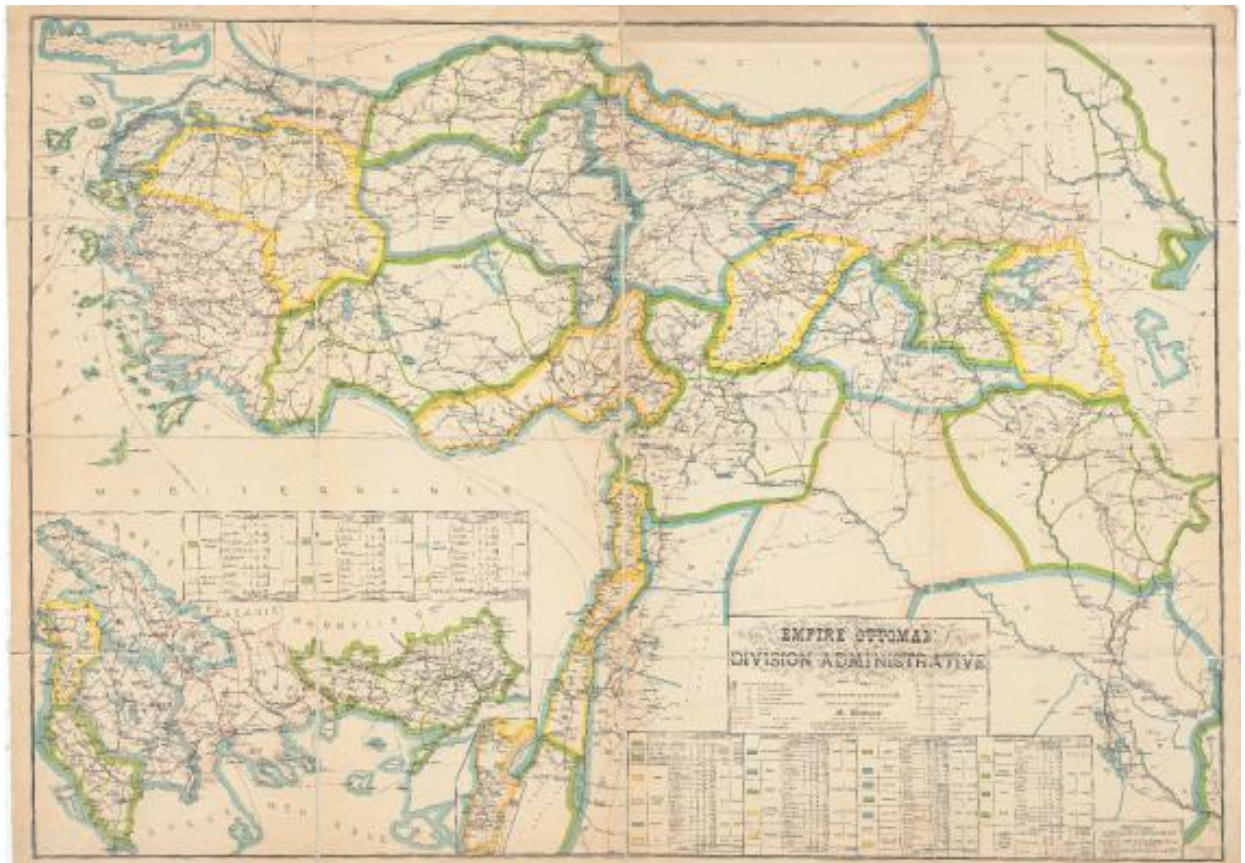


Figure 1 – A map of the administrative districts of the Ottoman Empire in 1899. Entitled: *Empire Ottoman: division administrative, dressée d'après le Salnamé 1899/1317 par R. Huber*. Published by F. Loeffler in 1899. Courtesy of Harvard Map Collection, Harvard College Library.

Before any data could be entered, represented, and analyzed, a shapefile was created to allocate the data regionally. The administrative units used by the Ottoman Empire during World War I existed only for a short time, from 1896 to 1918. There were no any existing shapefiles for the administrative units of this time period. However, the Harvard Map Collection provided a hand drawn map of the Ottoman Empire administrative units done in 1899 at a scale of 1:1,500,000. It is georeferenced to the

<sup>37</sup> Daniel A. Griffith, Larry J. Layne, John Keith Ord, and Akio Sone, *A Casebook for Spatial Statistical Data Analysis: A Compilation of Analysis of Different Thematic Data Sets*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 6-7.

'Europe Lambert Conformal Conic' projection with a central meridian of 38 degrees east. There is some error expected in using this map due to inaccuracies in the original measurements and drawing of the map, grid-like seams due to the map being folded as a booklet, and minor errors made during the digitization and georeferencing process. However, for this historical GIS, the error is acceptable. This map was used to draw and georeference the administrative units into three feature classes, one for each kind of administrative unit. Within the attribute tables for each feature class, categories were made for the name of the administrative unit, and the name of the administrative unit(s) for which the unit is contained (vilayet for the sancak shapefile, vilayet and sancak for the kaza shapefile), Armenian population in 1914, and the aforementioned categories pulled from Kevorkian's study. Currently only the vilayets of Erzerum, Bitlis, and Adana are represented in the kaza shapefile, as these are the primary regions studied in this work.

The population data comes from the Armenian Patriarchate's Census done from 1913 to 1914. The census was done by diocese, however Kevorkian reassigned the census data by kaza. This census was chosen because it contains the least bias of available censuses from the time period shortly before the war. Examinations of censuses done by the Ottoman government has proven that the Armenian populations were made artificially lower to de-emphasize Armenian presence within its borders (the discrepancies are made obvious when compared to concurrent tax data). The Patriarchate accordingly had no interest in doctoring its figures, which it knew would be promptly verified by two European inspectors.<sup>38</sup> The data used for the other categories comes from numerous primary sources used by Raymond Kevorkian in *The Armenian Genocide*. This

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<sup>38</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 271-72; Kaiser, *Genocide at the Twilight*, 382.

choice was made because Kevorkian did not limit his use of sources to those perceived to be politically acceptable (approved by Turkish authorities). Instead, he used all applicable and verifiable sources. Therefore, his accumulation of data is more broad than other studies, in that he is not trying to persuade Turkish detractors, but is simply presenting all verifiable information that he has unearthed.

Attributes within a geodatabase must adhere to the input type selected, such as short integer, long integer, float, text, or date. For data to be useful for statistical analysis and representation, it is best that it be in a numeric type such as integer, float or date. However, when working with historical sources that reference events, often the sources provide vague information. This is seen in many instances with sources that provide information on when a deportation took place or how many people were deported. In order to use this information within a GIS it was necessary to designate specific numbers to vague terms.

With that in mind these are the equations for the following vague numeric terms: couple equals 2, few equals 3, some equals 5, several equals 10, dozen equals 12, and a few dozen equals 36. An Armenian household equals 6 1/2. This was determined by dividing the number of Armenian households in Erzerum in 1914 by the overall Armenian population in Erzerum in 1914, because both numbers are known. It is recognized that this is a number expected for a densely-populated city and that the number of individuals in a rural Armenian household were typically higher, being closer to ten. However, it was decided to use one number for all regions, rather than using differing equations based on the type of population distribution of any given region. In situations where the sources claim that all of a population was deported, killed, or

otherwise in a given region, the number used to recognize “all” is the population attributed to the region in the Armenian Patriarchate 1914 Census.

These are the equations for the following vague terms concerning dates:

beginning of a named month equals the first day of the named month, the middle of a named month equals the fifteenth day of the named month, the end of a named month equals the thirtieth day of the named month (twenty-eighth for February), beginning of a named season equals the first day of the first month of the named season, middle of a named season equals the fifteenth day of the second month of the named season, and the end of a named season equals the thirtieth day of the third month of the named season. Therefore, it is recognized that the numbers entered into the geodatabase for the various attributes are not exact, because the sources being utilized often use inexact language. However, the numbers are accurate based on the aforementioned equations and are reliable based on recognizing that the numbers are interpreted from vague terms.

For this study the term “survivor” must be defined. The main subject of this study is the deportations of Ottoman Armenians from April of 1915 to March of 1916. Bearing that in mind, a survivor is somebody who either successfully arrived to a deportation camp or somebody who successfully escaped deportation based on the information that is available. What may or may not have happened to these survivors following the deportation phase of the genocide is not considered. For example, many deportees who successfully arrived to deportation camps would later die due to disease or deliberate attacks on the deportation camps. Likewise, many escapees into Kurdish safe havens and the Russian Caucasus, would later die as the Ottoman Turks subdued the Kurdish safe havens and conquered portions of the Russian Caucasus. In addition, Armenian women

and children who were forced to join Turkish and other Muslim families are not considered survivors of the deportations, as they are also victims of the genocidal intent of the CUP. Some of these woman and children would later escape from these circumstances, making them survivors of the genocide but not the deportations. These same arguments apply to Armenian families who chose to convert to Islam and were spared deportation due to their conversion (although this was extremely rare and they would still typically be numbered among the last to be deported from a given area).

This study applies only to Armenian deportees, and those deported with Armenians. During the Armenian deportations, Syriac populations in the vilayets of Bitlis and Dyarbekir received nearly identical treatment as the neighboring Armenians. In addition, other ethnic groups such as the Greeks and various Kurdish tribes would become the victims of other nation building campaigns in Anatolia carried out by the CUP and other Turkish leadership. The actions taken against these groups are worth being studied and considered. However, the scope of this study has been necessarily limited to the deportations of Ottoman Armenians during 1915 and 1916.

Because Anatolia was occupied by many different ethnicities over the ages, there are a plethora of names for each location, with varying spellings. It was determined to utilize the place names and spellings most often used by Kevorkian. His English translation typically uses the Anglicized Armenian place names and spelling, especially that which was used in the early twentieth century.

The SO, the army, and the local governments under CUP direction carried out the deportations. The methods used to carry out the deportations were influenced by the regions they took place in, and the goals the CUP had for each given region. The data in

the geodatabase show patterns that confirm these statements. Chapter one focuses on the areas of deportation. It explores the physical and cultural geography of Anatolia, with a focus on how these features impacted the CUP's approach to carrying out the deportations. It also introduces the three main vilayets used for this study – Erzerum, Bitlis, and Adana. The events that preceded the deportations in each of these areas are detailed. Chapter two focuses on the organizations the CUP used to organize and enforce the deportations – the Special Organization, the army, and local governments. The main CUP leadership and their ideals are described. And the workings and doings of the organizations concerning deportation are explored. Chapter three contains case studies of the methods used in each of the three vilayets focusing on events and the data to understand which methods were used to deport the Armenians and why.

The Armenian Genocide was carried out through deportations, the CUP utilized the general deportation order to permanently remove most of the Armenians they governed in Anatolia. The historiography of this event, in focusing on proving that genocide took place, has widely neglected to focus on the information from primary sources that illustrate what the CUP did in each of the administrative units under their control throughout Anatolia. Recent work has begun to fill this gap, this study builds on that work by utilizing the tools available through GIS. A regional exploration of the deportations reveals patterns of coordination, in which the CUP used specific organizations to carry out the deportations with methods that reflected regional goals.

## **Chapter One: Areas of Deportation**

The primary focus of this study is on the nature of the regions, the unique organizations charged with deportation, and the methods of deportation and killing that were employed. The deportations did not take place in a vacuum. They were shaped by the physical and cultural geography of the places in which they occurred. The Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) used the physical geography at their disposal to more effectively reduce the Armenian population. They used river gorges to trap deportees, tossed victims in the river, and sent the remaining individuals to the deserts in Syria where long-term survival was difficult. They utilized the cultural geography too, such as convincing Kurdish and Cirkez tribes to attack deportees at strategic locations. Anatolia was a very complex area and the strategies the CUP used in carrying out the deportations were in direct response to those complexities.

At the onset of the Great War, the Armenian population within the Ottoman Empire resided almost entirely within Anatolia, with a few enclaves within East Thrace. Armenians had been present within eastern Anatolia for nearly three thousand years, called by some as Western Armenia. The Ottoman government from the sixteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century referred to it as Ermenistan (Armenia). Reform of administrative units in the Ottoman Empire during the late nineteenth century split Ermenistan into six vilayets known as the Armenian provinces – Erzerum, Van, Bitlis, Diyarbekir, Sivas, and Mamuret ul-Aziz. The region known as Cilicia, around present day Adana, was settled and ruled by Armenians from the ninth to thirteenth centuries. There was a significant presence of Armenians in that area up to 1915. Armenian colonies were established throughout western Anatolia and East Thrace from the sixteenth through the

nineteenth centuries. Large populations of Armenians moved to the big cities in western Anatolia in the nineteenth century, such as Constantinople, Angora, and Bursa.

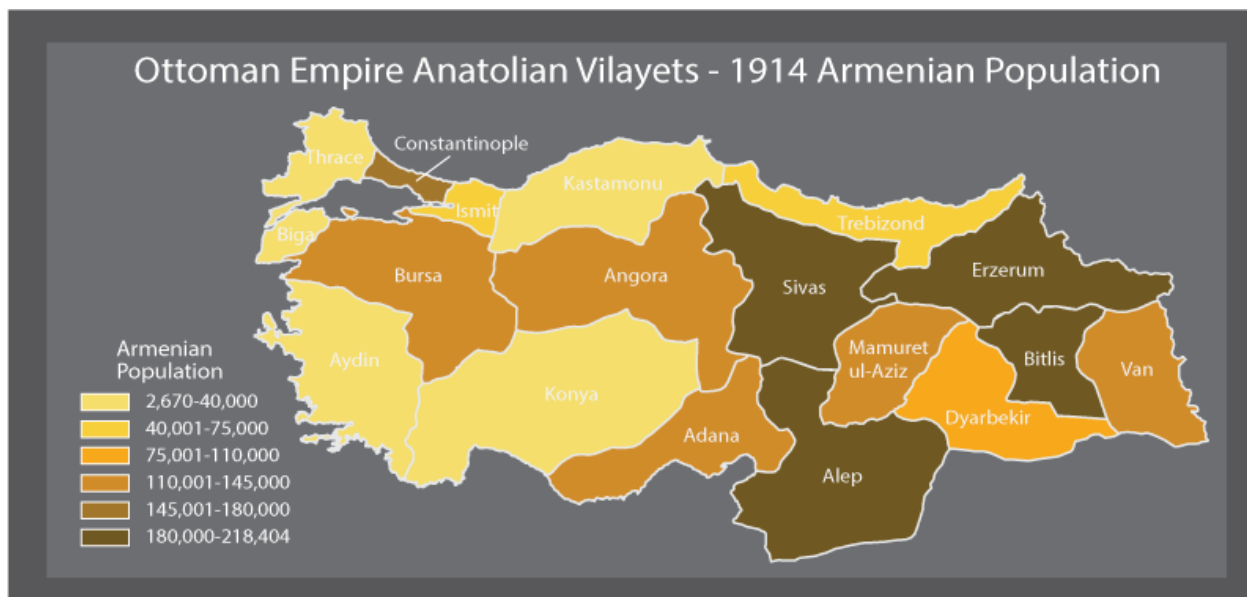


Figure 2 – A map of the Anatolian vilayets in 1914 representing the Armenian population before deportation.

The map in *figure 2* shows the Armenian population in each of the Anatolian vilayets in 1914. At that time the population in Anatolia numbered twenty million including two million Armenians, accounting for about ten percent of the total population. However, the Armenian presence was much more significant in eastern Anatolia, being as high as fifty percent of the total population, as was the case in the vilayet of Van.<sup>39</sup> Likewise, because of the long presence of Armenians in eastern Anatolia, that area was known within and without the Ottoman Empire as Armenia and Armenian. In contrast to western Anatolia which was known as Turkish and Greek.

The geography and infrastructure of Anatolia impacted how the deportations were carried out. Anatolia is characterized by two plateaus, separated by the Antitaurus Mountains; the Armenian Plateau, with an average height of 6,000 feet above sea level;

<sup>39</sup> Robert H Hewson, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 207; Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 278.



and the Anatolian Plateau, gradually rising above the Aegean and Black seas to an average height of 3,000 feet above sea level. These plateaus can easily be characterized as eastern and western Anatolia respectively.

The Armenian Plateau is densely mountainous, bounded by the Antitaurus Mountains to the west, the Pontic Alps and the Caucasus Mountains to the north, the Taurus Mountains to the south, and the Qaradagh Mountains to the east. The Tigris and Euphrates rivers originate in eastern Anatolia, cutting deep river gorges as they wind towards Mesopotamia to the south.<sup>40</sup> These river gorges were strategically used as deportation routes in eastern Anatolia. The gorges acted as traps where the Special Organization (SO) could cull the number of Armenian deportees as they followed the designated routes to the deportation camps located in the Syrian Desert.



Figure 3 – A map of the Anatolian physical geography and notable location in 1915.

Eastern Anatolia, once a strategic center for trade routes and control of southwest

<sup>40</sup> Hewson, *Armenia*, 17.

Asia, had, by the twentieth century, become a remote area made even more so by the lack of infrastructure at the onset of the Great War.<sup>41</sup> Travel through this area was difficult. The roads were bad, with many people still using a primitive two-wheeled cart, throughout the Armenian Plateau. In some areas, camel caravans were still the primary method of moving cargo.<sup>42</sup> Western Anatolia, in stark contrast, is a lower elevation region, with isolated mountain ranges, deserts, and plains. The Ottoman Empire had allocated resources to improving the infrastructure, resulting in many roads capable of vehicular travel and a budding set of railroads. Moving deportees through western Anatolia was easier, despite being more visible to foreigners and the outside world.

The CUP triumvirate who ruled the Ottoman Empire during the Great War, Taalat Pasha, Djemal Pasha, and Enver Pasha, had to tackle some very real problems affecting the Ottoman Empire prior to and during the war. The empire had been roiled with ethnic wars for decades and the leaders were entangled in infamously ethnic conflicts, known as the Balkan Wars, from the moment they gained power. The European powers were putting a lot of pressure on the Ottoman Empire to improve the treatment of Christian minorities. This proved to be a real issue for the multi-ethnic Ottoman Empire. Britain, Russia, and France regularly used the plight of Ottoman Christians to further their own goals.<sup>43</sup> In addition, France and Great Britain controlled much of the Ottoman debt. The Ottoman government was in a position of weakness as long as foreign entities had

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<sup>41</sup> Mark Levene, *Genocide in the Age of the Nation State: The Rise of the West and the Coming Genocide*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 303.

<sup>42</sup> Hewson, *Armenia*, 203.

<sup>43</sup> Ronald Grigor Suny, *A History of the Armenian Genocide*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 91-93.

economic control over the Ottoman Empire.<sup>44</sup> Additionally, Greeks and Armenians within the empire controlled the larger part of the economic functions.<sup>45</sup>

Addressing the meddling of foreign powers in the Ottoman affairs was a complicated proposition. In 1878 the Russians, acting as the protectors of Christians, defeated the Ottomans in a short and decisive war. In the Treaty of San Stefano, the Russians exacted harsh terms that imposed Russian military presence in eastern Anatolia, ostensibly to protect the Armenians. The treaty even included a clause specifically protecting Armenians from Kurds and Circassians, which can be seen as a turning point where Armenians turned to an enemy of the Ottoman Empire for support.<sup>46</sup> The British considered the treaty to be too advantageous for the Russians, convening a congress in Berlin to restructure its terms. In 1880 the Treaty of Berlin was agreed upon by the European Powers and the Ottoman Empire which ceded Russian protection of the Armenians in eastern Anatolia. The treaty replaced the Russian protection with a clause that reforms to improve the Armenian's condition would be enforced by the European Powers. Thus, the Armenian Question transitioned from a wedge used by the Russians to aggressively insert themselves into Ottoman affairs, to a general issue that any European Power could use to involve themselves in Anatolia.<sup>47</sup> The CUP reacted to these issues by

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<sup>44</sup> Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 36; Donald C. Blaisdell, *European Financial Control in the Ottoman Empire: A Study of the Establishment, Activities, and Significance, of the Administration of the Ottoman Public Debt*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1929).

<sup>45</sup> Raymond Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History*, (New York: I.B.Touris, 2011), 282; Hilmar Kaiser, "Genocide at the Twilight of the Ottoman Empire," in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, ed. Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 366.

<sup>46</sup> Richard G. Hovannisian, "Historical Dimensions of the Armenian Question, 1878-1923", in *The Armenian Genocide in Perspective*, ed. Richard Hovannisian, (London: Transaction Books, 1986), 21-3.

<sup>47</sup> Suny, *Armenian Genocide*, 96. Thomas De Waal, *Great Catastrophe*, 25.

asserting their control over eastern Anatolia, using the region to rebuff Western powers and to further their own goals of rebuilding the empire.

This involvement came a head months before the July Crisis when an Armenian reform plan was signed into law in February of 1914 that would place European inspectors in eastern Anatolia to oversee the reforms.<sup>48</sup> The CUP saw this development as a significant intrusion into their affairs. They sought to put an end to such disturbances, and ensure the Turkish place in the Ottoman Empire. The CUP viewed removing the Armenian people from Anatolia as a viable action to resolve the problem of European intrusion. Dr. Cerkez Reshid illustrates this point in his memoirs, “Either they us, we them. ... The Armenian Bandits were a load of harmful microbes that had afflicted the body of the fatherland. Was it not the duty of the doctor to kill the microbes?”<sup>49</sup> Cerkez makes clear in this retrospective opinion the mindset the CUP leadership had developed. The Armenians were seen not only as a threat to their governance and the good of the empire, but they were also a threat to the Turks themselves.

At the same time the CUP prioritized nationalizing the economy. As early as 1912, the CUP began encouraging efforts by Turks to take economic control from Armenians and Greeks.<sup>50</sup> Additionally, a minority of Armenians began clamoring for an independent or autonomous Armenia in Anatolia, the Turkish heartland. Armenian political leaders of the *Dashnk* party had expressed that independence was a preferable alternative to reforms. These political murmurings however were not widely accepted by

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<sup>48</sup> Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide*, (New York: Berghan Books, 2003), 215.

<sup>49</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser. *From “Patriotism” to Mass Murder: Dr. Mehmed Reşid (1873–1919), in A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Ronald Grigor Suny, et al., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 137.

<sup>50</sup> Stephan H. Astourian, "Genocidal process: Reflections on the Armeno-Turkish polarization." In *The Armenian Genocide*, (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1992), 70.

the Armenian populace and had little traction to be made a reality.<sup>51</sup> Such a predicament had to be nipped in the bud. The triumvirate desperately attempted to restructure Anatolia's ethnic makeup, while putting the economy in control of the Turks to solve these problems.<sup>52</sup> Due to their economic prowess and heavy European support, the Armenians were at the center of the events to follow.

The removal of the Ottoman Armenians in 1915 by deportation is set apart from typical treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. Armenians were Christians, which limited their rights within the empire. The Ottoman Empire organized its non-Muslim subjects into several religious governmental units called millets that were allowed to apply religious law under the overall Ottoman law. The millets had less rights and were historically treated poorly within the empire.<sup>53</sup> The Armenians were greatly repressed during the Hamidian Massacres from 1894 to 1896 that led to over 100,000 Armenian deaths.<sup>54</sup> Using force against Armenian households for requisitions or extra taxation was considered acceptable by the governments of the Ottoman Empire from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century through the time the deportations began. The Ottoman government violently dealt with discontent subjects in the Balkans and Arabia, which demonstrates their use of violence to address ethnic conflicts throughout their domain.<sup>55</sup> However, the

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<sup>51</sup> Elif Shafak, "Accelerating the Flow of Time: Soft Power and the Role of Intellectuals in Turkey," *World Literature Today* 80 no. 1 (2006): 25; Louise Nalbandian, *The Ermenian Revolutionary Movement: The Development of Armenian Political Parties Through the Nineteenth Century*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), 108-09.

<sup>52</sup> Bloxham, *The Great Game*, 94.

<sup>53</sup> Shavkat Kasymov, "The Example of the Armenian Genocide and the Role of the Millet System in its Execution," *Social Identities* 19, no. 1 (2013), 9.

<sup>54</sup> Johannes Lepsius, *Armenia and Europe: An Indictment*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1897), 330-331; Selim Deringil, 2009. "'The Armenian Question Is Finally Closed': Mass Conversions of Armenians in Anatolia during the Hamidian Massacres of 1895-1897." *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 2009: 351-55.

<sup>55</sup> Suny, *A History of the Armenian Genocide*, 92.

deportations of 1915 and 1916 does not fit into the previous patterns, the near total removal of the Armenian people went far beyond repression or limitation of rights. In the actions taken by the CUP there was a transition from repression to removal.

Nineteenth century Russian expansion preceded Balkan movements toward independence; Ottoman rulers used both as pretenses for population engineering throughout the empire, especially in eastern Anatolia. At the beginning of the nineteenth century eastern Anatolia was dominated by Armenians. By the end of the century they had become a slight minority. Primary factors for this shift were the relocation of Circassians who were displaced by the Russians, relocation of the Balkan Muslims expelled by newly independent Balkan nations, the Hamidian Massacres from 1894 to 1896, and Armenian emigration.<sup>56</sup>

The ethnic and geographic diversity makeup throughout Anatolia, by necessity, required the CUP to apply different methods regionally. Taking this a step further, the CUP had differing regional goals that impacted the methods applied. These goals included erasing the presence of Armenian artifacts from eastern Anatolia and taking control of Armenian economic interests in western Anatolia. Three vilayets illustrate the significance of these deportations, as evidenced in the decline of Armenians therein. The vilayets of Erzerum, Bitlis, and Adana each have historic Armenian significance and contained important Armenian communities in 1915. They also serve well as examples of three larger regions that saw different treatment. These regions are first, eastern Anatolia with the exception of the vilayets of Bitlis and Van, second, Bitlis and Van, and third, western Anatolia.

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<sup>56</sup> Hewson, *Armenia*, 179; Dominic Lievin, *Empire, the Russian Empire, and its Rivals*, (London: John Murray, 2000), 153.

Physical geography had a significant impact on the deportations. In eastern Anatolia the deportation routes had to go through deep river gorges to get through the mountainous region. The river gorges were used to kill many deportees. Cultural geography impacted the deportations as well. The CUP deliberately used violent destructive methods in eastern Anatolia where the Armenians had produced millennia of cultural artifacts. They used the SO to bring about a permanent destruction of the Armenians that represented this cultural geography, specifically those who lived in eastern Anatolia. Most of the Armenians from eastern Anatolia were killed before they arrived to deportation camps. To illustrate these points with data, it is important to first understand the circumstances of each of the studied regions just prior to the general deportation orders made on May 27, 1915.

The vilayet of Erzerum was strung out on the eastern frontier of the Ottoman Empire between the Pontic Alps to the north and the Armenian Highlands to the south. The west arm of the Euphrates originates here cutting deep gorges running east to west across the vilayet. Communities throughout Erzerum were isolated in valleys, separated by the numerous mountains found there. In 1914 the vilayet was home to 215,000 Armenians, making up about one third of the overall population of 627,000. The Armenian presence in the vilayet included 406 churches, 76 monasteries and 322 schools. The seat of Erzerum was a city called by the same name boasting an Armenian population of 40,000. The city of Erzerum had long been a defensive stronghold, housing the Ottoman army charged with defending the eastern provinces from Russian and Persian invasion. For this reason, a significant and powerful Turkish presence presided in Erzerum at the Ottoman's entrance into the Great War. Erzerum was the primary city in

which Ottoman soldiers passed on their way to the Caucasus front. This vilayet was home to a couple other cities of significance, including Erzincan 100 miles to the west of Erzerum, where 40,000 or so Armenians could be found in and around the city. However, most of the vilayet was rural and had seen a decline of permanent settlements throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This was due to the destitute circumstances of nomadic Kurdish tribes, who regularly harassed Christian and even other Muslim populations throughout the vilayet, murdering and plundering at will.<sup>57</sup>

During the early Ottoman military offensives in the winter of 1914-15, Armenian populations along the border of Russia and Erzerum were targeted for violence and other abuses during the fighting. These excesses can be explained as strategic imperatives and a desire of the CUP to eliminate potential enemies; however most of the Armenians of Erzerum were spared overt violence at this time.<sup>58</sup> There was enough violence going on that the Armenian populace in general was on high alert, preparing for worse things to come.<sup>59</sup> One of these vicious episodes included a murder of a parish priest by “three Turkish irregulars,” members of the SO, who had spent the night in his house. In another situation, 100 Armenian men were illegally locked up because they were unable to come up with 100 Turkish pounds that SO members demanded of them. Turkish regulars would also commandeer Armenian homes in the villages when they were short on barracks housing, consuming all the food stores they found.

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<sup>57</sup> Hewson, *Armenia*, 176-78.

<sup>58</sup> Hilmar Kaiser, “A Scene from the Inferno”: The Armenians from Erzerum and the Genocide, 1915-1916. In Hans-Lukas Kieser and Domonik Schaller (eds), *The Armenian Genocide and the Shoah*, (Zurich: Chronos Verlag, 2002), 135-45.

<sup>59</sup> Raymond Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History*, (New York: I.B.Touris, 2011), 289.



An uptick of violence began in February of 1915 when SO members began murdering influential men on the street, in broad daylight, without consequence. Murders of this kind, as well as raping and pillaging in outer rural areas, increased through April.<sup>60</sup> Despite this increase in ethnic violence, the Armenian leadership in Erzerum, especially the Armenian Apostolic Bishop, showed no public reaction. Things came to a head on the evening of April 24<sup>th</sup> and the morning of April 25<sup>th</sup> as the Armenian elite and leadership in Erzerum were arrested, as was done throughout the Ottoman Empire at that time (the Allied invasion at Gallipoli began that same evening). Thirty notables were murdered as they were being transferred to Erzincan. Additionally, 500 men were thrown into the city jail and tortured, with the purpose of obtaining admittance of a planned rebellion (whether true or coerced) to justify the deportations.

A couple days earlier a meeting of leadership took place in Erzerum from April 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>. According to an Armenian survivor, Boghos Vartanian, a telegram from the central leadership in Constantinople was obtained that detailed the planned deportation of the Armenians. In response to that telegram, 120 non-Armenian notables met to debate its instructions. Those in attendance broke into three groups. About 40 people argued for limiting the pending removal to only those Armenians along the border zones. Another 20 individuals recommended that the Armenians be left alone, arguing that they were essential to the local economy and the provisional support of the army. The rest, headed by the highest leadership, sided with the instructions from the central leadership and demanded “that all the Armenians be eradicated, that all of them be taken from their homes and then massacred, until not one is left.”<sup>61</sup> This report found in Fonds Andonian’s

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 290.

<sup>61</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 289-93.

archives is a recently discovered source that cleanly illustrates the mindset of Turkish leaders and dignitaries as the deportation orders were made. Clearly not every notable was in favor of deporting the Armenian population, some were against the idea. However, the majority of the leadership supported the CUP orders, arguing for the removal of the Armenians. In any case the scene was now set for the removal of the Armenian populace from Erzerum, which would begin in earnest in the following weeks.

Despite its presence in Erzerum, the Ottoman military played a minor role in the region's deportations. Following the devastation of the Third Army at the battle of Sarikamish, the Fourth Army was the primary Ottoman armed forces operating along the Caucasus front. This military unit was engaged in the vilayet of Van during April and May of 1915. Because they were fighting to the south of Erzerum as the deportations began to take place they were unable to assist in the operations. In addition, the local governments did not have a strong presence outside of the large cities, which limited their ability to enforce the deportations in the rural areas of the vilayet. This was compounded by a number of the local leaders being sympathetic to their Armenian populace. The central CUP leadership exerted extra effort to remove local leaders who refused to enforce the deportations, with individuals who were enthusiastic to do so. In Erzerum most of these replacements came from the SO.

In some cases, the Turkish population was opposed to the deportations. In Bayburt, three Turks were executed to quell the opposition.<sup>62</sup> To make up for these deficiencies in the local government and military presence, the SO was tasked in carrying out the deportations in this vilayet. The creator and leader of the SO, Behaeddin Shakir,

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<sup>62</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 302.

directed in person the brutal beginning phases of the deportations from Erzerum. The SO was also heavily involved throughout eastern Anatolia, including Bitlis where they carried out deportations in concert with and under the direction of the army.

Directly to the south of Erzerum lay the vilayet of Bitlis, in the Armenian Highlands west of Lake Van. Even though it was more mountainous than Erzerum, the people here were found in high concentrations in a handful of plains that cut beneath the mountains, especially the Plain of Mush. Numerous villages sat in deep narrow valleys found within the rugged mountains, particularly in the mountain district of Sasun. In 1914, Bitlis had an Armenian population of 180,000, roughly 20% of those who resided in the vilayet. However, the Armenian presence was extremely high in portions of the vilayet and almost non-existent in others. In the vilayet there were 510 Armenian churches - more than any other vilayet in the empire, 161 Armenian monasteries - including some dating back to the third century, and 207 Armenian schools. The vilayet was also home to a number of Kurdish tribes that had had an aggressive presence in the region for centuries, remaining autonomous until the mid-nineteenth century. These tribes were instrumental in emptying the Armenian population within their strongholds and for successfully defeating the Armenians of Sasun.<sup>63</sup>

The seat of the vilayet was also named Bitlis, laying to the southwest of Lake Van in a valley leading into the highlands. This city had a population of just under 40,000 with 17,000 being Armenian. It was a central hub for the Ottoman military, with a standing army found there. Bitlis was home to a significant military presence in 1915 as the vilayet came under Russian invasion during that summer. It also acted as the primary

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<sup>63</sup> Hewson, *Armenia*, 203-06.

crossroads for sending troops to the Caucasus front. To the northwest of Bitlis lay the Plain of Mush that opened up between the mountains. This plain was home to over 75,000 Armenians. Making it the densest Armenian locale in the entire Ottoman Empire at well over half of the total population on the plain. South of the Plain of Mush are the mountains of Sasun, which was the home of many Armenian towns and villages. This mountain district had a population of 25,000 Armenians who had remained largely independent through the ages and had proven themselves capable of fighting off threats from Kurds and the Ottoman government. They even produced their own arms and ammunition.

The Armenians of Bitlis, like those in Erzerum, experienced violence and harassment as the army was mobilized and requisitions were made in preparation for war in 1914. However, because Bitlis was not the scene of fighting during the winter of 1914-15, the Armenian populace had largely gone unmolested until late April. At this time three local leaders in Bitlis were arrested and hung, a move meant to condition the Armenians psychologically for what was to come. The primary targets at this point were leaders in Armenian political parties, especially in Bitlis where there was little expectation that the Armenians would react. The opposite was the case on the Plain of Mush, where the Armenian presence was great enough that the Armenian leaders there continued to be treated respectfully until the last moment. A meeting from April 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> between a primary CUP leader, Dr. Nazim, and the vali of Bitlis, Mustafa Abdulhalik, took place in which plans were made to remove the Armenian population of Bitlis.<sup>64</sup> The mountainous nature of the region contributed to a plan to isolate the

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<sup>64</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 337.

Armenian communities scattered throughout the vilayet, utilizing the Kurdish tribes to lay siege against the more independent Armenians of Sasun. It was not until June that “deportations” began in this vilayet, primarily due to the significant presence of Armenians in Mush and the remote nature of the vilayet. As we will see, most Armenians here were killed on site and very few were deported further than a half hour outside of town.<sup>65</sup>

At the beginning of June, the manpower necessary to begin removing the Armenian population of Bitlis became available. The retreating Ottoman Fifth Army Expeditionary Forces from the vilayet of Van and a large SO “army” of over 8,000 known as the “Butchers’ Battalion” arrived in the area. Bitlis was the scene of the most violent and extreme case of vengeance that took place during the entire Armenian Genocide. The reason for this is twofold. First, a concentrated Armenian presence for thousands of years had left a physical impact on the region, representing the heart of Armenia.<sup>66</sup> Second, the actions taken in Bitlis took place immediately after a failed attempt to deport the Armenians in the neighboring vilayet of Van. Those Armenians successfully rebelled and repulsed those in charge of deporting them.<sup>67</sup> Many of those who carried out the deportations in Bitlis were the same who failed at Van.

The third vilayet studied in this work is Adana, which bordered the Mediterranean Sea north of the island of Cyprus, and included the Taurus Mountains. Armenians had ruled this area, long known as Cilicia, from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries and still had a significant Armenian population in 1914. This Armenian population accounted for

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 340.

<sup>66</sup> Richard G Hovannisian, ed., *Armenian Baghesh/Bitlis and Taron/Mush* (Costa Mesa, Calif.: Mazda Publishers, 2001), 1-2.

<sup>67</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 337-39.

120,000 of 660,000, about 15 percent of the total population. They were found mostly in the Taurus Mountains in the northern reaches of the vilayet, in and around the city of Adana, and in villages north of the Gulf of Iskenderun. Adana was the scene of Armenian massacres during the early period of CUP rule over the empire.

In mid-April 1909, a brief counter-revolution against the CUP was suppressed. Throughout the empire demonstrations took place against CUP laws that targeted minorities. As the counterrevolution occurred, the Armenians in Adana were optimistic that their place under Ottoman rule would improve. The Turkish citizens in the region responded violently from April 13<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>. Local Turks killed roughly 2,000 Armenians during the massacre, they also looted and burned many Armenian shops. After the counter-revolution failed, the CUP sent a liberation army to Adana on April 25<sup>th</sup>. With no evident Armenian provocation, the army attacked the Armenian quarter of the city. A night of intense massacre ensued in which over 20,000 Armenians were killed.<sup>68</sup> The journalist Henry Charles Woods, after inspecting the ruins, declared “never has the burning of a town been more systematically carried out than at Adana in 1909.”<sup>69</sup> Yet, the Armenian presence remained influential with over 26,000 Armenians still in and around the city in 1915.<sup>70</sup>

The genocidal actions that would take place in Adana were foreshadowed as early as September of 1914 when the local CUP club leader announced his opinion that a nationalization of the economy should take place. The city’s middle-class was made up of Greeks and Armenians who were seen by some Turks, the Turkish government, and their

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<sup>68</sup> Peter Balakian, *The Burning Tigris* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003), 148-54.

<sup>69</sup> Henry Charles Woods, *The Danger Zone of Europe: Changes and Problems in the Near East*, (TF Unwin, 1911), 137.

<sup>70</sup> Hewson, *Armenia*, 194-96.

allies as being propped up by Western countries to insert themselves into Ottoman affairs. The requisitions made during the preparations to enter the Great War took a heavy toll on the Armenians of the region because many of their shops and other holdings were ransacked without repercussion. As the Armenians of nearby Zeitun were massacred and deported in February of 1915, the Armenians in Adana remained on high alert, expecting more reprisals to come.

In late April, more determined actions were taken against these Armenians when 400 members of the elite were arrested. However, in contrast to what took place at the same time in Erzerum, these men were freed one week later. Similar actions took place over the next few weeks in Adana. Twice, the local authorities deported several thousand Armenians, only to them return to their homes within two weeks. The reason for this is because the vali, Ismail Hakki Bey, had friendly relations with the Armenians. In addition, he had the support of the Commander-in-Chief of the Fourth Army, Cemal Pasha, who also had friendly relations with the Armenians of Adana, having been a vali there in 1910. Ismail was especially against the deportations and endeavored to mitigate the deportations from his vilayet for as long as possible. The deportations from this vilayet took place despite the feet dragging of the officials in place there. The Armenians would be deported along a safer route, avoiding the deadly concentration camps. Most would return to Adana after the conclusion of the Great War, only to leave again after France pulled out of Adana. Almost exclusively, the local governments carried out the deportations here, though they were assisted by CUP clubs in the area. The local authorities specifically used isolated mountain roads that wound through the Taurus Mountains to isolate the deportees, keeping them under as much control as possible.

The CUP and the organizations under their direction successfully undertook the removal of nearly two million people from their homes and sent them to deportation camps hundreds of miles away. Considering this was done in a mostly unindustrialized region that did not enjoy a developed transportation infrastructure, it should be noted that this accomplishment faced an uphill battle. The CUP put into place several effective mechanisms. Their ability to play to the emotions of their diverse population was vital for their success. In the west, they relied heavily on Turkish nationalism, a method the CUP preferred as it advanced their goal of Turkish state building. In the east, they had to coerce and rely on the disaffection of the Kurds and Circassians, combined with greater Muslim hostility toward Christians. This can be seen in Bitlis where Turkish nationalism was largely dropped in favor of fomenting religious hatred, which resulted not only in the massacre and removal of Armenians, but also that of thousands of Christian Syrians.<sup>71</sup> There were many Turkish and Kurdish communities that were not in favor of a general removal of Armenians. These communities were usually coerced, by threat of physical harm, to look the other way.<sup>72</sup> However, there was a notable exception as the sancak (county) of Dersim, in the vilayet of Mamuret ul-Aziz, was not under Ottoman control. The Kurdish and Armenian tribes of this remote mountainous locale took in as many as 15,000 Armenian refugees.<sup>73</sup> Most of the survivors who left accounts of what transpired in Erzerum are among those who escaped to Dersim and later joined the Russians when they took control of Erzincan during the summer of 1916.

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<sup>71</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 340; Ronald Grigor Suny. "Religion, Ethnicity, and Nationalism: Armenians, Turks, and the End of the Ottoman Empire." In *In God's Name: Genocide and Religion in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Omer Bartov and Phyllis Mack, (New York: Berghen Books, 2001): 53-4.

<sup>72</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 305; 602.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 421



By playing to the fears and emotions of their various subjects, the CUP set the stage for an effective apparatus of destruction. The CUP had to convince their Muslim subjects that the benefits of removing the Armenians outweighed any costs for doing so. They did this in many ways: offering rewards, inducing fear, provoking religious hatred, and calling upon nationalism.<sup>74</sup> However, the costs devastated the Muslim population immediately following the deportations. By removing the Armenian people, all benefits that came along with their presence was lost. This is notable in the eastern vilayets, as they contributed no taxes to the war effort in 1916, indicating that the Muslim inhabitants of these regions had suffered financial ruin.<sup>75</sup> Additionally, the Muslim populations were devastated as they caught diseases from the maligned and mistreated deportees.

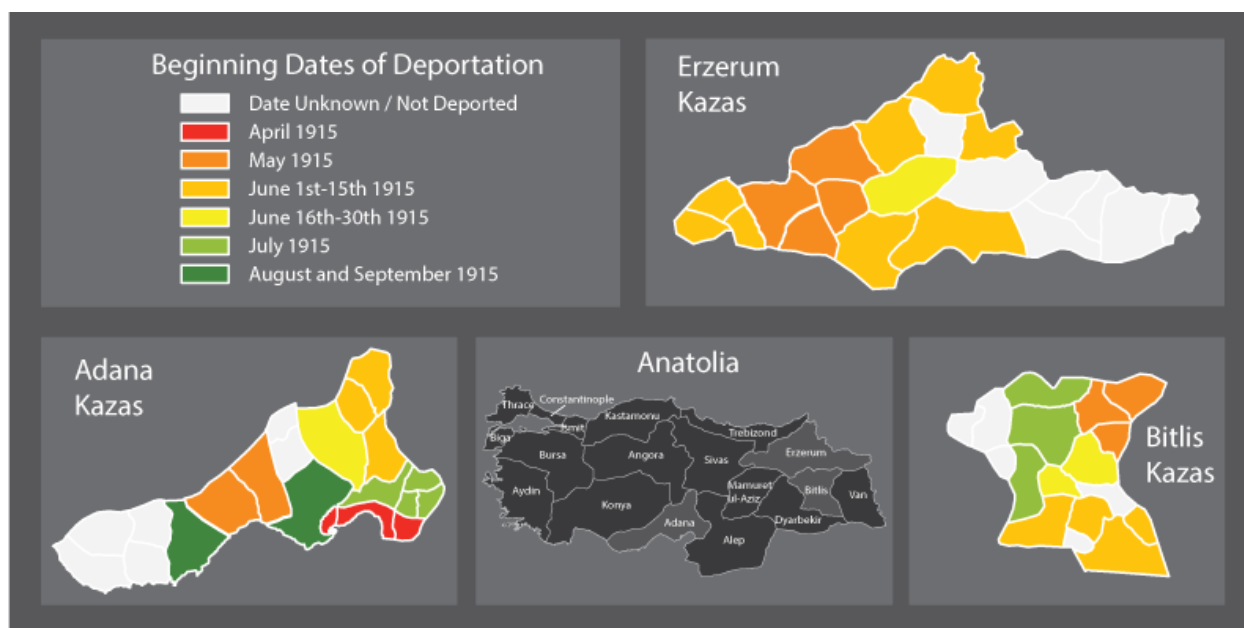


Figure 4 – These maps show when the deportation began from each kaza. For some areas, the process took months such as Hacin at the north end of Adana where the deportations were done from June through October.

The geographic differences of each region did not impact the timing of the deportations. The deportations started at roughly the same time in May for Erzerum,

<sup>74</sup> Henry Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story* (Blackmask Online, 2001).

<sup>75</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 271.

Bitlis, and Adana. In Erzerum the deportations began in and around Erzincan and Bayburt. This was done to empty the areas along the main deportation routes of Armenians before the bulk of the deportees began traveling. The remaining Armenian population of the vilayet was deported in June. The kaza of Erzerum was deported last, beginning on June 16<sup>th</sup> and continuing through July. In Bitlis massacres took place at the north end of the vilayet as the army passed through. The areas of least concern were deported first, in June. These areas included Sis and Bitlis. The Armenian dominated regions of Mush and Sasun were emptied of Armenians in July. Mush was deported before Sasun, as the mountain district was deliberately deported last. In Adana, the kazas north of the Bay of Iskenderun were deported in April following British shelling of the area. In late May, Mersin and Tarsus were deported. The deportations of the rest of the vilayet were mostly completed in June and July. The kazas of Adana and Selefke were the last to be deported in late August and September respectively. A pattern in each vilayet is that the areas of greatest concern were deported last. This isolated the most powerful Armenian communities, reducing opportunities of resistance. The dates of deportation are similar in each of these vilayets beginning at the end of May and being mostly complete by the end of the summer. The implication is that the CUP instructed the deportations to begin in these regions at roughly the same time.

Dealing with the problems of geography, demographics, and resistance that the CUP faced in solving the Armenian problem was done through a latticework of effective communication and invested partners. As such, the central CUP leadership leaned heavily on party members scattered throughout the empire. The Young Turk clubs pervaded every populated region of the empire and were characterized by people who were

dedicated to the CUP's cause, which included removing Armenians. They functioned as a means of persuasion when necessary to keep the deportations on track. They functioned as the eyes and the ears of the central leadership, and took care of much of the dirty work behind the scenes, especially the destruction of incriminating evidence that were in telegrams. They also communicated orders by word of mouth when orders were too sensitive for telegram communication. The reliability of the rank and file party members opened the options for the central CUP leadership as they determined the means and methods that would be used. To address the problems that the variance in regions provided, and to accomplish region specific goals, the CUP elected to form an organization to eliminate Armenians in the eastern vilayets, while utilizing the existing governments and military to accomplish directives in other regions according to their needs.

## Chapter Two: Organizations of Deportation

The CUP used the Special Organization (SO), Army, and local governments to deport the Armenians from May 1915 through March 1916. The organizations coexisted throughout Anatolia, with differing hierarchies of power from region to region. The deportations were carried out differently based on which organization was primarily in charge of a given region. The goals of the CUP central leadership strongly influenced which organization was placed in charge regionally, and the goals set forth for each organization. The ideology of the CUP greatly influenced which organizations were given greater power locally. To better understand the CUP's motivations, it is imperative to look at how their motivations were developed. This development begins with the architect of CUP dogma, Ziya Gokalp.

Ziya Gokalp had significant influence on CUP policy and ideals. Born and raised in Diyarbakir of Kurdish descent, Gokalp saw himself as a Turk by upbringing, thereby identifying with Turkish nationalism.<sup>76</sup> Gokalp was the architect of ideologies that transitioned the CUP focus to Turkification. He was largely influenced by nationalism, a Western ideal that had grown in popularity. The idea was that a nation has a common bond, that the people are the nation, and that it belonged to them. Taking this a step further, nationalism came to be defined by race and ethnicity. A nation should be “a society of people who speak the same language, have had the same education and are united in their religious and esthetic ideals – in short those who have a common *culture* and religion.”<sup>77</sup> Specifically for the Ottoman Empire, this meant the language must be

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<sup>76</sup> Taha Parla, *The Social and Political Thought of Ziya Gökalp, 1876-1924*, (Brill, 1985), 10.

<sup>77</sup> Mark Levene, *Genocide in the Age of the Nation State: The Rise of the West and the Coming Genocide*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 184.

Turkish and the national ideal Turkism.<sup>78</sup> He taught that the terms Turkist, Islamicist, and Westernization should be co-dependent. That is, to be Islamic is to be Turkish and it is imperative to utilize Western thought so long as it supports Turkish nationalism.

This thesis directed the decisions made by the CUP Central Committee from 1913 onward. Initially this concerned the idea of uniting all Turks throughout Asia. Following the early defeats in the Caucasus front by the Russian army, which prevented the CUP from uniting with Turks under Russian rule, the CUP pivoted to dealing with their domestic non-Turkish elements. Taalat Pasha presented clearly the reasons why it was imperative, from the CUP perspective, to remove the Armenians in an exchange with American ambassador, Henry Morgenthau

I have asked you to come To-day so that I can explain our position on the whole Armenian subject. We base our objections to the Armenian on three distinct grounds. In the first place, they have enriched themselves at the expense of the Turks. In the second place, they are determined to domineer over us and to establish a separate state. In the third place, they have openly encouraged our enemies.<sup>79</sup>

A combination of nationalism, wartime measures, and successful Armenian resistance in the city of Van resulted in the “General Deportation” law, established on May 27, 1915. The CUP directed the reactionary measures executed by the military and Special Organization (SO) prior to the declaration of this law, and the subsequent deportations. The violent or peaceful nature of those organizations informed how they carried out their orders.<sup>80</sup>

The CUP formed the Special Organization (SO) in 1913 in response to the secession of the Balkan states during the Balkan Wars. The organization was formed to

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<sup>78</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 198.

<sup>79</sup> Henry Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story* (Blackmask Online, 2001).

<sup>80</sup> Donald Bloxham, “The First World War and the Development of the Armenian Genocide,” in *A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 268-69.

function as a special-forces for gathering intelligence, suppressing separatists within the empire, and destabilizing the rear of enemies in wartime.<sup>81</sup> In August of 1914, in preparation for entry into the Great War, the Central Committee moved the office of the SO to Erzerum, recognizing that it was in the eastern provinces and on the eastern front that their services would be needed most. A leader within the SO, Kuscubasizade Esref, provided a telling description of the SO's purpose and role during the time of his service in his memoirs

The Special Organization, a secret outfit, was to become the fundamental edifice for ensuring the internal and external security of the Ottoman state . . . For this purpose it cultivated its own cadres, uniforms, treasury, and ciphers, becoming a state within a state; in assuming duties which exceeded normal bounds, it had acquired a moral personality. In pursuit of its three principal goals, namely, unifying Turkey Islamic Union, and Pan-Turkism, the organization carried out the state's internal and external policies by accomplishing most important and at the same time dangerous tasks.<sup>82</sup>

Dr. Behaeddin Shakir, a founding member of the CUP, was also an influential man in the SO. Born in Bulgaria, Shakir was a long-time army doctor who was appointed by Enver Pasha as president of the SO in 1914. He was chiefly responsible for developing the SO in eastern Anatolia. Based in Erzerum he helped form SO squadrons, placed significant pressure on Armenian activists in the area, and developed strategies to subvert Russia. He played a significant role in convincing the Central Committee in the spring of 1915 that the problem of the Armenian enemy from within needed to be addressed with a lasting solution.<sup>83</sup> Arif Cemil, a subordinate to Shakir, shared how he did this

[N]umerous documents that were discovered [plainly showed] that the domestic enemies who had organized inside the country were preparing to attack our army from the rear. After Dr. Behaedin [Sh]akir had brought all this to the attention of the Ittihad's Central Committee Istanbul, the Committee worked together with him on defining the measures to be taken;

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<sup>81</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 180; Hilmar Kaiser, *Genocide in the Twilight*, 365.

<sup>82</sup> Vahakn N Dadrian. *Documentation of the Armenian Genocide in Turkish Sources*, (Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide, 1991), 126-27.

<sup>83</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 199.

thanks to them, the Turkish army avoided a great danger. The result of their collaboration was the deportation law.<sup>84</sup>

Following this event, the SO was elevated beyond that of a secret organization to the primary dictate of government in eastern Anatolia. Under Shakir's direction it was entrusted with complete latitude in accomplishing the task of deporting the Armenians from the historically Armenian vilayets.

The SO was comprised of men suited for the violent and gruesome tasks at hand.<sup>85</sup> For instance, the Central Committee recruited men convicted of violent crimes for the formation of SO squadrons. An encrypted telegram sent from the central government to each vali, or vilayet leader, requested that murderers be recruited into the SO, and that they be released from prison.<sup>86</sup> At least 10,000 criminals (most of them murderers) were set free and enrolled into the SO beginning in fall of 1914.<sup>87</sup> Employing murderers risked losing local support. However, the CUP considered these people respectable retrospectively "for they massacre[d] Armenian women and children to serve the fatherland."<sup>88</sup> Under Shakir's charge the SO superseded the local authorities, gaining the freedom necessary to carry out their orders. Even though the SO officially functioned under the war ministry, it acted independent of the military. Esref illustrates this point

It is a fact that the Special Organization performed services which the forces at the disposal of the government and the law and order outfits absolutely couldn't. The measures taken for these services applied to areas within the borders of the Ottoman Empire where non-Turkish and non-Muslim races and nationalities constituted the majority of these areas' populations,

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<sup>84</sup> Ronald Grigor Suny, *A History of the Armenian Genocide* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 147.

<sup>85</sup> Vahakn N. Dadrian, *History of the Armenian Genocide*, 236.

<sup>86</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 184.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 183.

<sup>88</sup> Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 182. Vahakn N. Dadrian, "The Role of the Special Organisation in the Armenian Genocide During the First World War," in Panayi, P., ed. *Minorities in Wartime: National and Racial Groupings in Europe, North America and Australia during the World Wars*. Oxford: Berg, 1993), 78.

and which were always suspect in terms of their bonds and loyalty; to the central authorities.<sup>89</sup>

The SO would take control of a region for a period necessary for them to accomplish their tasks. It was common for the CUP to assign a mayor (kaymakam) or a vali who was enthusiastic to perform the deportations; these men were either affiliated with the SO or chose to collaborate closely with it. Mehmet Nusret Bey, a faithful CUP militant, was assigned as the kaymakam over Bayburt during the deportations from the area in May to July 1915. He worked in concert with Behaeddin Shakir as they organized the SO squadrons and educated the local SO leadership on the particulars of carrying out the deportations. Later on Shakir appointed Nusret as the president of the Deportation Committee in Bayburt.<sup>90</sup> Even in cases where local leaders did not directly affiliate with the SO they were subordinate to the SO and acted under their direction. In May of 1914, a year before the general deportation order took place, Tahsin Bey was appointed by the CUP as vali of the vilayet of Erzerum due to his skills in maintaining good relations with the Armenian religious and secular leadership. As the face of the leadership in Erzerum he put to rest any complaints of massacre or deportations from the Armenians and foreign leaders such as the German vice-consul that would arise. This occurred under the direction of Shakir, who was the true wielder of power, as the president of the SO, during the period leading up to and during the deportations.<sup>91</sup>

Dr. Cerkez Reshid was established as vali of Dyarbekir in March of 1915. He worked directly with the SO to form killing squadrons made up of, and led by, local criminals. Reshid also created a grand council made up of officials from the CUP, the

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<sup>89</sup> Vahakn N Dadrian. *Armenian Genocide in Turkish Sources*, 126.

<sup>90</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 300-01.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 293-94.



military, and the local government. This council functioned to fulfill the central government's mandates, which required convincing the general populace of their duty to support the government and the edict of general deportation.<sup>92</sup> For instance, Reshid declared, "The time has come to save Turkey from its national enemies, that is, the Christians. We must be clear that the states of Europe will not protest or punish us, since Germany is on our side and helps and supports us."<sup>93</sup> Under Reshid's direction, the Kurdish and Circassian tribes of the region were persuaded to join in the cause against the Armenians by invoking God and the potential benefits of attacking the Armenians asking God to "make their children orphans, make widows of their wives through and give their property to Muslims."<sup>94</sup>

Many kaymakams in Dyarbekir took issue with the orders to deport their Armenian subjects, requesting they be given official orders from the central government. Reshid overcame this obstacle by releasing the kaymakams from their positions and replacing them with men who were more compliant. Reshid even had to replace a replacement on occasion, leading him to select men affiliated with the SO. During Reshid's brief period as vali he relieved eight kaymakams, ordering three to be murdered.<sup>95</sup> By taking actions of this kind the SO and the leaders affiliated with the organization were able to subvert the local governments and take control of the townships (*kazas*) until the deportations and related orders were complete.

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 359.

<sup>93</sup> David Gaunt, *Massacres, Resistance, Protectors: Muslim-Christian Relations Eastern Anatolia during World War I*, (Gorgias Press, 2006), 168-69.

<sup>94</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 360.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 361.

The army was responsible for accomplishing the CUP's war goals. Upon entrance into the war their primary goal was to liberate the Turkish people under Russian rule, thus bringing all of the Turkish people into one Turkish nation. This aspiration of the CUP punctuated the actions of the army.<sup>96</sup> In November and early December of 1914 the Third Army and some other army units launched a campaign into the Caucuses, seeing a number of minor victories. At the beginning of January, Enver Pasha, against the advice of the Germans, launched an offensive on Sarikamish. This winter assault failed disastrously with half of the 90,000 soldiers in the Third Army dying and with many others deserting.<sup>97</sup> Enver only survived the battle because an Armenian officer, who was a veteran of the Balkan Wars, carried Enver several miles across the snow on his back.<sup>98</sup> Following this setback the leadership within the army and the CUP were embarrassed at their defeat. They became very suspicious of the Armenians within their ranks and placed blame upon the enemy from within.<sup>99</sup>

Armenian villagers in Erzerum were first forced to move from the warfront in December 1914 for the army's protection. By April, the army issued a direct order to remove the perceived internal enemy, expansively and brutally, when the Fourth Army was engaged in the defense of Van. The army, with assistance from a handful of SO battalions, actively rounded up as many Armenian villagers as possible north of Lake Van. These citizens were massacred indiscriminately. Similar actions were taken south of

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 207.

<sup>97</sup> Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914: The Ottoman Empire and the First World War*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 467.

<sup>98</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 220-221; Ugur Ümit Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia, 1913-1950*, (Oxford University Press on Demand, 2012), 64.

<sup>99</sup> Yigit Akin, "The Ottoman Homefront During World War I: Everyday Politics Society and Culture" (Ph.D. diss., Ohio State University, 2011) 51.

the lake as well, resulting in over 50,000 Armenians killed.<sup>100</sup> A siege commenced against the Armenians in the city of Van during the last week of April. Despite overwhelming numbers and artillery, the siege failed and by May 16<sup>th</sup> the army and all of the Muslim population evacuated from Van toward Bitlis. The army corrected their failure in Van to an extreme in the vilayet of Bitlis from the moment they fled Van to the end of July, where thousands of Armenians were slaughtered mercilessly.<sup>101</sup> Here the army actively worked in concert with the SO to eliminate the entirety of the Armenian population, resulting in the bloodiest and most violent episode of the deportations. A review of this eight-month timeline shows the CUP and army drastically ramping up their efforts to address the perceived disease of the Armenian population. The Army was used to eliminate the Armenian population in these regions under threat of Russian invasion.

Beginning in October of 1914 all Armenian men between ages 20 and 45 were drafted into the army to fight in the Great War, except those who paid a sum of money, to avoid the conscriptions. By spring of 1915 the draft expanded to include Armenian men, ages 18 through 60. Following the battle of Sarikamish all Armenians on the Caucasus front were removed from combat units and placed in worker battalions.<sup>102</sup> It was left up to the army, in collaboration with the SO, to eliminate these men when the time was appropriate. Throughout the remainder of 1915, and even up to the summer of 1916, these battalions were liquidated following completion of projects. Liquidation occurred sometimes as troops were ordered to dig their own mass graves, and more often through

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<sup>100</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 324.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 321-331.

<sup>102</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser. "Patriotism" to Mass, 138. Eric J. Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey*. Vol. 87. (IB Tauris, 2014), 171-73.

deportation to a killing field.<sup>103</sup> Henry Morgenthau, vividly described these violent practices

In many instances Armenian soldiers were disposed of in ... summary fashion ... In almost all cases the procedure was the same. Here and there squads of 50 to 100 men would be taken, bound in groups of four, and then marched out to a secluded spot a short distance from the village. Suddenly the sound of rifles would fill the air, and the Turkish soldiers who had acted as the escort would sullenly return to camp. Those sent to bury the bodies would find them almost invariably stark naked, for, as usual, the Turks had stolen all their clothes. In cases that came to my attention, the murderers had added a refinement to the victims' suffering by compelling them to dig their graves before being shot.<sup>104</sup>

The role of the local governments was complicated and varied across the empire. In the eastern vilayets the local governments colluded with the SO, often under the direction of SO officials. This is especially true as preparations were made for and during deportations. The local officials acted as a legitimate entity, carrying out valid actions for the security of the empire. In the presence of foreign officials, the local governments were essential to quelling concerns.<sup>105</sup>

After the Armenians had been removed from the kazas, it was left to the local governments alone to tie up any loose ends and pick up the pieces. Dealing with “abandoned property” was a messy affair ranging from relocating displaced Muslims into Armenian homes, controlling how mundane spoils were divvied up among the commoners, and obtaining property from Armenian bank accounts.<sup>106</sup> An ongoing problem that the kaymakams had to deal with, especially in eastern Anatolia, were the corpses that littered the roads. Deportees were forced to walk great distances with little access to necessities which resulted in natural reduction among the population. This process led to problems associated with corpses, particularly the spread of disease among

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<sup>103</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 311-13.

<sup>104</sup> Henry Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story* (Blackmask Online, 2001), 109.

<sup>105</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 425.

<sup>106</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 316.

the local populace. The roads had to be regularly cleared of the dead and dying, and the bodies had to be buried in deep trenches to prevent dogs or other animals from digging them up.<sup>107</sup>

Outside of the Armenian vilayets – Erzerum, Van, Bitlis, Sivas, Diyarbakir, Mamuret ul Aziz – the local governments were chiefly in charge. They typically exacted less violent means of deportations, with much of their Armenians arriving to deportation camps. However, there were exceptions to this rule, most notably in the vilayets of Trebizond and Angora, which both bordered the Armenian vilayets. The CUP appointed a replacement vali in each location who expressed great hatred toward Armenians which was reflected in the deportations they exacted. In both cases, they subjected the SO and military attachés to their will as opposed to following the SO's prerogative. The methods used in these two vilayets differed from the rest of Anatolia due to local government leaders who chose to act ferociously like the SO, but with their own style.<sup>108</sup>

Resistance occurred in many forms. In Angora, the vali who held the post from June of 1914 to July of 1915, was unconvinced of the need to deport his Armenian population, putting up fierce resistance to the deportation orders. The central government dealt with this by replacing him with an interim vali, Atif Bey, an eminent member of the CUP. Atif held the position only from July to October of 1915, acting swiftly and decisively to remove the Armenian population. He convened a council of various CUP, SO, and local leaders to draw up a deportation plan.<sup>109</sup> Using a combination of massacre and deportation the vilayet's 135,000 Armenians were removed.<sup>110</sup> Angora had a slightly

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 424.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 468-78 and 496-506.

<sup>109</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 497.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 499-524.

higher rate of deportation camp arrivals than from the Armenian vilayets. However, that rate was far lower than the rest of western Anatolia. In Trebizond, the appointed vali, Cemal Azmi, coordinated the deportations with cruel efficiency, bringing squabbling SO leaders under his control. Thousands of Armenian children were drowned in the Black Sea, many more were poisoned in local hospitals, and many thousands of women and old men were massacred as they were deported through the mountains to the south.<sup>111</sup>

The opposite occurred in the vilayet of Aydin. Rahmi Bey, a distinguished CUP member, was chosen as the vali in early 1914 by the central government. Aydin bordered the Aegean Sea, containing a large Greek population, with only about 22,000 Armenians. In 1914, Rahmi worked tirelessly to weaken and remove much of the Greek population prior to the Ottoman entrance into the Great War.<sup>112</sup> However, the persecution of the Greeks halted during the war, because the Ottoman Empire did not want the Greek state to join the Entente. Rahmi went out of his way to mitigate Armenian deportations as part of the efforts to appease the remaining Greeks. Only a couple hundred Armenians were removed from Aydin as a result of Rahmi's efforts.<sup>113</sup> The opposing examples of Angora and Trebizond versus Aydin illustrate how local government personalities greatly affected the methods of deportations.

In the other western vilayets, the local governments followed the central government's directive to carry out traditional deportations. The vali of each vilayet coordinated the SO forces at their disposal to enforce the deportation orders. Under the direction of the vali the deportations were coordinated in multiple steps as the Armenians

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<sup>111</sup> Suny, *A History of the Armenian Genocide*, 291.

<sup>112</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 567.

<sup>113</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 568-70.

prepared to leave and then traveled to deportation camps. The Armenians were typically granted a period of time to prepare for their departure, but were forbidden from selling real estate property so the government could retain the property later. The deportees were limited to obtaining small liquid assets as these could easily be taken from them while they were on the road. Albeit, somewhat extreme, this report written by a Bulgarian general and an Austro-Hungarian consul regarding the Armenian deportation from Adrianople, provides a window into how a deportation began

On the night of 27-28 October, the organs of the police knocked at the doors of the cities' rich Armenian families and forced them to abandon, without delay, their homes, their belongings, and all their assets in order to be transported to an unknown destination. The scenes that took place on that and the following nights defy description. Women still bed-ridden because they had given birth the day before were torn from their beds; small children who were seriously ill were carried off by force in carts; semi-paralyzed old men were forced to leave their homes. Little girls in the city's boarding school had no idea their parents had been forced to leave and were thus separated forever from their fathers and mothers. The unfortunates did not even have the right to take money or objects dear to them when they left... On the very night on which the Armenians were expelled the Turkish authorities staged little feasts in homes bereft of their masters: people played the piano there, emptied the cellars, and ate whatever provisions they found. The same scenes were repeated in broad daylight the next day. The only salvation the Turks offered the Armenians was to embrace Islam! So far not a single family has responded to this pressure.<sup>114</sup>

As soon as the deportations had taken place the local officials would confiscate the Armenian property left behind, removing anything of value, and then release the property to be looted by locals. Along the Baghdadbahn the transit camps were maintained under local authority, utilizing the SO forces. The SO controlled the flow of the deportees as they moved along the heavily used railroad. These camps required a lot of attention because at times they contained over 15,000 people.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 547-48.

<sup>115</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 579-80.

The Central Committee played a key role in manipulating local governments. They took the initiative early on to place loyal CUP members in significant positions in areas where Armenian resistance was most feared.<sup>116</sup> The Central Committee later learned that the areas in which they did not appoint leaders provided greater resistance. These areas often had a handful of kaymakams and even the occasional vali who would refuse to deport their Armenian citizens. These Turkish leaders did not hold animosity toward their Armenian population. As local resistance became apparent, the Central Committee would relieve leaders of their duties, placing loyal CUP members in their stead.<sup>117</sup> The general populace was also served notice that helping Armenians was punishable by death. This edict makes that clear, “since this is a violation of government orders, heads of household who shelter or protect Armenians are to be executed in front of their houses and it is imperative that their houses be burned down.”<sup>118</sup> This apparatus of controlling the makeup of the local governments greatly improved the Central Committee’s ability to enforce the deportation orders.

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<sup>116</sup> Bloxham, *Development of the Armenian Genocide*, 265.

<sup>117</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 555.

<sup>118</sup> Suny, *A History of the Armenian Genocide*, 285.



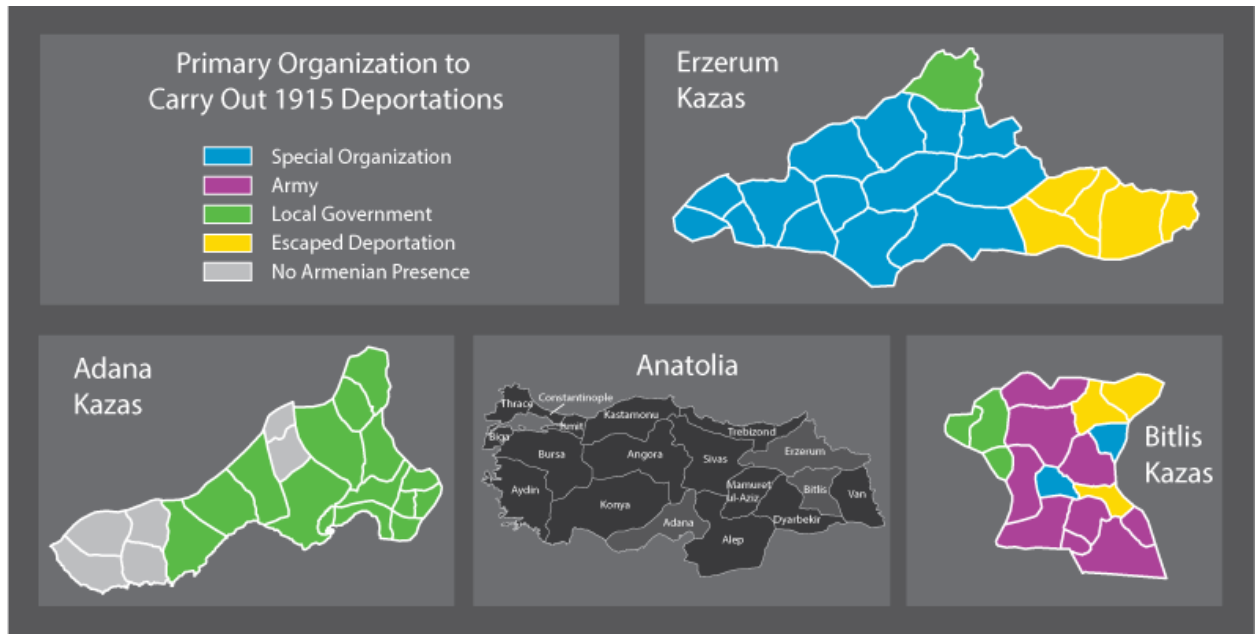


Figure 5 – Each kaza had a primary organization in charge of the deportations. In Erzerum the Special Organization was in charge, primarily the army in Bitlis, and exclusively the local governments in Adana.

A careful examination of the information provided by Kevorkian for each kaza in Erzerum, Bitlis, and Adana shows that the CUP leaned towards specific organizations playing greater roles throughout entire vilayets. In Erzerum the CUP leaned heavily on the SO, utilizing their violent capabilities to bring about a lasting destruction of the Armenians from that region and the evidence of Armenian culture throughout the vilayet. The only exception was the far northern kaza of Keskim, the Armenians of this kaza were mostly catholic. To appease the Austrian and German leaders, the local government carried out the Armenians deportations there. The Army played a significant role throughout Bitlis, especially in the Armenian strongholds of Mush and Sasun. The Army's firepower was needed in these areas under threat of Russian invasion. The local governments played a significant role in the western part of Bitlis where there was an insignificant Armenian minority. The local governments exclusively carried out the deportations in Adana.

Throughout the empire the SO, army, and local governments were involved with deporting the Armenians. The army provided gendarmes to escort deportees or bury corpses. The SO was deployed in squadrons throughout the empire to enforce the deportations, and local governments coordinated the deportations for their specific citizens. Each area in the empire had their own pecking order in regards to the three organizations, with one in charge and the others taking orders. The methods that were employed and the results of the methods differ considerably based on the organization in charge. Ultimately removing the enemy from within was accomplished universally, even in the face of isolated instances of refusal, despite the use of differing methods.

### Chapter Three: Methods of Deportation and Killing

Tactics used to deport and exterminate Armenians differed based on region and leadership. Patterns were produced by the roles of organizations under the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) control that reveal elements of coordination and regional intent. Rural areas, especially in eastern Anatolia were more likely to see the Armenian villages outright destroyed and the inhabitants killed. Whereas urban areas were more likely to see actual deportations in which the Armenian populace were informed they would be deported, given a timeframe to prepare, and then formally marched out of the town or city along a designated deportation route. The CUP's intent of the deportation in the Armenian vilayets in eastern Anatolia was to remove all evidence of Armenia and turn it into a Turkish space. The methods of deportation from Erzerum and Bitlis reflect that intent. Elsewhere, however, the CUP was simply removing the Armenian populace, resulting in generally less violent and destructive deportation methods, which can be seen in the deportations from Adana.

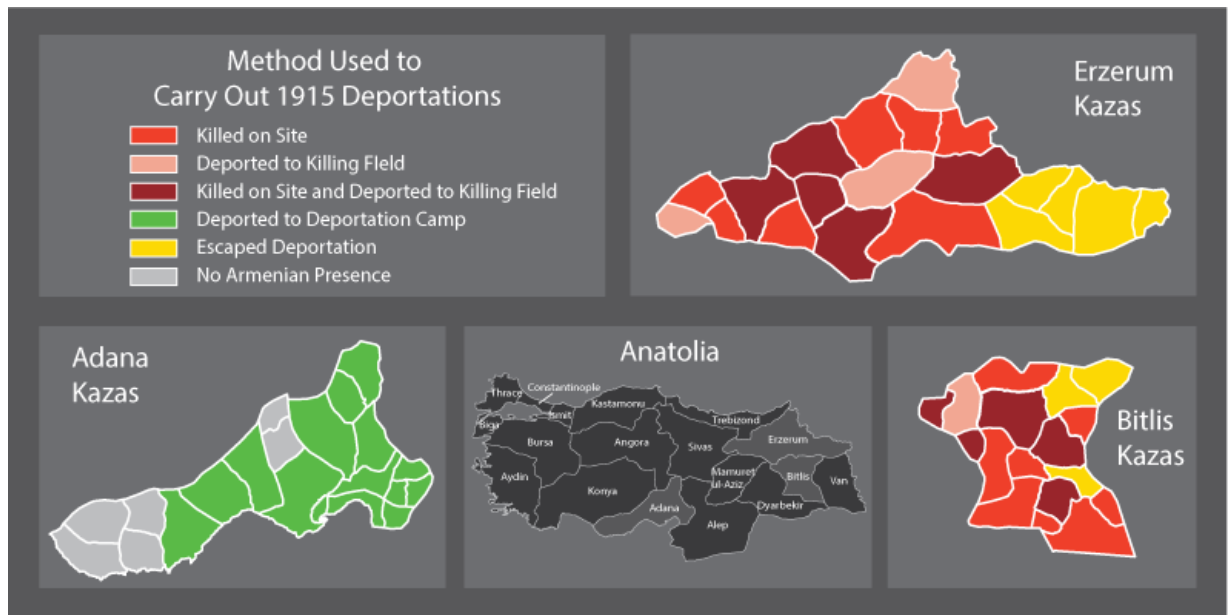


Figure 6 – A combination of massacre and deportations through killing fields were utilized in Erzerum and Bitlis. More traditional deportations took place in Adana.

The maps in *figure 6* depict the methods used in each kaza in Erzerum, Bitlis, and Adana. The deportation methods are allocated to three categories, killed on site, deported to a killing field, and deported to a deportation camp. Killed on site includes any scenario where the victims were killed in or within a half hour of travel time from the village. The SO commonly used this kind of “deportation” in rural areas throughout eastern Anatolia. In addition, much of Van and Bitlis were filled with massacres as the army directed the deportations from these vilayets. The SO deported most Armenians from population centers in eastern Anatolia through killing fields. These killing fields were commonly deep river gorges that had road access. As the convoys traveled through these river gorges their escorts would abandon them, which would be closely followed by an ambush of SO squadrons or Kurdish bands under SO direction. Deportation to deportation camps was a commonly used method throughout western Anatolia. The escorts of these deportations conducted them in relative safety, with most deportees arriving to deportation camps. For the studied vilayets the violent methods used were used exclusively in Erzerum and Bitlis, with a greater tendency of deporting to killing fields in river gorges in Erzerum, and killing on site in Bitlis. The methods used in Adana were exclusively deportation to deportation camps. This data shows that the CUP instructed specific methods to be used regionally. The patterns are a result of intentional actions to violently deport the Armenians of eastern Anatolia and peacefully deport the Armenians of western Anatolia.

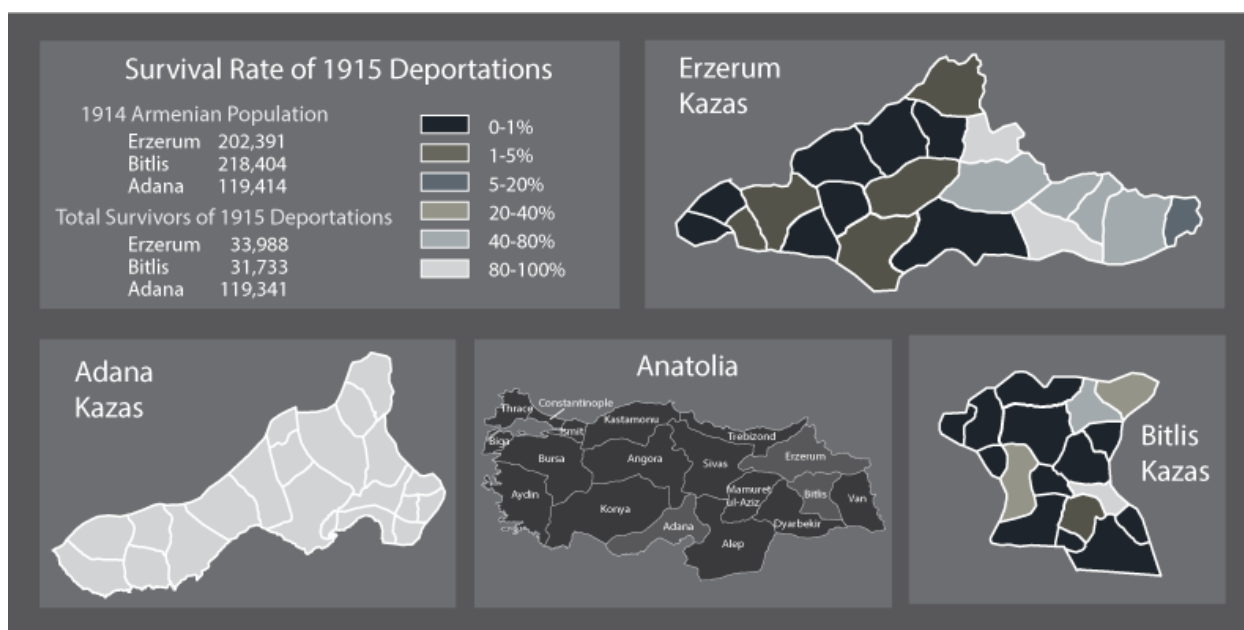


Figure 7 – This map specifically depicts the survival rate of the deportations. It does not take into consideration the rates of survival at deportation destinations.

The maps in *figure 7* depict the survival rate of the Armenians from each kaza in Erzerum, Bitlis, and Adana normalized to the total Armenians population in each kaza. Of the 202,391 Armenians from Erzerum, 33,988 survived deportations. Most of the counted survivors were those who were able to flee to Russia prior to the deportation orders, a handful of others counted are those who escaped to Dersim. Of the 218,404 Armenians from Bitlis, 31,733 survived the deportations. The survivors were almost exclusively those who made it to Russian lines, a few hundred deportees from Bitlis and Sis arrived to deportation camps in Mosul. Of the 119,414 Armenians from Adana 119,341 arrived to deportation transits and camps. They survived the step of being deported at an extremely high rate thanks to Adana's short proximity to the deportation camps around Aleppo and less violent deportations.

The results of the study of these three regions displays a strong correlation between the organization in charge of the deportations and the results of the deportations. The SO and Army killed their deportees at nearly total rates by using a combination of

massacre before and during deportation. The local governments in Adana removed nearly all of their Armenian population by deportation, however they did not actively kill their deportees. Erzerum, Bitlis, and Adana were three distinct regions, separated by the organization in charge of the deportations.

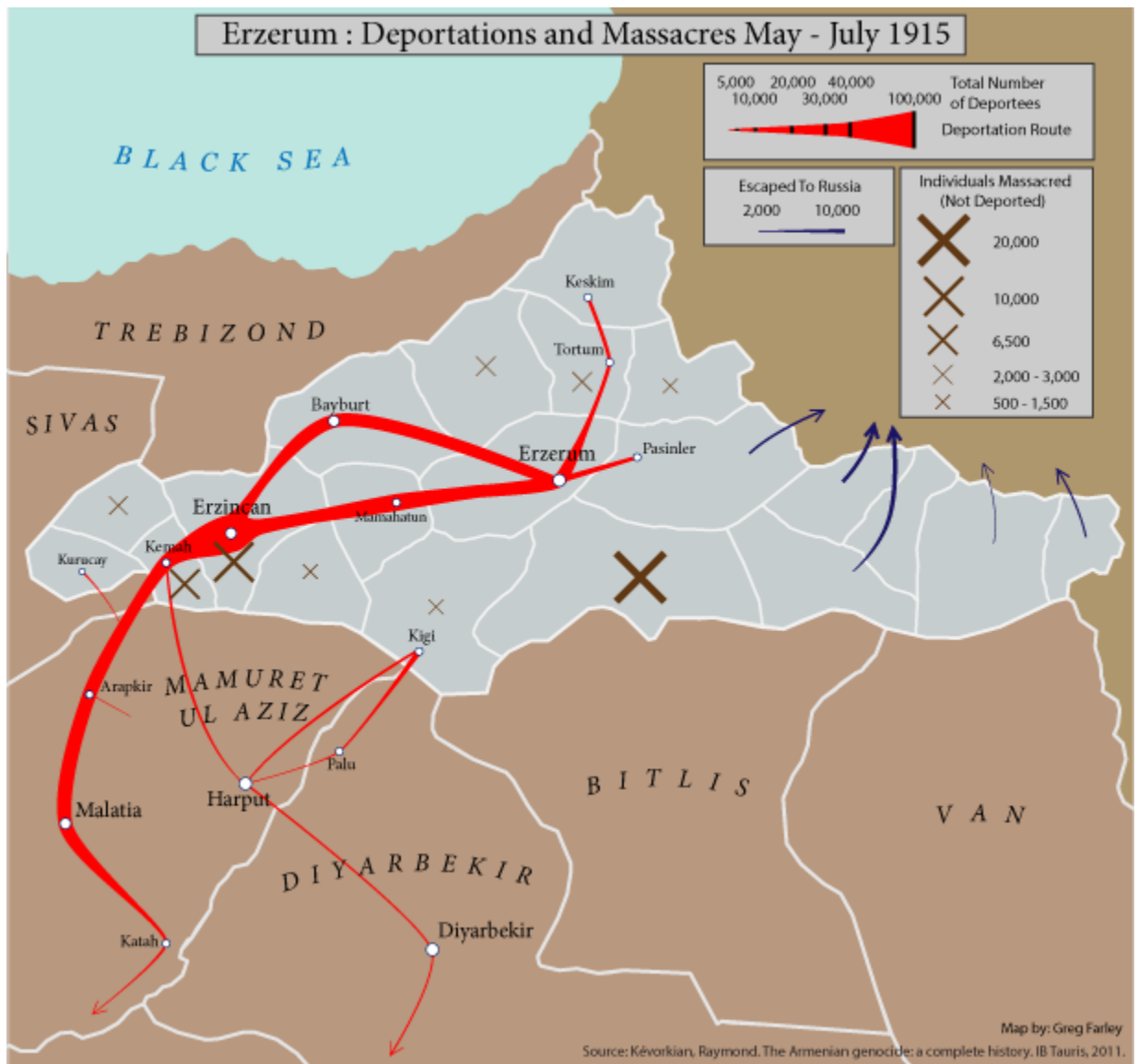


Figure 8 – This map depicts the number of deportees that reached destinations along deportation routes. The numbers greatly diminished in slaughterhouses located near Kemah, Katah, Palu, and Harput.

The map in *figure 8* represents the deportation methods used in Erzerum. The depictions on the map are based on the data entered into the geodatabase mined from

Kevorkian's regional narrative, specifically the number of deportees, the routes they took, and the number of survivors along each portion of the routes. The routes that the SO used are shown here. The portions where the routes are wider representing where more people passed through. Conversely the narrower the route, the less deportees that passed through that portion of the route. The rapid thinning between Erzincan and Kemah is representative of the Kemah Gorge where over 100,000 deportees entered, but only 30,000 exited, a similar thinning can be seen in the Katah Gorge north of Katah. The SO specifically used the physical geography of the region to control the movements of the deportees and to lead them into areas where they could not escape being killed. Additionally, the massacres in the Armenian villages are represented by the letter X. The larger the X, the more Armenians were killed.

Most of the methods used in the vilayet of Erzerum can be observed in the deportation that took place from the kaza of Kigi, in the south-central portion of the vilayet. The Armenian population in Kigi numbered 19,859 in 1914, about 2,000 of whom resided in small villages scattered throughout the kaza. The deportations from the actual town of Kigi began on June 10th, 1914; however massacres in the surrounding villages took place in the week preceding the deportation. A combination of Kurdish forces and SO irregulars made up of recruited Circassians and Turks circled the villages on the pretext that they were searching for arms. The SO first arrested the leading men of the villages, where they chained them up and led them to Kigi be murdered by axe in the local jail. Then the aggressors attacked the remaining villagers, killing most inhabitants, plundering their homes, and eventually rounding up the survivors to take them to Kigi. At one of these villages, known as Khups, the Armenian peasants organized themselves and

resisted when they were attacked by a Kurdish band under SO direction during the evening of June 7th. After two days of uninterrupted fighting, in which 40 Kurds and one Armenian were killed, the Armenians broke the Kurdish line but were later cornered and killed in a mill where they fought to the last bullet.

Each of the deportations from Kigi went along the road to the southwest through Palu in the far northern reaches of the vilayet of Dyarbekir. The first deportation from Kigi itself began with 1,200 people from affluent households. After the first day of marching, the bishop and other notable men from this group were separated, supposedly to meet with the president of the Deportation Committee. Upon separation, each of these men were tortured and then shot in the head. Not aware of these murders the main group continued along the road until they arrived at Palu Bridge, an ancient bridge that crosses the Euphrates constructed by the Romans. Here the remaining men were separated from the caravan then taken to the banks of the river, where they each killed and tossed into the rushing water. Immediately afterward the caravan was attacked and plundered. Many of the women jumped off Palu Bridge deliberately drowning themselves to avoid “being dishonored.”<sup>119</sup> At this point in the journey only 200 of the original 1,200 were still alive, these remaining women and children were then sent directly east to Harput, where they arrived after twenty-five days on the road, naked and starving.<sup>120</sup>

The next convoy from Kigi was made up of 2,000 villagers and began on June 11th. This group was harassed even more ferociously on their way to Palu, where the men met a similar fate to the previous convoy. Meanwhile, on June 12th, the SO deported a third convoy of 4,000 Kigi residents. This group’s escorts heavily extorted and harassed

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<sup>119</sup> Zaven Der Yeghiayan, *My Patriarchal Memoirs* (Mayreni Pub Inc, 2002), 181.

<sup>120</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 306.



them as they approached Palu. The following morning, they came under heavy fire from Kurds, leading their SO escorts to turn on them and join in the massacre. As this convoy approached Palu on June 16th, the attackers of the Kigi deportees cut open the bellies of the Armenian women, after discovering that they had swallowed gold coins and other valuables during body searches. Following this attack, one fourth of the convoy remained. Upon arriving in Palu, the remainder of the previous two convoys joined them and together they continued to Harput on June 18th.

The SO sent a fourth convoy of the remaining Armenians in the city of Kigi, on June 13<sup>th</sup>, directly to Harput. They left ten indispensable craftsmen behind in the city. A fifth and final convoy of villagers were sent from the western portion of the kaza on June 16<sup>th</sup>. Shortly thereafter a Kurdish band under SO direction attacked this convoy. During the attack the convoy scattered, allowing a local Kurdish village to take in many of the scattered Armenian women and children. Following this series of events, the escorts of the fifth convoy rounded up those who had found refuge in the Kurdish village. They threatened the Kurds with destruction if they did not return the Armenians. Not all Kurds joined in the deportations and massacres, and many attempted to help the Armenians in whatever way they could. By this time Kurdish and Turkish workers dismantled Armenian churches and cemeteries in the area. A Kurd informed a survivor “it is the government which has given orders to demolish them, so that no trace that this was once an Armenian village remain.” As the convoy neared the Palu Bridge, some of the men who had disguised themselves as women, were thoroughly searched, discovered, stabbed to death, and then tossed into the river.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 307.

The convoys from Kigi went through Dyarbekir and then continued south to reach their final destination at Ras ul-Ayn, located at what is today the Turkey-Syrian border, where the final man was killed after a 70-day trek. About 3,000 of the total Armenians from Kigi arrived at Ras ul-Ayn. After one month, only 700 remained alive, and by summer of 1916 only 12 had survived. The destruction of the Kigi Armenians did not take place by accident, it was the result of carefully laid out plans by the SO operating in the area at the direction of the CUP. Simply put the SO began by rounding up and slaughtering villagers. They then initiated formal deportation convoys in which the rich and powerful were disposed of first, followed by villagers and other inhabitants of Kigi. Many of the deportees were slaughtered along the deportation route, especially at the Palu bridge crossing the Euphrates. About one sixth of the deportees would make it to the deportation camp, where nearly all of them would eventually succumb to death by disease, exposure, or slaughter. The Armenian population of the kaza of Kigi was effectively eliminated by these methods.<sup>122</sup> Most of the Armenians in the vilayet of Erzerum suffered a similar fate as those from Kigi. The central CUP leadership had given the SO primary responsibility over the deportations there. Behaeddin Shakir oversaw the earliest deportations in Erzerum himself, in the kazas of Ispir and Tortum. There are no accounts of survivors from these kazas. It was in Erzerum that Shakir directly trained SO leadership on how to carry out the deportations in a manner resulting in little to no survivors.<sup>123</sup>

A method that came up repeatedly in the Kigi account is the use of river gorges as slaughterhouses. Although many Armenians of Kigi met their fate at the Palu Bridge, it

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<sup>122</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 308.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 291, 299.

was in the Kemah Gorge to the west of Erzincan that many of the deportees of the vilayet would be slaughtered. The Kemah Gorge, which is a series of gorges along the Euphrates River, took over four hours to traverse on foot. This made for a natural trap that the SO used to kill many Armenians. As the convoys entered the gorge they were stripped of their belongings. Then as they continued deeper into the gorge they were slaughtered in huge numbers. In one day as many as 25,000 Armenians lost their lives there. Hundreds of women and children would link their arms together and leap into the tumultuous river hundreds of feet below to escape attacks from their captors. Some women would even drag their attackers who were attempting to rape them into the void as well. In regular intervals, members of the SO would climb down to the riverbanks and finish off any who had survived.<sup>124</sup> A Greek witness of this pattern of deportation into the Kemah Gorge provides a telling description of a convoy of Armenians being escorted into the gorge by gendarmes

Shortly, the gendarmes withdrew to the mountainside and, together with the *chetes* and the Kurds, began a hail of rifle fire. As soon as the first Armenians fell dead, the throng went into turmoil and turned back with screams of pain. But then they came upon the Turks of Erxinjan, who were following them with rifles and sabres and who now fell upon them without mercy. Before the situation got this far, all the beautiful women had jumped into the [Euphrate] river. The whole surface of the river was covered with them ... The Turks were slaughtering in great numbers, but the Armenians were many, and by rushing upon them they managed to break through the line of Turks and reach the plain ... A few days later there was a mopping up operation; since many little children were still alive and wandering about beside their dead parents, the *chetes* were sent to round them up and kill them. They collected thousands of children and brought them to the banks of the Euphrates, where, seizing them by the feet, they dashed their heads against the rocks. And while a child was still in its death throes, they would throw it into the river ...<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 310.

<sup>125</sup> Ronald Grigor Suny, *A History of the Armenian Genocide* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 147.

The convoys were led along circuitous routes, bypassing populated regions. A survivor from Kigi stated, “They didn’t take us via regular roads, but instead we would go from village to village and stay outside of them. They would take us through the mountains so that their people would not see us; otherwise, the people would wonder what was going on.”<sup>126</sup> Using remote roads had two benefits. First, the deportees were less likely to resist. Asked about why they did not resist a survivor responded, “Where would we go? Are we going to remain hungry in these mountains? So we kept walking.”<sup>127</sup> Second, the travails of the convoys could be kept hidden from onlookers. The general methods employed along the various deportation routes throughout eastern Anatolia, caused the convoys to be stripped of their possessions and their numbers as they travelled from one river gorge to another. At specific points, such as Palu, the convoys would be stopped for several days, causing multiple convoys to merge. At these stops the deportees were warned that massacre was imminent, persuading them to give up their children and teenage girls, or to pay the escorts for extra protection. This allowed the authorities to strip the Armenians of many valuables in a convenient fashion, avoiding the mess of sifting through bodies for swallowed jewelry and coins. The convoys would then continue along the deportation route toward the next killing field.<sup>128</sup>

A significant method of the genocide used in Erzerum, and throughout Anatolia, was the forcible integration of some Armenian children and young women into Turkish

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<sup>126</sup> Donald E Miller and Lorna Touryan Miller, *Survivors: An Oral History of the Armenian Genocide*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 82.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 88.

<sup>128</sup> Hilmar Kaiser “Genocide at the Twilight of the Ottoman Empire,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, ed. Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 376.

families.<sup>129</sup> For example, at the city of Bayburt, which sat northwest of the city of Erzerum, children between ages one and five were taken from convoys shortly after they left town and were then returned to Bayburt. The Turkish families were given an opportunity to adopt whichever children they were interested in. In the Kemah Gorge the remaining women, adolescent girls, and children were separated into groups. They were given as gifts to men who had travelled to the gorge for the purpose of procuring these women or children, they selected who they wanted and left with them. Those who were not selected continued into the gorge. After the men of the city and surrounding villages were killed. A similar event took place in the city of Bitlis. The women and children there, numbering 8,000, were gathered up and placed at the mouth of the Arabi Gorge, just south of the city. This spot served as a vast auction for two weeks, during that time Muslims from the area came to take who they wanted. In the end about 2,000 women and children were sold and the remaining 6,000 were deported south towards Sis.<sup>130</sup> This practice of selecting the most attractive children and young women to be integrated into Turkish families was practiced throughout Anatolia.<sup>131</sup> The implication of this method is that when the CUP rejected the Armenians it was their heritage that was rejected, not necessarily their ethnicity.

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<sup>129</sup> "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide," *Human Rights Web*, 2/17/2015, <http://www.hrweb.org/legal/genocide.html>. As recognized by the UN Genocide Convention the forcible transfer of children from one group to another group constitutes genocide.

<sup>130</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 342.

<sup>131</sup> Ionnis K. Hassiotis, "The Armenian Genocide and the Greeks: Response and Records (1915-1923)," in Richard G. Hovannisian ed.; *The Armenian Genocide: History, Politics, Ethics*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 146-47.

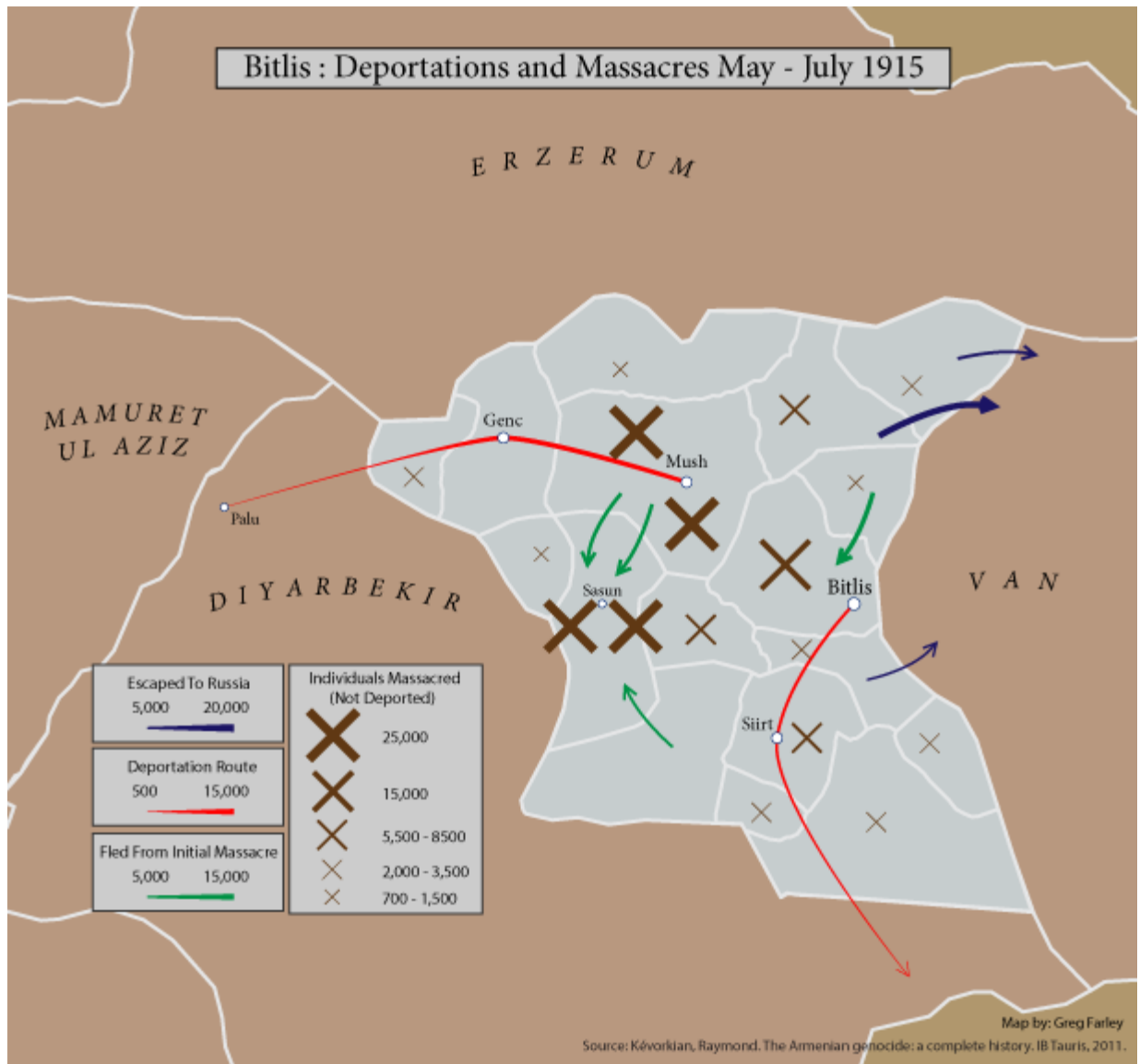


Figure 9 – This map shows the heavy use of massacres during the deportations from Bitlis.

The map in *figure 9* depicts the methods used in Bitlis based on the data entered into the geodatabase mined from Kevorkian's regional narrative. In stark contrast to the deportations from Erzerum, the data represented here shows that the overwhelming method used in Bitlis was the massacre of Armenians in or near their villages and cities. Each X represents these kinds of massacres, the larger the X the greater number of people were killed. However, many of the smaller X's represent total or near total killing of the Armenians in that kaza. There were some deportations that went through killing fields.

Unique to Bitlis was the fleeing from one kaza to another to temporarily escape deportation. This was done purposely as the army and SO corralled the Armenians into dire situations that improved their ability to subdue the Armenians in order to deport or massacre them. Due to Bitlis' proximity to Russian lines during the summer of 1915 some Armenians were able to escape deportation.

The methods put into use in the vilayet of Bitlis are quite similar to that of Ezerum, with a couple significant exceptions. Bitlis and the neighboring vilayet to the east, Van, both had majority Armenian populations throughout portions of their respective territory. Therefore, the influence and capability of the Armenian people in Bitlis and Van were the strongest in the Ottoman Empire. In addition, Van and Bitlis were the most susceptible regions of the Ottoman empire to Russian invasion, due to Russian proximity and most of the Turkish army being stationed in Erzerum. Due to the geography, the CUP leadership took extra measures to ensure the success of Armenian removal from these areas as they feared they would not be able to do so if the regions fell to Russia. The arrival of the Ottoman 5<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Army, which had failed to invade Persia, and a portion of the 4<sup>th</sup> Army fighting against the Russians in the Caucasus, improved the CUP's ability to carry out plans in the area in June. With the help of the Ottoman military, the method of removing the Armenians from Bitlis was much more direct. Instead of deporting most of the Armenian population, the preferred method was to simply kill every Armenian where they stood.<sup>132</sup>

Raphael de Nagalas vividly describes the massacres perpetrated by the army as they traveled from Van to Sis, in the southern part of the vilayet. A Venezuelan

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<sup>132</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 338.

freebooter who served in the Ottoman army, he describes a scene of one of these massacres that he came across while traveling. A pastoral landscape was ruined by a hillside covered with thousands of nude and bleeding corpses, he described the bodies as being attacked by vultures “while the scavenger dogs struck sharp teeth into the entrails of beings still palpitating with the breath of life.” These images stained Bitlis as the army and the SO descended upon the Armenians.

The actions taken on the Plain of Mush in the sancak of Mush, in which over 140,000 Armenians resided, illustrate the range of the methods employed in the vilayet of Bitlis. The Plain of Mush lies to the northwest of Bitlis. Due to the fertile soil of the plain it contained a higher population than that of the surrounding regions, including a majority Armenian population. At the center of the plain sat the city of Mush which contained a large Armenian population, although it did not comprise the majority population within the city. The conscription campaigns in August of 1914 and March of 1915 had drained the region of most of the men who could have defended it. Despite this, Armenians did find some early success in defending themselves there. The Armenians of the plain were first attacked by Kurdish bands under CUP direction in late May of 1915, which Armenians repulsed. However, on July 8th the liquidation of Armenians on the plain began in earnest, following the arrival of Turkish military forces. The first step took place in the numerous villages on the plain surrounding the city. The various assembled forces would first surround a village, round up the men and tie them together in groups of ten to fifteen and then execute the men in a nearby field or orchard. Then they would forcibly herd the women and children into barns, douse the buildings with kerosene, and burn those inside alive. It was common practice to come back the following day and sift the



ashes for any valuables that may have been swallowed. By July 14<sup>th</sup> this method had effectively eliminated over 50,000 Armenians scattered along the plain.

On July 11th Armenian men in Mush were issued a summons to register for deportation along with their families. The following day the 200 or so who arrived for registration were arrested and later marched to a village on the plain and executed. The remaining Armenians in the city attempted to resist, but faced heavy shelling from cannons and an army of 20,000. By July 17th, every Armenian neighborhood in Mush had been captured and systematically destroyed. As each neighborhood fell, the survivors were rounded up and treated similarly to the villagers. They were marched to a nearby village where the men were executed in an orchard and the women and children were burned alive in a barn. Any who remained hidden in their homes were discovered and murdered where they hid. Those who were in the final neighborhood to fall attempted a desperate flight south into the mountain district of Sasun, many of whom perished in their flight. On the 18th of July 10,000 women and children who had survived the violence on the plain were deported west through Genc and into the eastern Euphrates valley, where the majority would meet their deaths in the gorges of the river.<sup>133</sup>

Because of the dominant presence of Armenians throughout the vilayet of Bitlis it was necessary for the army to work in tandem with the SO in order to eliminate the Armenians in the region. The summary of the experience in the sancak of Mush depicts the deliberate methods of complete and total destruction of the Armenians who resided there. There was only a superficial attempt of formal deportation in the city of Mush itself. Instead the forces marshaled there were used in an aggressive and extremely

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<sup>133</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 345-48

violent manner to eliminate the Armenians in their native space. Only one tenth of the Armenian population of the area was deported.<sup>134</sup>

The army's man power and expertise were needed to deport the Armenians of aforementioned kaza of Sasun. This mountain district was directly south of Mush. Home to a little over 24,000 Armenians, they had proven during the Hamidian Massacres from 1894-96 that they were less than interested in being killed without putting up a fight. Likely this was in mind when the CUP set the plan to eliminate the Armenians of Bitlis. Initially in early June, the local Kurdish tribes attempted to confiscate arms from villages at the southern end of the district, however they failed when met with fierce resistance. It was not until after Bitlis, Mush, and the other localities had been emptied of their Armenians that they moved on Sasun on July 18<sup>th</sup>.

In the meantime, the SO and Kurds had relentlessly held a siege around the district, while allowing Armenian refugees to flee into Sasun. When the assault went underway Sasun held over 50,000 Armenians who had very little food remaining. The combined Kurdish and military forces brought against Sasun numbered 30,000, while the defenders amounted to 1,000 men armed primarily with hunting rifles. Despite these obvious discrepancies in military might, the Armenians held for ten days before starvation and low ammunition convinced them that they would have to fight their way out and head for the Russian lines to the northeast. From August 2<sup>nd</sup> to August 5<sup>th</sup> the whole of the remaining population, including women who fought with knives, attempted a maneuver to fight their way out. Amazingly about 5,000 were able to break the Turkish

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<sup>134</sup> Christopher Walker, *Armenia: The Survival of a Nation*, (London: Routledge, 1980), 211-12, 222.

and Kurdish lines into Russia, the rest however were slaughtered.<sup>135</sup> The CUP demonstrated their commitment to eradicate the Armenians by deploying an army of 30,000 while Russian forces were just miles away. Under the duress of Russian invasion, the actors in Bitlis dropped all pretense of deportation, launching a significant assault on the Armenians. This method to accomplish their goals is a portion of what set Bitlis and Van apart from the remainder of the Armenian vilayets. Although there are some similarities to the overall methods used in Erzerum, the actions taken in Bitlis were more extreme.

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<sup>135</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 351-52. Raymond Kevorkian, "The Armenian Population of Sassoun and the Demographic Consequences of the 1894 Massacres," *The Armenian Review* 47, Nos. 1-2 (2001), 42-52.

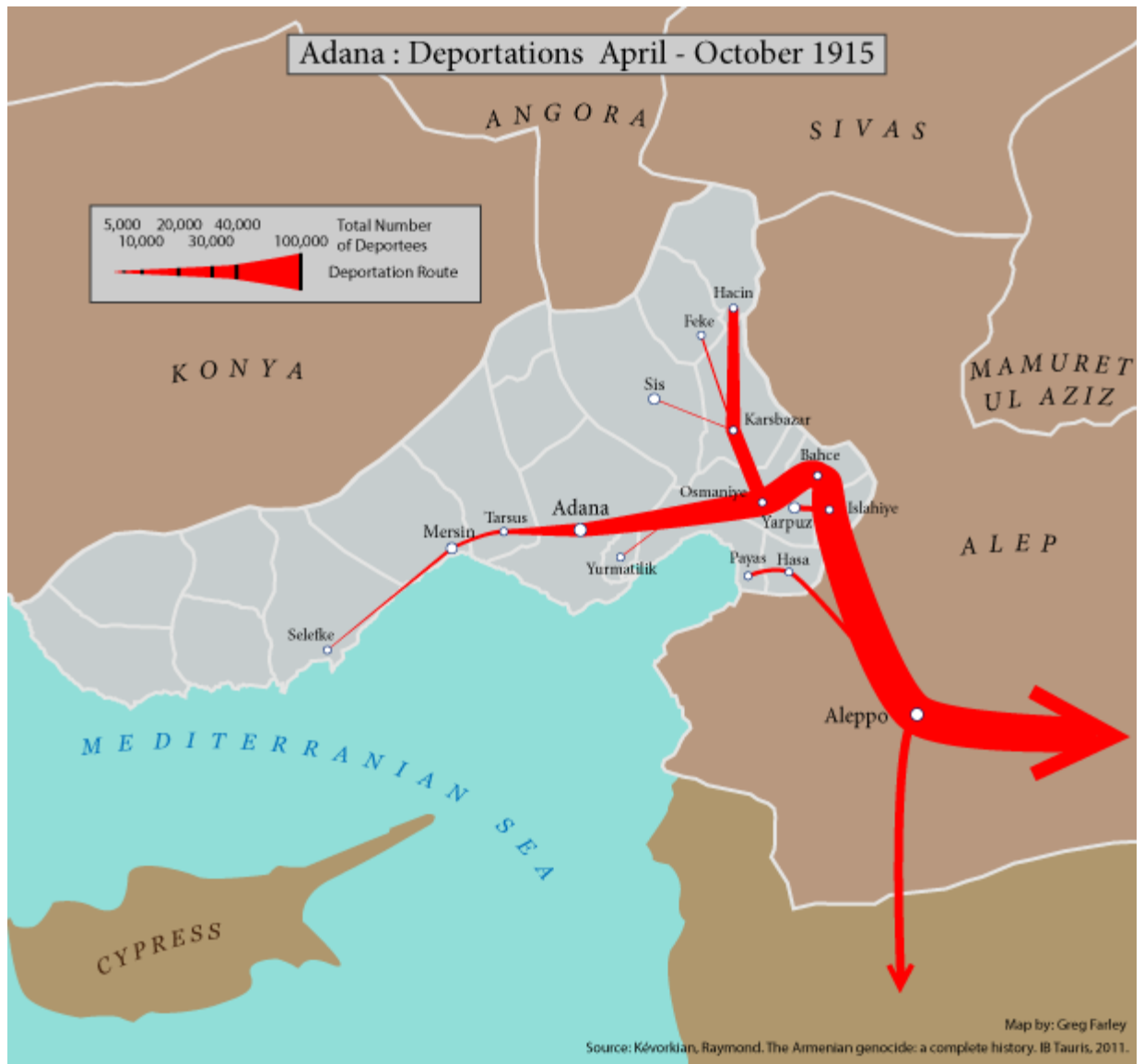


Figure 10 – This map depicts the route of the deportations from Adana. Nearly all of the deportees from Adana reach deportation destinations.

The map in *figure 10* depicts the data entered into the geodatabase, regarding the Armenians in Adana, mined from Kevorkian's regional narrative. The deportations here were exclusively done in safety towards deportation camps. The wider the deportation route, the greater the number of deportees that passed through that portion of the route. This representation makes it clear that violent methods of deportation that resulted in killing during deportation did not take place in Adana.

In stark contrast to the deportations from Erzerum and Bitlis, the deportations from Adana better reflect actual deportations. In Adana, the SO was used minimally, with the majority of the actions done under the orders of the local government that had been put into place there. Because Adana contained regions that had Armenian majority populations, the milder methods used as compared to those in Erzerum and Bitlis stand in greater contrast than the methods in regions where Armenians were a clear minority. The deportations from the sancak of Sis/Kozan illustrates this point. Sis was located north of the city of Adana in the heart of Cilicia, and had been the capital of the medieval Armenian kingdom of Cilicia. At the onset of the deportations many relics of that kingdom still stood, including the royal citadel which stood on a hill above the city of Sis and was surrounded by a massive wall with forty-four towers. The city alone had an Armenian population of 5,600 among a total 8,000 people. At the north end of the sancak sat the ancient city of Hacin which had an Armenian population of over 26,000, easily making up the majority in the city. The Armenians of this sancak demonstrated during the massacres that took place in Adana in 1909 that they could put up a successful resistance. Because of this past success on their part, the CUP leadership of the region employed a cautious, yet effective approach to deporting these Armenians.<sup>136</sup>

The first incident in Hacin took place in January of 1915. A leaflet was discovered pasted to the wall of the cathedral of St. George which implored the Armenians in Hacin to remain vigilant and focus on self-defense. The Turkish authorities quickly became aware of the leaflet and ordered the local Armenian primate to discover who was responsible for it within two days. During the investigation, under the direction

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<sup>136</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 599.

of the police chief, it was discovered that the leaflet had been put on the wall by an Armenian child. When the child was interviewed by the police chief (who had instructed the boy to place the leaflet), the child incriminated local Armenian party leadership. This pretense was used to arrest dozens of Armenian leaders, ultimately executing four and banishing seven others.<sup>137</sup> An order given on the May 18<sup>th</sup> required that the Armenians give up their arms and deserters by the 20<sup>th</sup>. To avoid the consequences of a perceived rebellion, the Armenians turned over seventy rifles and a number of deserters turned themselves in. This was followed by the arrival of a handful of infantry and cavalry squadrons.

On May 27, 1915 with the necessary arrangements in place, 250 men were arrested and systematically tortured. On June 3<sup>rd</sup> a general deportation order was declared in Hacin. The first deportation took place on June 10<sup>th</sup>, which was comprised of the most influential Armenian Protestant and Armenian Apostolic leaders and their families. The deportations from Hacin continued with small groups staggered over the course of the next few months. By October only a few craftsmen and their families remained. The deportees from Hacin were sent on foot toward Aleppo along a lesser used mountain route through Osmaniye, rather than use the road south through Sis that could handle vehicular travel. This decision helped prevent any rescues by vehicle. The deportation order in Sis was issued on June 17<sup>th</sup> and followed the same pattern as those from Hacin, staggered over the course of the summer and sent along the route through Osmaniye. Many of these deportees arrived at deportation camps spread across the Syrian Desert.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 600.

<sup>138</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 601.

The Armenians throughout the vilayet of Adana faced similar treatment, with the exception that those from the sancak of Adana were deported further south through Damascus, avoiding the destruction of the deportation camps in the Syrian Desert that took place in the summer of 1916. This can be seen as a direct result of the role of the leadership in this vilayet. The local leadership, much of it established in April of 1915 by the central CUP government, played a primary role with the SO and army units acting subservient to them. This resulted in a much more orderly set of deportations as compared to the massacres that took place throughout eastern Anatolia. Despite the relative peacefulness of deportations from Adana, many of these Armenians were treated poorly, were robbed and plundered along the deportation routes, would die at the deportation camps. Those lucky enough to survive would ultimately be prevented from returning to their homes.<sup>139</sup>

Adana was also home to a snapshot of the conditions that the deportees from western Anatolia faced. As many as 400,000 Armenians were deported along the Baghdadbahn train line during the summer and fall of 1915.<sup>140</sup> Due to the high usage of this railroad line, the deportees were interned at transit camps in regular intervals along the railroad line. One of these transit camps was located just north of Adana. This camp was a vast tent camp that held as many as 10,000 to 15,000 deportees at a time. They received very little water, food, and medical treatment. This resulted in dozens of deaths daily and the dead were buried in nearby fields.<sup>141</sup> The conditions that these deportees

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<sup>139</sup> Hilmar Kaiser "Genocide at the Twilight of the Ottoman Empire," in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, ed. Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 380-81.

<sup>140</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 580. Hilmar Kaiser, *Genocide at the Twilight*, 379.

<sup>141</sup> Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 597.

faced was deliberately implemented by the CUP toward the Armenians of western Anatolia.

The Armenians in western Anatolia were treated differently than those from eastern Anatolia. Those from the west were deported in relative safety and those deported from the east were killed in their villages or along the deportation routes. These differences are not coincidental. In the studied vilayets it has been shown that specific organizations were used to accomplish specific goals. In Erzerum the SO was charged to deport the Armenians there, specifically to kill most of them before they arrived to deportation camps, deliberately using the mountainous geography of eastern Anatolia to control the movement of the deportees and lead them through gorges where they could not escape being killed. The data that Kevorkian obtained from primary sources prove that this took place, the SO effectively killed most of the Armenians from Erzerum before they arrived to deportation camps. The CUP had the same goals for Bitlis, however because of the imminent threat from Russia they used the army to lead the deportations. The data shows that nearly all Armenians from Bitlis, who did not escape to Russian lines, were killed in Bitlis. In Adana, however, the CUP wanted the Armenians removed, but was not intent on killing them before they arrived to deportation camps. They charged the local governments to carry out the deportations. In Adana, these local governments successfully deported their Armenian population to the deportation camps. These findings are based on data that reveal that the CUP coordinated the deportations using the SO and Army to kill most of the Armenians from eastern Anatolia before they arrived to deportation camps and local governments to deport the Armenians of western Anatolia to deportation camps.



## Conclusion

The utilization of Geographic Information Systems combined with the data mined from Kevorkian's *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History* shows the movement of the deportations and the how they were carried out. This work is a departure from Kevorkian's because it has gone beyond detailing the deportations regionally, by bringing that information together into a geodatabase to discover the patterns that directed and impacted the deportations. The use of maps produced in this study help illustrate these patterns and the genocidal impact on the studied vilayets in 1915 and 1916. There is no other work of this kind in the historiography which has widely focused on proving intent using CUP documentation. This study focused on the vilayets of Erzerum, Bitlis, and Adana which brought about several discoveries. First, the Special Organization (SO) was primarily in charge of carrying out the deportations in Erzerum, where they killed most of the deportees before they arrived to deportation camps. Second, the army played the greatest role in enforcing the deportations in Bitlis, where most of the deportees were killed before arriving to deportation camps. Third, the local governments in Adana led the deportations there, with nearly all deportees arriving to deportation camps. Knowing that these organizations were subordinate to the CUP, these results show that the CUP used the general deportation law they enacted on May 27, 1915 as a reason to instruct the army and SO to deliberately kill the Armenians of Erzerum and Bitlis, and that they used the local governments of Adana to remove the Armenians there.

The spatial relationship discoveries through this research on the deportations provide a great starting point for further work to better understand how the Armenian Genocide proceeded throughout the empire. Due to the limited resources of this study

only focused on three of the vilayets. Future work could complete this study by looking at the remaining Anatolian vilayets in the Ottoman Empire. It is suspected that the findings in Adana mirror much of western Anatolia and that the findings in Erzerum represents much of eastern Anatolia, however further work is necessary to confirm these conclusions. This study considered the spatial relationships of the administrative units in the form of polygon data concerning the deportations. Another viable route of study would be to use point data to focus on the spatial relationships between the cities, towns, and villages which would allow for the use of advanced geospatial analysis tools, enhancing the study and conclusions of how the deportations happened.

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### **Appendix – Attribute Tables and Metadata File**

These are simplified attribute tables of the data mined from Kevorkian's *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History*. For the category "Organ" the numbers are as follows: 1 = Special Organization, 2 = Army, 3 = Local Government. For the category Method Used the numbers are as follows: 1 = Massacre, 2 = Deportation to killing field, 3 = Massacre and deportation to killing field, 5 = Escaped deportation, 6 = Massacre and escaped deportation.



Kazas

	Name	Armenian Pop	Sancak	Kaza	Date of De	Pop of Dep	Surv of Dep	Date of Dep 2	Pop of Dep	Surv of Dep 2	Date of Dep 3	Pop of Dep 3	Surv of Date 3	Date of Dep 4	Pop of Dep 4	Surv of Dep 4	Method	Tot Surv	Organ	Total	TL Perc
	Adana	27990	Adana	Adana	6/3/1915	4000	4000	9/2/1915	20000	20000	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	4	27990	3	0	1
	Adana	0	Ilcil	Ermenek	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>
	Adana	3300	Mersin	Mersin	5/18/1915	216	216	8/15/1915	1800	1800	9/15/1915	1100	1100	2/15/1916	184	184	4	3300	3	0	1
	Adana	5600	Sis	Sis	6/17/1915	5600	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	4	5600	3	0	1
	Adana	11000	Cebelbereket	Payas	4/25/1915	11000	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	4	11000	3	0	1
	Adana	3500	Cebelbereket	Osmaniye	7/15/1915	3500	3500	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	4	3500	3	0	1
	Adana	1000	Cebelbereket	Bahce	7/15/1915	1000	1000	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	4	1000	3	0	1
	Adana	3500	Cebelbereket	Islahiye	7/15/1915	3500	3500	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	4	3500	3	0	1
	Adana	12000	Cebelbereket	Yapuz	7/15/1915	12000	12000	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	4	12000	3	0	1
	Adana	5000	Cebelbereket	Hassa	4/25/1915	5000	5000	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	4	5000	3	0	1
	Adana	5645	Sis	Karsbazar	6/15/1915	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	4	5500	3	145	0.974314
	Adana	27850	Sis	Hacin	6/10/1915	27850	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	4	27850	3	0	1
	Adana	4948	Sis	Feke	6/15/1915	4948	4948	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	<Null>	4	4948	3	0	1
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Kazas

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