

Reform and Violence in the Hamidian Era: The Political Context of the 1895 Armenian Massacres in Aintab

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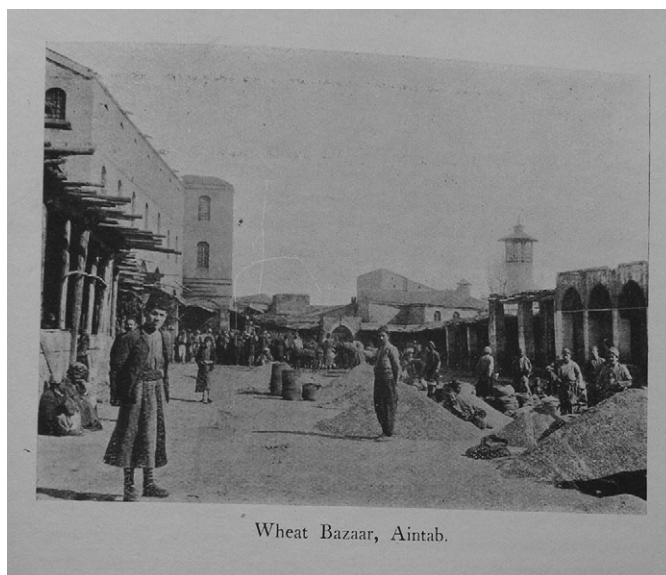
The eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire witnessed numerous massacres of Armenians between 1894 and 1897. Although some specialists have studied the origins, dynamics, extent, and repercussions of massacres in the eastern *vilayets*, few have studied events in the region of Cilicia (southern Anatolia). Drawing upon primary sources from Ottoman-Turkish, Armenian, British, and missionary archives, as well as memoirs and personal papers, this article explores the massacres of 1895 in the district of Aintab.

The eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire became the primary site of a series of massacres of Armenians between 1894 and 1897. These killings centered initially in the urban centers of the six *vilayets* (provinces) of Sivas, Erzurum, Mamuret-ul-Aziz, Diyarbekir, Bitlis, and Van—where the great majority of the Ottoman Armenians lived—but spread after November 1895 not only to rural districts but to western and southern Anatolia. Violence claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands under the last significant Sultan, Abdhülhamid II (1876–1909; it was his name that came to be associated with the killings). Tens of thousands converted to Islam to escape death and other tens of thousands fled to the Russian Empire. Systematic and repeated violence was coupled with the plunder of residences and businesses, ruining countless families.¹

The opening act took place in the Sasun district of Bitlis vilayet in summer 1894, when Muslims killed Armenians after the latter mounted armed resistance to administrative encroachments, unfair taxation, and the depredations of the local Kurdish *aghas* (chieftains, reportedly backed by Turkish regulars).² The second stage, of which events discussed below form a part, erupted in Istanbul and then Trabzon in September and October 1895. The outbreak of violence motivated British and Russian diplomatic pressure to improve political and social conditions for the Christian populations inhabiting the Empire's eastern provinces. The Sultan's October 17, 1895 promulgation of reforms consequent to that pressure seems to have only encouraged the violence. As Selim Deringil notes, the massacres “spread like shockwaves” after the announcement of the Sultan's concessions.³ Muslim resentment provided the hostile political atmosphere prerequisite to anti-Armenian disturbances. Though several important studies of the eastern vilayets have appeared recently,⁴ there has been little research into the unfolding of violent events in the region of Cilicia (southern Anatolia), in provinces and districts such as Adana, Osmaniye, Düzce, Kilis, Zeitun, and Aintab.⁵ Focusing on the latter district and drawing upon primary sources from Ottoman-Turkish, Armenian, British, and missionary archives, as well as on memoirs and personal papers, this study examines the 1895 anti-Armenian violence in Aintab. Though that city presents its own specificities, it also offers a paradigm of the dynamics that shaped the Armenian massacres.

What triggered the outbreak and spread of violence in Aintab? Were events the spontaneous expressions of widespread sentiment, or were they orchestrated by state or other actors? If the latter, what roles did government policies and local actors play? The answers draw in large part on substantial materials in the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives (BOA), the British National Archives, Foreign Office (FO), and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions archives (ABCFM) at the Houghton Library of Harvard University.

SURROUNDED BY HILLS AND VALLEYS, Aintab is situated on the boundary of Cilicia and Syria, near both the Mediterranean Sea and the Gulf of Alexandretta. A populous and prosperous Armenian community lived in Aintab and its surroundings. An important hub inside Aleppo, one of the most important provinces of the Ottoman Empire,⁶ Aintab was home to 10,802 Muslims, 4,933 Christians, and 274 Jews in 1868.⁷ By 1883 that population had doubled to 31,486, two-thirds of whom were Muslims and one-third Armenians.⁸ According to its 1895 Yearbook, the total population of Aintab had more than doubled to 84,135, of whom 15,390 were Armenians.⁹



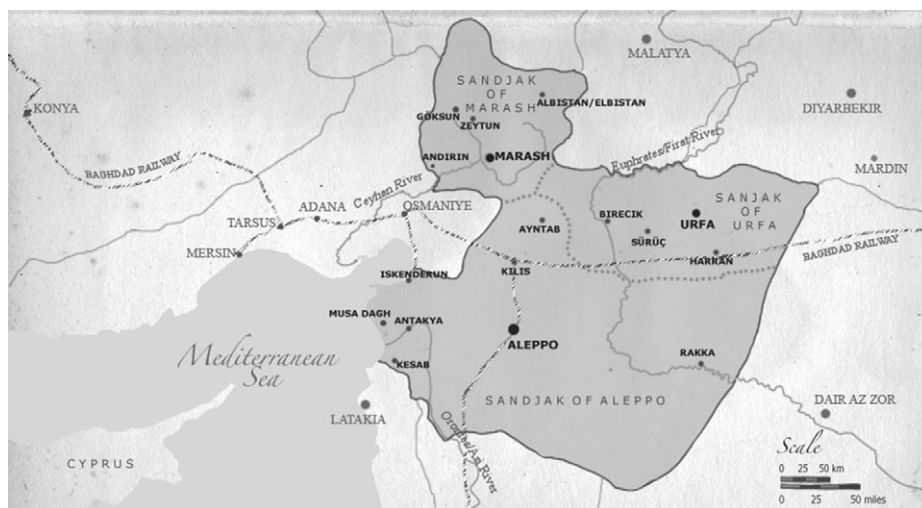
Aintab wheat market, from W.J. Childs, *Across Asia Minor on Foot* (Edinburgh; London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1917).

As a trade center and gateway to Syria and Palestine, Aintab attracted Armenian entrepreneurs who took a great deal of initiative in commerce. By the end of the nineteenth century, Armenians had become economically more powerful than Muslims. They owned caravanserais, covered bazaars, and other businesses.¹⁰ For example, the *Kürkçü Hanı*, an inn, was owned by the Kurkchuians, one of the most prosperous families in Aintab.¹¹

Describing status changes within the Christian and Muslim communities can help us formulate answers to some of our questions. Beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century, the Empire's Armenians underwent accelerated economic, educational, cultural, religious, and political change. Especially evident in economic life, the changes were likewise apparent outside the Armenian community.

First, economic power gradually shifted to Armenians. The vast majority of artisanal businesses were in Armenian hands: soap-making, jewelry-making, copper-working, tailoring,

shoemaking, construction, blacksmithing, weaving, saddlemaking and more.¹² Armenians controlled nearly all of Aintab's trade, domestic and foreign. Most doctors, dentists, pharmacists, and lawyers were Armenian.¹³ Muslims, on the hand other, tended to earn less money as grocers, butchers, and the like.¹⁴



Sandjak (villayet) of Aleppo, early twentieth century. Courtesy Houshamadyan: A Project to Reconstruct Ottoman Armenian Town and Village Life.

Second, education factored into Armenian status change. Two institutions founded by American missionaries in 1876, the American Central Turkey College and the Girls' Seminary, enrolled primarily Armenian students. At the onset of the twentieth century, there were twenty Armenian schools: eleven "national schools," eight Evangelical schools, and one Catholic school. Prominent Armenian schools were the Cilicia Tchamaran (College), founded in 1912;¹⁵ the Vartanian and Atenagan schools for boys, founded in 1882 and in 1885 respectively;¹⁶ and the Hayganushian school for girls, founded in 1878.¹⁷ By contrast, Aintab's Muslim-Turkish community remained loyal to the traditional education model and continued to attend madrasahs (Muslim theological schools). Armenian schools helped to strengthen a national identity while encouraging cultural modernization. In Aintab their educational and cultural programs led some to speak of Aintab as "the Athens of Cilicia and Anatolia."¹⁸ Thus advantaged, Armenians gained new positions. A considerable number of members of the Ottoman lower courts (courts of first instance), as well as both the administrative and town councils, were Armenians;¹⁹ two of the four members of the Ticaret Odası (chamber of commerce) were Armenians, and Armenians occupied posts in the Ziraat Bankası (Agricultural Bank) and the *Tarım Kurulu* (Agricultural Assembly).²⁰

Third, some Armenians now could entertain thoughts of conversion from Apostolic Orthodoxy to other forms of Christianity. There were seven Armenian churches in Aintab by the early twentieth century: an Apostolic church, three Evangelical churches, an Anglican church, and a Catholic church and Franciscan monastery.²¹

Improvements in welfare made Aintab Armenians more politically aware, and Armenians throughout the Empire gained an increased self-consciousness and collective assertiveness. Foreign Christian missionary activities played a key role in this process.

Missionaries, Progress, Muslim Humiliation

American missionary efforts gained momentum in 1848 when the first Protestant church was established in Aintab. Its missionary activities were successful, generating a number of converts equal to that in the entire remainder of the Empire.²² The advance of Protestantism in the 1870s and 1880s became associated with Aintab's reputation as a center of Armenian prosperity. To understand the success of Protestantism among Armenians in an Ottoman periphery, one needs to bear in mind the context of economic, societal, and political transformations. Thanks to the city's proximity to Aleppo, Aintab Armenian businessmen might connect to a broader world system. The Armenian middle class of Aintab flourished, which seemed to some Turks to threaten the traditional *millet* (confessional community) system that had long regulated the lives of non-Muslims within the Empire.²³ In this context, Protestantism, which seemed to reflect American values, offered relative autonomy from traditional forms of oppression, and presented a more flexible religious/legal structure—features that in turn promised social mobility.

Nor were Protestant missionary activities limited to the confessional sphere. Most important, two institutions established by missionaries focused on modernization: Central Turkey College and the Azariah Smith Hospital, founded in 1878 under the college's medical department.²⁴ The latter, notably, enjoyed the financial support of a number of wealthy Muslim families.²⁵ Its chief was American missionary Dr. Fred Shepard (1855–1915). The College was established by Rev. Dr. Tilman C. Trowbridge (1831–1888), who became its first president, with the collaboration of Prof. Alex Bezjian (1856–1913).²⁶ While the official language of instruction was Turkish, the study of English, Armenian, and Arabic was mandatory. The college contributed to Armenian intellectual development, ethnic self-awareness, and social advancement.²⁷



A postcard of the Holy Mother of God Church, Aintab, date uncertain; subsequently converted to mosque.

To many Muslims, unfortunately, the college was an infamous place where Armenians honed their national objectives. The Ottoman government considered American colleges in Merzifon and Aintab “harmful” threats, labelling them “subversive places, striving to train young Armenian students to instigate disorder.”²⁸ According to government officials, most of the professors took part in “incidents” as activists of Armenian political organizations.²⁹

IN MUSLIM EYES, a number of significant factors underlay the superior position of Armenians by the late nineteenth century. Endless unsuccessful wars spelled conscription for young Muslim men,

many fated never to return. Most of those who did return were either sick or disabled. Muslim (as Armenian) peasants not drafted bore the cost in heavy taxes. Wealthier Armenians could buy exemption by paying the *bedelat-ı askeriye*, an exemption tax, and thus continue their economic activities.³⁰ Such factors permitted some affluent Armenians to take over businesses and land previously belonging to Muslims.

Although the Armenian population in the villages near Aintab was small, much of the land there belonged to Armenians who lived in the city. At the beginning of the twentieth century, more than half of the commercial, industrial, and agricultural wealth of the Aintab district was owned by Armenians, who constituted less than a quarter of the population.³¹ To be sure, Muslim imaginations exaggerated this wealth. *Terekeler* (probate inventories) and inheritance documents prove that Armenians became only *comparatively* rich.³²

Skewed socio-economic, political, and cultural developments, and the failure of the Muslim community to keep pace, generated a sense of disadvantage. This feeling diluted earlier feelings of “harmonious coexistence” between the two groups. Enlightened nineteenth-century, reform programs also upset many Muslims, for instance by their rhetoric of religious equality.³³ Envy and resentment opened the door to hate-mongering. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, this open enmity found expression in many Ottoman newspapers:

They [the Turks] are ordered to die on Crete, they have been slaughtered on Samos, massacred in Rumelia, cut into pieces in Yemen, mowed down in Hawran, and strangled in Basra. But it's not the Greeks, the Bulgarians, the Vlachs, the Jews, the Arabs, or the Armenians ... who are sent there, is it? Let them sit in their houses, in their homelands, in their tents! Let them put all their energies into their work and grow rich! Let them marry and multiply! It wouldn't be right to upset them, to trouble their lofty souls, to tire their delicate bodies. If it were ... how could we have warmed them to the idea of Ottomanism [i.e., the idea of ethnic equality within a multinational empire]? We had to please them so that they would [want] to remain Ottomans.³⁴

Economic, social, and political asymmetries upset earlier balances, enabling opportunistic actors to foster a social climate in which violence seemed to be justified, as would become evident in 1894–1897.

The Hamidian massacres were a turning point from the nineteenth-century history of the “Armenian Question” of the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, it will be useful to clarify a few points about that “Question” as an *international* issue before discussing how the 1895 massacres unfolded. The great European powers became an increasingly determining factor in the Ottoman Empire. The Treaty of Berlin of 1878 marked a crucial shift after Turkish defeat by Russia (itself cheated of the benefits by the other European powers). Article 61 of the Treaty stipulated that “The Sublime Porte agrees to implement, without further delay, improvements and reforms ... in those provinces inhabited by Armenians, and to assure their security against the Circassians and Kurds. It will regularly keep the powers who oversee the implementation informed of the measures taken.”³⁵ The European powers thus extracted from Abdülhamid II a promise to carry out the necessary reforms in the Eastern provinces. Instead, fears for the Empire’s demise moved him to evade these commitments.

Until the Sasun massacres of 1894, the Great Powers (at this time, Britain, France, and Russia) did little besides send various proposals and notes to the Sublime Porte. In Asia Minor, these interventions produced the reverse effect of causing Abdülhamid II to intensify his policies of centralization and repression. In Sasun Armenian peasants had been mobilized by members of

the Hunchakian Revolutionary Party to resist exploitation, unfair taxes, and attacks by local Kurdish *aghas*.³⁶ Fearful in particular of interference by Britain and Russia, the Sultan ordered an “immediate and harsh response”³⁷ during which, according to European reports, up to 20,000 Armenian villagers were killed and numerous villages burned in 1894.³⁸

After the Sasun massacres and violence elsewhere in eastern and southeastern Anatolia, the oppression of Armenians and other Christians by the Ottoman authorities elicited serious responses from European governments. Through their embassies in Istanbul, the latter pushed reforms on the Empire calculated to improve the conditions of Christian populations in rural areas.³⁹ Finally, the Great Powers, led by Great Britain and Russia, sent an ultimatum on May 11, 1895. Yielding, Abdülhamid II sent instructions to the provinces, stating that the reforms were to be carried out, all court cases were to be handled by impartial judges, and discrimination based on race and religion was to be prohibited.⁴⁰ Most local governors did not welcome the Sultan’s orders. In reality, going through the motions served primarily to appease the European states,⁴¹ and indeed the orders themselves became the triggers to renewed anti-Armenian violence.⁴²

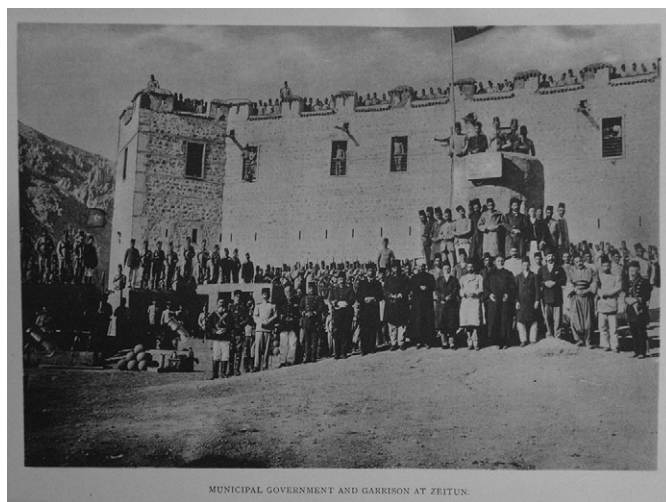
The Hamidian massacres of 1894–1897 started in Sasun but spread widely through eastern Anatolia and Cilicia, from Bitlis, Muş, and Diyarbakır to Sivas, Trabzon, Samsun, and Erzurum, and then continuing to Merzifon, Tarsus, Zeitun, Marash, Adana, Urfa, Birecik, and Aintab.⁴³ Massacres and rapine were organized with the large-scale participation of local elites as well as of the Turkish and Kurdish Muslim populations. Ordinary members of the dominant community enjoyed the “permission” of governors, sub-prefects, the police, and the gendarmerie.⁴⁴ Material gain and personal grievances seem to have underlain ordinary people’s assaults on neighbors, employers, employees, customers, and even friends. It is also true that many Muslims outside the state hierarchy thought they were acting in the interests of the state and with the support of the Sultan.⁴⁵ As Donald Bloxham notes, the Sultan could not very well oppose actions that had “emerged in large part from the general policies he had sponsored”; his entire program was predicated on not alienating the provincial Muslim population.⁴⁶ The course of the massacres in Aintab support this general observation.

Alarm

In order to understand events in Aintab one needs to consider certain revolutionary political organizations. Among these, the Hunchakian occupied a significant place in the political awakening of Armenians. The Aintab branch of the Hunchakian Revolutionary Party was established at Central Turkey College in 1890.⁴⁷ Nationalistically-inclined Armenian youth tended to be directly involved in or at least sympathetic to the Hunchakians.⁴⁸ The movement maintained a presence in Aleppo, Marash, Kesap, Kilis, Talas, and Urfa.⁴⁹ Aintab was especially closely linked to events in the town of Zeitun, some ninety miles away. In fact, to understand Aintab’s political climate on the eve of the massacres, one would do well to keep Zeitun in the picture.

Zeitun witnessed early and strong Armenian resistance against the oppressive policies of the government in 1895. At the beginning of summer, one of the prominent figures of the Hunchakian movement, Aghasi (Garabed Tour-Sarkissian) arrived in Aintab to plan resistance in Zeitun,⁵⁰ strengthen links to the central organization, and arrange financial support.⁵¹ Local supporters formed an administrative board in Aintab, including prominent figures such as Armenag Nigoghos Nazaretian, Hrand Sulahian, Berc Momdjian, and Soghomon Bastadjian.⁵²

According to British consular reports, Aghasi and other revolutionaries stirred “younger Armenians” in Aintab to actions likely to provoke Turkish “retaliation.”⁵³ However, the reports offered no concrete evidence, and missionaries in Aintab suggested quite the contrary: the Christian population had behaved with the “greatest forbearance” in the face of the “grossest and most wanton insult, abuse and violence.”⁵⁴



Municipal government and garrison at Zeitun, from Hugo Grothe, *Geographische Charakterbilder aus der asiatischen Türkei* (Leipzig: Karl W. Hersemann, 1909).

Despite the fear caused by the 1894 Sasun massacres, along with news of similar atrocities in Harput, Sivas, and other towns, schools and shops remained open in Aintab—if many Armenians locked themselves in their houses.⁵⁵ Abdülhamid’s May 1895 reformist promises reassured Aintab’s Armenians, who gathered to celebrate at Surp Asvadzadzin Church in September.⁵⁶ The Aintab native Sarkis Balabanian, then a schoolboy, later recalled: “That day was different from any other. The streets and squares of Aintab took on a festive air. The expression of satisfaction on Armenians’ faces was extraordinary.... At school, our teacher was talking about the benefits and freedoms brought to us by the European states’ reformist program.”⁵⁷ These celebrations disturbed the Muslim population. Great Power interference undermined whatever feelings of trust remained between Muslims and Christians. Then on October 9 local authorities received an order from the Sublime Porte to “arrest the Protestant Pastor and a College professor who were guilty of sedition and the organization of [revolutionary] societies.”⁵⁸ Troops repeatedly passed through the town, “followed by crowds of Muslim women weeping and cursing the infidels.”⁵⁹ Over the following days fear gripped the Christians, who locked themselves in their homes. “Thousands were without food,” reported a missionary, though the more fortunate cared for them. “Over 1,000 men” fled for shelter to “mosques, khans, and powerful Muslim houses,” where they lived as virtual prisoners.⁶⁰

The missionaries still believed that Aintab might avoid the violent fate of neighboring Armenian communities. Deeming circumstances here different, the missionary doctor Rev. Americus Fuller wrote that “the leading Muslims ... [were] intelligent and able men and have shown themselves to a degree tolerant of and even friendly to Christians.” Moreover, “the

Governor of Aleppo ... seemed disposed beyond most Turkish officials to respect the rights of Christians," and the town had a relatively large contingent of foreigners "sure to be witnesses of any violence" against them. Furthermore, according to Fuller, the missionary hospital and college had generated "good will" among "all classes," and the town's Christians had "given very little countenance to the [Armenian] ultra-revolutionists."⁶¹

Reassuring hopes notwithstanding, threats against the Christians were repeatedly heard during the weeks before the massacres. Orders to confiscate arms from locals reached the Governor of Aleppo,⁶² but the local government focused only on disarming the Christians. Concurrently, Muslims armed themselves to confront any Armenian "rising."⁶³ British consul Barnham later learned that "a number of persons from Constantinople dressed as dervishes" had arrived in Aintab shortly before the massacre and "were received with extraordinary honor" by the authorities, who spent hours meeting with them.⁶⁴ An American missionary reported that a *firman* (edict) ordering a massacre arrived a few days before the outbreak of violence, along with "a wink from Constantinople."⁶⁵

On Friday, November 15, 1895, Ali Bey, son of the notable Rasim Pasha, secretly organized a meeting with the *softas* (madrassah students) and other provincial elites to organize massacres.⁶⁶ The brothers Nuri and Süleyman Bakkalzâde planned the raids according to instructions from the central government.⁶⁷ The doors of Armenian homes in the Muslim quarter were marked.⁶⁸ As such preparations continued, large crowds of villagers poured into town.⁶⁹ Finally, that evening the *mufti* (religious official of the state) and *kadı* (a Muslim judge) issued a *fatwa* stating that "the lives and property of Christians were lawful prey for Muslims."⁷⁰

The Massacres in Aintab

A mob of Turks and Kurds began the slaughter the next morning, continuing the bloodshed until the evening of November 19.⁷¹ The events began in the Arasa marketplace, where Armenian shops and businesses were located.⁷² The mob butchered shopkeepers and pillaged stores, killing all Armenians in sight.⁷³ Attackers used stones, clubs, and axes.⁷⁴ When an Armenian blacksmith was caught by the mob, one of his neighbors pleaded with him to convert "so we can save you."⁷⁵ The blacksmith refused and was killed.⁷⁶ In the nearby Kalealtı district, five Armenian smiths were murdered with cries of "peace be upon the Prophet," and their bodies were carried away and thrown into ditches. In the same neighborhood, fifty to sixty Armenian-owned jewelry stalls were robbed.⁷⁷ Hoping to find hidden gold and silver, the looters dug up the floors.

The violence then spread to the Armenian residential neighborhoods that were least defensible. Dr. Shepard, the missionary in charge of the hospital, heard the "terrible [cries] of Kurdish and Turkish women cheering on their men," and saw "a crowd of Kurds armed with guns, axes, clubs, and butcher-knives ... swarming out of their quarter ... to attack their Armenian neighbors."⁷⁸ Fuller also remarked on "the loud shrill *zullghat* [wedding ululation]" of the Turkish women crowded on their roofs and cheering on their men.⁷⁹

Approximately 800 people surrounded the Debbaghane neighborhood, armed with axes and pistols. In four hours, they burnt and destroyed this quarter and massacred Armenians.⁸⁰ The twin brothers of the Duzdjian family were butchered in their own home.⁸¹ Peasants from the Keçe Inn area slaughtered the shoemaker brothers Sarkis and Abraham Apoian. In Rahen Street, Krikor Kabakdjian's house was pillaged and then burned down. Chests, cases of wares, and everything else were plundered from the homes of brothers Melkon, Khacher, and Harutyun Kabakdjian.⁸² Some parts of the Alaybeyi neighborhood were set on fire.

A Franciscan monk who witnessed the massacres told the investigating British consul that “butchers and tanners ... armed with clubs and cleavers” were prominent among the killers.⁸³ They screamed “*Allahu Akbar!*” (“God is great”) as they broke down doors “with pickaxes and crowbars or scaled the walls with ladders” and then slaughtered Armenians. “Then when mid-day came they knelt down and said their prayers and then jumped up and resumed the dreadful work. Wherever they were unable to break down the doors, they torched the houses with petroleum.”⁸⁴ In some areas, the uproar went on until midnight. Then, the crowd settled down, and the initial panic subsided. Nonetheless, Armenian watchmen guarded the gates of the Armenian quarters all night.

On November 17, a group of people from the Kozanlı neighborhood reached the Sarı Mahsere gate; there, they attacked houses lining both sides of the street.⁸⁵ Horrified young girls and boys were chased through the streets, screaming. Shepard and Fuller witnessed Armenians being assaulted as their homes were plundered; people—particularly Armenian women—defended their homes from the rooftops with “stones and firearms”⁸⁶ to the horrid shouts of the Kurdish women, the screams of the “wounded and dying [and,] the hoarse cries of the men.”⁸⁷ At times, as in the case of two large Armenian compounds, the mob was fended off; in other cases, where Armenian houses were adjacent to Muslim homes, the mob broke through the doors and began massacring and plundering.⁸⁸

On November 18, the same mob resumed the atrocities, on this occasion singling out the house of Harutyun Effendi Nazaretian, who had inherited the building of the former Iranian consulate in Aintab from his father, Kara Nazar. This act of despoliation went on until late that evening. With its large and spacious courtyard, garden, and guest facilities, the two-story house was thoroughly ransacked. Fortunately, the mob did not burn it down. To protect their houses and neighborhoods, Armenians had built *tebirges* (strong gates) as a precaution. During the massacres, the *tebirges* of the Armenian quarters were not breached, principally because the mob preferred the shops and warehouses of the market.⁸⁹ These gates spelled the difference between life and death for many.⁹⁰ At noon the attacks on private homes promptly ceased; however, the looting of the market went on into the night.⁹¹ A large convoy of Turkish and Kurdish villagers “with bundles ... on their backs, and some with donkey loads and camel loads, showed too plainly that the looted area must have been considerable.”⁹² As they walked, the villagers chanted limericks like, “Queen of England, the owner of Armenians, come quick, save the infidels.”⁹³ Muslim women swarmed around the now-homeless Armenians, mocking their destitution. On the nineteenth, the killings and looting abated. Despite this, on November 24 a Turkish mob accompanied by mostly Kurdish peasants from surrounding villages invaded Harutyun Agha Nazaretian’s house again from the garden gate facing the Çınarlı mosque to scour it for the last valuables.

In the course of three days, all houses from the Alaybeyi, Debbaghane, Sıçancı, Paşa Street, Akyol, Kalealtı, and İbn-i Eyüp quarters, and the Arasa marketplace were robbed; except for covered bazaars in Gemlikli and some inns, all shops and businesses owned by Armenians were pillaged. The churches and school buildings were filled with cold, hungry women and children: “The husbands and fathers [were] in prison or dead.... Houses [were] not only sacked, but even doors and sash windows [were] carried away:... Except for the few wealthy ones, and the few who [had] assured salaries ... all [were] plunged into destitution.”⁹⁴

Perpetrators, Rescuers, Victims

Often those best situated to reduce the violence were themselves complicit. Numerous members of the local elite and minor officials played an active role in the pogroms. Fuller commented that

the local government was “wholly in sympathy with the rioters and ... that it [had] incited and directed nearly all the disturbances.”⁹⁵ The principal organizers were Ali Bey, Bakkalzâde Nuri, and the Süleyman brothers. Additionally, Cenanzâde Ali Bey, a prominent wealthy citizen, seized goods and property from the looted Armenians. Veli Agha, a local official and lieutenant in the Ottoman Army, also benefited.⁹⁶ The bigoted yet influential member of Aintab’s *ulema* (religious scholars), Bülbülzâde Abdullah, supported the massacres. Another prominent local, Dayızâde (Dai) Ahmed Agha, took part,⁹⁷ notably in the pillaging of the Nazaretian house.⁹⁸

Some soldiers sent by the government “to maintain order” also took part in the pillage but, in Shepard’s words the majority made “not the slightest attempt to prevent the attack, or to scatter the mob.”⁹⁹ Neither the government nor the notables attempted during “the whole of that terrible Saturday [November 16]”¹⁰⁰ to stop the killing and looting, other than hurrying “a large force of soldiers out for the defense of the foreign residents [missionaries].”¹⁰¹

However, not all Muslims of Aintab participated in the pogroms. Some “behaved with great humanity” to protect “nearly 2,000” Armenians.¹⁰² The sheik of the dervish lodge welcomed many Armenians.¹⁰³ On the afternoon of November 16, a number of Ottoman soldiers came convoyed those remaining in Armenian neighborhoods to the compound of the sheik of Tekke.¹⁰⁴ Another such individual was Mazlum Effendi, a lawyer who had Armenian clients, lived close to the heavily Armenian Kozanlı market, and harbored Armenian neighbors during the pogrom.¹⁰⁵ For this, some Muslims later called him “Gavur [Infidel] Mazlum.”¹⁰⁶ Another Muslim who resisted the persecutions was Ubeydullah Effendi, an educated, religious, and successful lawyer, antagonistic to Abdülhamid’s regime.¹⁰⁷ Ali Bey (not the above Cenanzâde Ali Bey), the Muslim *mukhtar* (headman) in charge over the Armenian quarter, persuaded the mob to stay away.¹⁰⁸

In another instance, as the mob approached the majestic Niziblian home, a rugged-looking Muslim prevented its looting by addressing them furiously: “You merciless people, what kind of Muslims are you, how are you going to throw stones at this house? Isn’t the owner ... a charitable person? He gave you free wheat when the famine hit us; how quickly you forget, you treacherous sons of traitors.”¹⁰⁹

Future research may uncover other examples, but surely numerous courageous acts of protection went unrecorded.

THE MASSACRES OF NOVEMBER 1895 were remembered as *Balta Senesi* (Year of the Ax): most victims were felled by knives, axes, and bayonets—though firearms also were used.¹¹⁰ The exact number of victims remains unknown. According to various records, the approximate number of Armenians killed from November 16 to 19 in Aintab is between 300 and 400.¹¹¹ Official Ottoman sources report (not realistically), approximately sixty Muslims and 110 Christians dead.¹¹² The estimated number of plundered shops and stalls ranges from 900 to 1,500, that of pillaged houses from 500 to 600.¹¹³ Christian graveyards were desecrated, the bones carried off and scattered. Christian-owned orchards were destroyed.¹¹⁴

After the killings, a “peaceful atmosphere” was reestablished. In each Armenian neighborhood a garrison of thirty soldiers was deployed. Yet these continued to rob and tyrannize the Armenians.¹¹⁵ In June 1896 an effort by Lutfi Pasha, the newly appointed Major General of reserves in Aleppo, to arrest the plunderers and restore Christian property came to naught after Muslim demonstrators forced him to release all prisoners.¹¹⁶ Some of the outraged looters burned stolen property in the street rather than return it.¹¹⁷



Charitable administration formed to assist victims of the anti-Armenian rioting, Aintab, 1895.

For weeks, even months, Armenians feared leaving their homes. Many took refuge in Surp Asvazdzin Church. In January 1896, the British consul reported that some 750 Armenians still sheltered there, while all Armenian shops remained closed.¹¹⁸ After the massacres leading Armenians were arrested; “sixty four of [Aintab’s] most influential and wealthy Christians” remained in jail as of early March,¹¹⁹ some there and others in Aleppo.¹²⁰ A few weeks later, thirty-two more were arrested, including a Rev. Hovannes Krikorian, an Armenian Protestant pastor.¹²¹ The number imprisoned continued to increase and Aintab’s jails were soon “crammed with Armenians.”¹²² The arrested were charged with conspiring with co-ethnics in Zeitun. British consul Barnham suggested that the continued arrest of wealthy Armenians was largely designed to facilitate their expropriation.¹²³ Another possible motivation was to pressure them to convert. Aintab’s “leading Muslim notables,” including the new *kaimakam* (sub-prefect), repeatedly warned that there was now “no hope of [the Armenians] living in security unless they ... [became] Muslims.”¹²⁴

By appealing to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the British Embassy was able to obtain the release of the Aintab Armenians.¹²⁵ In April 1896, twenty-seven Armenians were released from the jails in Aleppo and Aintab after the Sultan amnestied Armenians connected with the armed resistance in Zeitun.¹²⁶ Eventually, the remaining Armenian jailees of Aleppo were released with bail or under amnesty.¹²⁷ No Muslims were punished in the wake of the massacres, and the authorities “systematically” portrayed Christians as “the aggressors,”¹²⁸ a perspective occasionally represented in Turkish historiography even today.¹²⁹

Conclusion

According to current consensus, the massacres of 1894–1897 were ordered and arranged by the central government, with the active participation of *Hamidiye* cavalry regiments—quasi-irregular units founded in the early 1890s under Abdülhamid II and overwhelmingly composed of Kurdish tribes—

often aided by the gendarmerie and regular army.¹³⁰ Both Richard Hovannisian and Ronald G. Suny write that the massacres were intended to put the Armenians “in their place” for engaging outside interests.¹³¹ Norman Naimark observed that Abdülhamid II aimed to reinvigorate his domination by dehumanizing the Armenian minority,¹³² weakening it economically and socially, and sending a message to both the Ottoman populace at large and the outside world that he would not tolerate any further interference with the integrity, or in the domestic affairs, of the Empire.¹³³ Selim Deringil contends that “Abdülhamid intended to cow, decimate, and humble the Armenians, but not to destroy them.”¹³⁴ It has also been argued that Abdülhamid II’s approach was to execute policies of reform and persecution simultaneously: after the reform program that he declared under British pressure,¹³⁵ he encouraged massacres in the provinces of Eastern Anatolia and Cilicia.¹³⁶

However, some recent studies have urged greater caution regarding the role of the Sultan and the government. The overall picture was more nuanced. Certain studies contend that there is no proof of the direct involvement of the Sultan. According to Jelle Verheij, the development of events suggests an impression that “the situation veered out of control, and that the Sultan could not even decide how to act, far less direct events.”¹³⁷ Donald Bloxham argues that the extent of Abdülhamid’s direct complicity “in the full spectrum of the massacres remains unclear”¹³⁸—this is not to absolve the Sultan, since he bore “the primary responsibility of inculcating the atmosphere of anti-Christian chauvinism in which the massacres took place.”¹³⁹ Moreover, recent studies have suggested that the roles of the Hamidian troops and local governors deserve to be reevaluated.¹⁴⁰ Verheij, for instance, asserts that the involvement of Hamidian regiments in the massacres in Diyarbakır province is uncertain.¹⁴¹ In Mardin, a Hamidian regiment of the Arabic Tay tribe was reportedly involved in restoring order,¹⁴² and Hamidian regiments protected Armenian towns and villages in certain places.¹⁴³ As Edip Gölbaşı holds, the attitude of local officials varied from place to place: in some provinces governors actively attempted to prevent killings.¹⁴⁴

In other words, a complex web of relationships both preconditioned and constrained the massacres: common perpetrators internalized their criminal roles as religious and patriotic duty when the Sultan and his government signaled their tacit or explicit consent. The 1895 Aintab massacres manifested a climate of enmity enabling direct violence against a minority. The precondition of the massacres was mobilization of lower-class Turks, Kurds, and Arabs’ grievances by political leaders and organizations, including local notables, provincial elites, and the Muslim clergy. These groups stoked the majority’s deep sense of collective frustration and the identification of Armenians as the fundamental cause of the difficulty of their lives, as well as their society’s social, political, and economic retardation. The Armenians were painted and seen as traitors dissatisfied with their already superior position and eager to overturn the status quo ordained by Islam.

Many ordinary Muslims were so eager that they attacked even when the local government or the Sultan himself sought to restrain them. As Verheij cogently observed, Abdülhamid “appears to have been caught between his own inclination to ‘teach the Armenians a lesson’ and the multiple forms of other opposition from the Great Powers, of the Muslim citizens that were unleashed.”¹⁴⁵ But the case of Aintab shows that once people at the street level perceived the implicit consent of their immediate superiors (or authorities higher still), they took matters into their own hands.

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Notes

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1. Edip Gölbaşı, “1895-96 Katliamları: Doğu Vilayetlerinde Cemaatler Arası ‘Şiddet İklimi’ ve Ermeni Karşıtlığı,” in *1915: Siyaset, Tehcir ve Soykırım*, ed. Oktay Özel and Fikret Adanır (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2015), 140; Edip Gölbaşı, “The Official Conceptualization of the anti-Armenian Riots of 1895–1897: Bureaucratic Terminology, Official Ottoman Narrative, and Discourses of Revolutionary Provocation,” *Études arméniennes contemporaines* 10 (2017): 33–63.

2. The most recent and the most nuanced study is Owen Miller, “Sasun 1894: Mountains, Missionaries and Massacres at the End of the Ottoman Empire” (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University, 2015), esp. chapter 4. See also idem., “Rethinking the Violence in the Sasun Mountains (1893–1894),” *Études arméniennes contemporaines* 10 (2017): 97–125.

3. Selim Deringil, “‘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* 51, no. 2 (2009): 361.

4. See Jelle Verheij, “‘Les Frères de Terre et d’Eau.’ Sur le Rôle des Kurdes dans les Massacres Arméniens de 1894–1896,” in *Islam des Kurdes*, ed. M. van Bruinessen and Joyce Blau (Paris: special issue of *Les Annales de l’Autre Islam*, 1998), 225–76; Jelle Verheij, “Diyarbakir and the Armenian Crisis of 1895,” in *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbakir, 1870–1915*, ed. Jelle Verheij and Joost Jongerden (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 85–145; Gölbaşı, “1895–96 Katliamları,” 140–63; Hans-Lukas Kieser, *İskalanmış Barış: Doğu Vilayetleri’nde Misyonerlik, Etnik Kimlik ve Devlet, 1839–1938* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2005), 210–20, 332–38, 354–57, 761–66; Edhem Eldem, “26 Ağustos 1896 ‘Banka Vakası’ ve 1896 ‘Ermeni Olayları,’” *Tarih ve Toplum: Yeni Yaklaşımlar* 5 (2007): 113–46; Robert Melson, “A Theoretical Inquiry into the Armenian Massacres of 1894–1896,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 24, no. 3 (1982): 481–509; and, for the mass conversion of Armenians during and after the massacres, Deringil, “‘The Armenian Question is finally closed,’” 344–71. See too contributions by Edip Gölbaşı, Ali Sipahi, Owen Miller, Jelle Verheij, Deborah Mayersen, and David Gaunt in “The Massacres of the Hamidian Period (1): Global Narratives and Local Approaches,” special issue of *Études arméniennes contemporaines* 10 (2017).

5. Also known as Antep, Ayntab, and later Gaziantep, after the famous battle of Aintab against the French—which resulted in the gifting of the honorific prefix *Gazi* (veteran), rechristening the city as Gaziantep on February 8, 1921.

6. Leslie Pierce, *Morality Tales, Law and Gender in the Ottoman Court of Aintab* (Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003), 20.

7. Bülent Çukurova, “Antep’te Ermeni Ulusçuluğunun Doğuşunda Amerikalılar ve Kolejin Etkisi,” *Ankara Üniversitesi Türk İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü Atatürk Yolu Dergisi* 10, no. 40 (2007): 617.

8. Ibid., 617. According to Krikor Bogharian, in 1883 the followers of the Armenian Apostolic Church numbered 1,600 families (that is 10,000 persons), and the number of schoolchildren was 550. In general, the 2,000 Armenian families constituted one-third of Aintab’s population at that time. See Krikor Bogharian,

“Statistical Notes,” in *Badmo’wt’iwn Ah’nt’abi Hah’o’c*, vol. I, ed. Kevork A. Sarafian (Los Angeles: Union of the Armenians of Aintab, 1953), 779.

9. *Salname-i Vilayet-i Halep, Ayıntap Kazası*, 1313/1895 (Ankara: Global Strateji Enstitüsü, 2007), 187. There were 11,703 Gregorian Armenians, 3,528 Protestants and 307 Catholics.

10. Kevork A. Sarafian, *Briefer History of Aintab: A Concise History of the Cultural, Religious, Educational, Political, Industrial and Commercial Life of the Armenians of Aintab* (Los Angeles: Union of the Armenians of Aintab, 1957), 118; Hulusi Yetkin, *Gaziantep Tarihi ve Davaları* (Gaziantep: Yeni Matbaa, 1968), 35.

11. *Gaziantep Kültür Envanteri* (Gaziantep: Gaziantep Valiliği Yayını, 2005), 66–68.

12. Ali Nadi Ünler, “Gaziantep Ermenileri,” *Gaziantep Kültür Dergisi* 13 (1972): 151–52; Hulusi Yetkin, *Gaziantep İçin Söylenenler* (Gaziantep: Yeni Matbaa, 1969), 48; Kevork H. Barsumian, *Badmo’wt’iwn Ah’nt’abi H. H. Tashmagco’wt’iwn 1898–1922* (Aleppo: Tigris, 1957), 17.

13. Ünler, “Gaziantep Ermenileri,” 152.

14. Barsumian, *Badmo’wt’iwn Ah’nt’abi H. H. Tashmagco’wt’iwn*, 17.

15. Sarafian, *Briefer History of Aintab*, 105–12; *Badmo’wt’iwn Ah’nt’abi Hah’o’c*, vol. I, 775–91.

16. *Badmo’wt’iwn Ah’nt’abi Hah’o’c*, vol. I, 665–70, 740–53.

17. Sarafian, *Briefer History of Aintab*, 87–91.

18. *Ibid.*, 81.

19. For example, in 1902 Sarkis Agha and Leylekian Effendis were administrative members of the town council. *Salname-i Vilayet-i Halep, Ayıntap Kazası*, 1320/1902, 229.

20. Ramazan Erhan Güllü, *Antep Ermenileri: Sosyal-Siyasi ve Kültürel Hayatı* (Istanbul: IQ Yayıncılık, 2010), 72.

21. *Badmo’wt’iwn Ah’nt’abi Hah’o’c*, vol. I, 335–50; 500–11.

22. Leon Arpee, “A Century of Armenian Protestantism,” *Church History* 5, no. 2 (1936): 152.

23. Emin Bakı Adaş, “Antep’in ‘Protestan tarihi,’ 19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı taşrasında din ve etnisite,” in *Ta Ezelden Taşkındır’... Antep*, ed. Mehmet Güntekin (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 265.

24. American missionaries arrived in Aintab around 1845–1846 through the leadership of Dr. Azariah Smith. See Sarafian, *Briefer History of Aintab*, 56, 83; Faruk Taşkın, “Amerikan Misyoner Okullarından ‘Merkezi Türkiye Koleji,’” (Ph.D. dissertation, Mersin University, 2007), 86–92.

25. Turan Baytop, *Antep’in Öncü Hekimleri: Merkezi Türkiye Koleji Tıp Bölümü ve Antep Amerikan Hastanesi* (Istanbul: SEV Yayınları, 2003), 25; Uğuroğlu Barlas, *Gaziantep’in Yakın Tarihi Üzerine Araştırmalar* (Istanbul: Hilmi Barlas Eğitim Vakfı, 2006), 23.

26. Prof. Alex Bezjian, a senior member of the faculty at the college until his death in 1913, was intimately involved in the founding of the college and was for many years an influential member of its board. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Houghton Library, Harvard University (ABCFM), 16.9.1.6.1, 1817–1919, unit 5, vol. 1, reel 667-139.

27. Judd W. Kennedy, “American Missionaries in Turkey & Northern Syria and the Development of Central Turkey and Aleppo Colleges, 1874–1967” (master’s thesis, College of William and Mary, 2008); ABCFM, “The Missionary Herald,” 70 (1874): 73 (available online as *APS Online*). Elie H. Nazarian, *Badmakirq Nazarean Kertasları (1475–1988)* (Beirut: Atlas, 1988), 115–27 and 207–208; *Badmo’wt’iwn Ah’nt’abi Hah’o’c*, vol. I, 637–897; A. Gesar, *Ah’nt’abi Ko’h’amardı* (Boston: Hayrenik, 1945), 20–25.

28. BOA (Prime Minister's Office Ottoman Archive), İ.HUS (İrade Hususi) 7/1310.C/26, 16 Kânûmевvel 1308 (28 December 1892). Sadaret (The Grand Vizierate) to Ministry of Education, 17 Kânûmевvel 1308 (29 December 1892), BOA, A.MKT.MHM (Sadâret Muhimme Kalemi Evrakı), no. 749/lef 6.
29. Abidin Pasha, governor of Ankara, to Mâbeyn Baş Kitâbet, 9 Kânûmsâni 1308 (21 January 1893), BOA, Y. PRK.DH (Yıldız Tasnifi Perakende Evrakı Dâhiliye), no. 5/83.
30. Sarkis Y. Karaian, "On the Number of Armenians in Aintab in 1914," in *Badmo'wt'ıwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. III, ed. Yervant Babaian (Los Angeles: Union of the Armenians of Aintab, 1994), 15; *Gençlere Başarı Yolu: Cemil Alevli'nin Hayatı ve Hayat Görüşü*, ed. Hulusi Yetkin (Gaziantep: Işık Matbaası, 1963), 16.
31. Yetkin, *Gaziantep Tarihi ve Davaları*, 35–36.
32. Bülent Çukurova, "1922 Yılında Ermenilerin Antep'ten Suriye'ye Göçlerinde Sosyo-Ekonomik Faktörler," *ASAM Ermeni Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, Ermeni Araştırmaları I. Türkiye Kongresi Bildirileri* 3 (2003): 167.
33. Donald Bloxham and Fatma Müge Göçek, "The Armenian Genocide," in *The Historiography of Genocide*, ed. Dan Stone (Basingstoke, UK; New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2008), 365.
34. The quote appears in Bekir Sıtkı Baykal, *Şark Buhranı ve Sabah Gazetesi* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi, 1948), cited in Çetin Yetkin, *Türk Halk Hareketleri ve Devrimleri Tarihi* (Istanbul: Say Yayınları, 1984), 303.
35. Yves Ternon, *The Armenians: History of a Genocide* (Ann Arbor, MI: Caravan Books, 1990), 51; Kieser, *Iskalanmış Barış*, 166.
36. Miller, "Sasun 1894," 154–230.
37. Verheij, "Diyarbakir and the Armenian Crisis of 1895," 94; Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 51–52.
38. Christopher J. Walker, *Armenia: The Survival of a Nation* (London: Routledge, 1990), 136–51; Verheij, "Les Frères de Terre et d'Eau," 238–46; idem., "Die armenischen Massaker von 1894–1896: Anatomie und Hintergründe eine Krise," in *Die Armenische Frage und die Schweiz (1896–1923)*, ed. Hans-Lukas Kieser (Zurich: Chronos Verlag, 1999), 81–84; and idem., "Diyarbakir and the Armenian Crisis of 1895," 94.
39. In April 1895 Great Britain prepared a reform proposed for "Western Armenia" (essentially Ottoman Armenia, as opposed to the Russian Empire and Iran) "which provided de facto autonomy of the region under the auspices of the European powers"; see Arman J. Kirakossian, *The Armenian Massacres 1894–1896, U.S. Media Testimony* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004), 25.
40. Manug Pancardjian, "Ah'nt'abi Ch'arti," in *Badmo'wt'ıwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. I, 906; Sarkis Balabanian, *Geanqis Daq o'w Bagh Orery: Ah'nt'ab, Qe'sab, Hale'b* (Aleppo: Atlas, 1983), 30.
41. Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus* (Providence, RI: Berghahn Books, 2004), 61–110; Raymond Kévorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2011), 10–11; Richard Hovannisian, "The Historical Dimensions of the Armenian Question, 1878–1923," in *The Armenian Genocide in Perspective*, ed. Richard Hovannisian (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1986), 24. For a detailed study on the role of British diplomacy and policies on the Armenian Question and reforms, see Arman J. Kirakossian, *British Diplomacy and the Armenian Question from the 1830s to 1914* (Princeton; London: Gomidas Institute Books, 2003).
42. Walker, *Armenia the Survival of a Nation*, 136–51; Ternon, *The Armenians*, 61.
43. See the extensive bibliography in George N. Shirinian, "The Armenian Massacres of 1894–1897: A bibliography," *Armenian Review* 47, no. 1–2 (2001): 113–64.
44. Kieser, *Iskalanmış Barış*, 200; Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, 55.

45. Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, 55; Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Der verpasste Friede: Mission, Ethnie und Staat in den Ostprovinzen der Türkei 1839–1938* (Zurich: Chronos, 2000), 243–47.
46. *Ibid.*, 55.
47. Barsumian, *Badmo'wt'iwn Ah'nt'abi H. H. Tashmagco'wt'iwn*, 20; *Badmo'wt'iwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. I, 936.
48. Barsumian, *Badmo'wt'iwn Ah'nt'abi H. H. Tashmagco'wt'iwn*, 20.
49. *Badmo'wt'iwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. I, 937.
50. Soghomon B. Bastadjian, “Zëyt'uni Absdamput'iwnë ew Hnch'agean Gusagts'ut'iwnë,” in *Badmo'wt'iwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. I, 936.
51. Nazarian, *Badmakirq Nazarean Kertasdani*, 140, 145; Barsumian, *Badmo'wt'iwn Ah'nt'abi H.H. Tashmagco'wt'iwn*, 33.
52. *Badmo'wt'iwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. I, 936. Nazarian, *Badmakirq Nazarean Kertasdani*, 162.
53. Barnham to Currie, November 1895, the National Archives, Kew, London, Foreign Office Papers (FO), 195/1883.
54. Extract from letter of Rev. Fuller, Aintab, to Chas. E. Swett, 9 May 1895, ABCFM, 16.9.5, unit 5, vol. 12, reel 655.
55. Balabanian, *Geanqis Daq o'w Bagh Orery*, 32.
56. *Badmo'wt'iwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. I, 907.
57. Balabanian, *Geanqis Daq o'w Bagh Orery*, 30.
58. F.D. Shepard to James Barton, 9 October 1895, ABCFM, 16.9.5, unit 5, vol. 14, reel 659.
59. Barnham to Currie, November 1895, FO 195/1883; and Poche to Terrell, 2 November 1895, The United States Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS), 1895, vol. II, 1346–47.
60. Fuller to Smith, 5 November 1895, ABCFM, 16.9.5, unit 5, vol. 21, reel 667.
61. Fuller to Clark, 23 November 1895; and Fuller to Lord Bryce, 5 March 1896, both in ABCFM 16.9.5, unit 5, vol. 12, reel 655. See also George H. Filian, *Armenia and Her People* (Hartford, CT: American Publishing Company, 1896), 286–87.
62. Barnham to Currie, November 1895, FO 195/1883.
63. Fuller to Clark, 23 November 1895, ABCFM, 16.9.5, unit 5, vol. 12, reel 655; see also Filian, *Armenia and Her People*, 287.
64. Barnham to Currie, 21 January 1896, FO 195/1932.
65. *Ibid.*
66. *Badmo'wt'iwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. I, 915.
67. *Ibid.*, 912; Avedis Nakashian, *A Man Who Found a Country* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1940), 160–61. As opposed to first-hand testimonial accounts of Sarafian and Nakashian, in his report to Mr. Terrell (U.S. minister in Istanbul), missionary Rev. Saunders stated that the majority of the Moslem notables had always been friendly to them. In the same report, Saunders also expressed their gratitude to the Aintab soldiers by saying that, “What they did or did not in the city is not our affair. They certainly protected us well on Saturday, the 16th.” See Saunders to Terrell, 27 November 1895, FRUS, 1895, vol. II, 1389;

Saunders also presented his special gratitude to the Beridjik [Birecik] contingent, who protected missionaries in the College and the Hospital on Sunday 16th and Monday the 17th. (p. 1390).

68. Mihran Der Melkonian, *Geanqi ew Maho'wan Mich'ew* (Beirut: Aravot Press, 1939), 4; Stina Khatchadourian, *Efronia, An Armenian Love Story* (Princeton: Gomidas Institute Books, 2001), 27.

69. Barnham to Currie, November 1895, FO 195/1883.

70. Sanders to Barnham, 11 December 1895, FO 195/1883.

71. Terrell to Olney, 17 November 1895, FRUS, 1895, vol. II, 1341; Saunders to Terrell, 27 November 1895, FRUS, 1895, vol. II, 1388.

72. Filian, *Armenia and Her People*, 289.

73. Nakashian, *A Man Who Found a Country*, 160; Filian, *Armenia and Her People*, 289.

74. Emre Barlas, *Doktor Mecid Barlas'ın Anıları* (Istanbul: Cinus Yayınları, 2010), 12.

75. *Badmo'ut'ıwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. I, 907.

76. *Ibid.*, 907.

77. *Ibid.*; Melkonian, *Geanqi ew Maho'wan Mich'ew*, 4.

78. F.D. Shepard, "Personal Experience in Turkish Massacres and Relief Work," *The Journal of Race Development* 1, no. 3 (1911): 319; Kirakossian, *The Armenian Massacres*, 119.

79. Shepard, "Personal Experience in Turkish Massacres," 319; Edwin M. Bliss, *Turkey and the Armenian Atrocities* (New York: Edgewood Publishing Company, 1896), 451; Alice Shepard Riggs, *Shepard of Aintab* (Princeton, NJ: Gomidas Institute Books, Taderon Press, 2001), 109; Filian, *Armenia and Her People*, 289.

80. *Badmo'ut'ıwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. I, 915–16.

81. *Ibid.*, 909.

82. *Ibid.*

83. Barnham to Currie, 21 January 1896, FO 195/1932.

84. *Ibid.*

85. *Badmo'ut'ıwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. I, 910; Melkonian, *Geanqi ew Maho'wan Mich'ew*, 3; Filian, *Armenia and Her People*, 289.

86. Bliss, *Turkey and the Armenian Atrocities*, 452.

87. *Ibid.*, 452.

88. *Ibid.*

89. Shepard, "Personal Experience in Turkish Massacres," 320.

90. Nazarian, *Badmakirq Nazarean Kertasdani (1475–1988)*, 127.

91. Shepard, "Personal Experience in Turkish Massacres," 320.

92. Bliss, *Turkey and the Armenian Atrocities*, 452.

93. *Badmo'ut'ıwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. I, 916.

94. Kirakossian, *The Armenian Massacres*, 121.

95. Fuller to Smith, 25 December 1895, ABCFM, 16.9.5.

96. *Badmo'ut'ıwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. I, 908; J. Rendel Harris & Helen Harris, *Letters from the Scenes of the Recent Massacres in Armenia* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1897), 32.
97. *Badmo'ut'ıwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. I, 913.
98. For a short biography of Dayızâde Ahmed Agha, see Şakir Sabri Yener, *Gaziantep'in Yakın Tarihinden Notlar* (Gaziantep: Gaziyurt Matbaası, 1968), 54–68.
99. Bliss, *Turkey and the Armenian Atrocities*, 453.
100. *Ibid.*, 451.
101. *Ibid.*
102. Barnham to Currie, November 1895, FO 195/1883.
103. *Badmo'ut'ıwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. I, 912.
104. Balabanian, *Geanqis Daq o'w Bagh Orery*, 33.
105. *Badmo'ut'ıwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. I, 913.
106. *Ibid.*
107. *Ibid.*
108. *Ibid.*, 901.
109. *Ibid.*, 909.
110. Barlas, *Doktor Mecid Barlas'ın Anları*, 12; Mahmut Oğuz Göğüş, *İlk İnsanlardan Bugüne Çeşitli Yönleriyle Gaziantep* (Ankara: Cihan Ofset, 1997); Yener, *Gaziantep Yakın Tarihinden Notlar*, 368; Bliss, *Turkey and the Armenian Atrocities*, 455; Harris and Harris, *Letters from the Scenes*, 32.
111. *Badmo'ut'ıwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. I, 923; Bliss, *Turkey and the Armenian Atrocities*, 45–56; 553; F. D. Shepard to Smith, 18 November 1895, ABCFM, 16.9.5, unit 5, vol. 14, reel 659; Fuller to Smith, 25 December 1895, ABCFM, 16.9.5; Saunders to Terrell, 27 November 1895, FRUS, 1895, vol. II, 1390; M.S. Gabrielian, *Armenia: A Martyr Nation. A Historical Sketch of the Armenian People from Tradition Times to the Present Tragic Days* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1918), 257–58; Shadid Bey, *Islam, Turkey and Armenia and How They Happened* (St. Louis, MO: Press of C.B. Woodward Company, 1898), 201; E. Antoine, *Les Massacres d'Armenie* (Bruxelles: Soci t  de librairie, 1897), 72–9.
112. Ciphred telegram of 5 Teşrinisânî 1311 (17 November 1895), BOA, DH.ŞFR (Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemî), 184/30; ciphred telegram of 7 Teşrinisânî 1311 (19 November 1895), BOA, DH.ŞFR 184/44. According to records of Hüseyin Nazım Pasha, fifty-one Muslim men and eight Muslim women, and 103 Armenian men and eight Armenian women lost their lives, while 110 Muslims and ninety-seven Armenians were injured. Hüseyin Nazım Paşa, *Ermeni Olayları Tarihi*, vol. I (Ankara: Başbakanlık Basımevi, 1998), 131.
113. *Badmo'ut'ıwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. I, 914; *Hay Aintab* 10 (1969): 20–21; Filian, *Armenia and Her People*, 295; Barsumian, *Badmo'ut'ıwn Ah'nt'abi H.H. Tashnagco'ut'ıwn*, 30; Gesar, *Ah'nt'abi Ko'h'amardy*, 25.
114. Fuller to Smith, 19 March 1896, ABCFM, 16.9.5, unit 5, vol. 12, reel 655.
115. *Badmo'ut'ıwn Ah'nt'abi Hah'o'c*, vol. I, 916.
116. Telegram of 31 Mays 1312 (12 June 1896), BOA, AMKT.MHM, 651/28.
117. Catoni to Herbert, 1 July 1896, FO 195/1932.
118. Barnham to Currie, 21 January 1896, FO 195/1932.

119. Fuller to Lord James Bryce, 5 March 1896, ABCFM, 16.9.5, unit 5, vol. 12, reel 655.
120. Güllü, *Antep Ermenileri*, 229. Some of the prisoners were Artin and Garabed Nazaretian; Kevork Leylekian; Kevork and Movses Shamian; Agop, Babik, and Movses Babigian; Artin Boshgezenian; Avadis Hasardjian; Kirkor Kabakian; Agop Araklian; Anton Gaberlian, and Garabed Barsamian. Among those arrested, two prominent Armenians—Artin Agha Nazaretian and Kevork Leylekian—stood out. These were rather wealthy notables families, and their houses were severely attacked during the massacres. They sent a letter begging the Sultan to pardon them. Telegram of 20 Şubat 1312 (3 March 1896), BOA, A.MKT.MHM 650/13; and, for another telegram of 7 Mart 1312 (19 March 1896), BOA, A.MKT.MHM 649/9. Thereupon Aleppo governor Raif Pasha sent a follow-up telegram to Sadaret about alleged offences committed by Nazaretian and Leylekian: “Nazaretian got involved in a murderous incident during the events in Aintab, and that Leylekian attempted to murder a man but only injured him. They were put on trial and condemned alongside their wives.” See BOA, A.MKT.MHM 650/13, 22 Şubat 1312 (5 March 1896).
121. Fuller to Smith, 6 February 1896; and Hovannes Krikorian to his sister, 5 February 1896, both in ABCFM, 16.9.5, unit 5, vol. 14, reel 659.
122. Barnham to Currie, November 1895, FO 195/1883. On the other hand, Governor of Aleppo Hasan Pasha telegraphed the Ministry of Interior about the number of Armenians who were arrested and imprisoned during the supposed Armenian insurgency describing what occurred in Aintab as an “Armenian insurrection,” claiming that 700 Armenians had been arrested, and another sixty-five interned temporarily in inns and government buildings. See BOA, DH.ŞFR 184/49, 7 Teşrinisânî 1311 (19 November 1895).
123. Barnham to Currie, 21 January 1896, FO 195/1932.
124. “Notes on the Situation at Aintab (Province of Aleppo),” 6 February 1896, unsigned, attached to Dwight to Currie, 19 February 1896, FO 195/1949; Shepard, “Personal Experience in Turkish Massacres,” 323.
125. BOA, A.MKT.MHM, 649/9; and BOA, HR.SYS (Hariciye Siyasi), 2859/18, both of 24 Şubat (February) 1896.
126. Aleppo Governor Raif Pasha to Sadaret, 15 Mayıs (May) 1896, BOA, A.MKT.MHM 651/12.
127. Telegrams of 24 Şubat (February), 1896, BOA, HR.SYS, 2791/29 and 2859/18.
128. Fuller to Smith, 25 December 1895, ABCFM, 16.9.5, unit 5.
129. Güllü, *Antep Ermenileri*, 143; Halil Özşavlı, “1895 Antep Ermeni Olayları,” *The Journal of Academic Social Science Studies* 5, no. 8 (2012): 951–69; Telegram of 4 Teşrinisânî 1311 (16 November 1895), BOA, A.MKT.MHM 648/10; Aleppo Province to Istanbul Vizierate, 26 Teşrinievvel 1311 (7 November 1895), BOA, A.MKT.MHM, 649/10.
130. Peter Balakian, *The Burning Tigris: The Armenian Genocide and America’s Response* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004), 51; Raymond Kévorkian and Paul B. Paboudjian, *Les Arméniens dans l’Empire Ottoman à la Veille du Génocide* (Paris: Editions d’Art et d’Histoire ARHIS, 1992); Simon Payaslian, *The History of Armenia: From the Origins to the Present* (New York: Palgrave, 2007), 120; Vahakn N. Dadrian, “The Role of the Turkish Military in the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians: A Study in Historical Continuities,” *Journal of Political and Military Sociology* 20, no. 2 (1992): 262; Mark Levene, “Creating a Modern ‘Zone of Genocide’: The Impact of Nation-and State-Formation on Eastern Anatolia, 1878–1923,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 12, no. 3 (1998): 396. On the Hamidiye regiments, see Stephen Duguid, “The Politics of Unity: Hamidian Policy in Eastern Anatolia,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 9, no. 2 (1973): 139–56; Janet Klein, *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011).
131. Hovannisian, “The Historical Dimensions of the Armenian Question,” 25–26; Ronald G. Suny, *Looking toward Ararat: Armenia in Modern History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 99. Dragoman of the British Embassy Fitzmaurice was convinced that the massacres occurred at a signal from the sultan: “No

direct orders had been issued ... but clear hints had come down from Yıldız that ‘it would be desirable to give the Armenians a good lesson.’ In an Oriental country, he said, this was all that was needed.” See, *Gerald Fitzmaurice Berridge (1865–1939): Chief Dragoman of the British Embassy in Turkey* (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2007), 25 (cited in Deringil, “The Armenian Question is finally closed,” 368).

132. Norman M. Naimark, *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 2001), 23.

133. Johannes Lepsius, *Armenia and Europe* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1897), 76–77; Mark Levene, “The changing face of mass murder: Massacre, genocide and post-genocide,” *International Social Science Journal* 54, no. 174 (2012): 449.

134. Deringil, “The Armenian Question is finally closed,” 368.

135. According to Mr. Terrell, this reform program contained “absolutely nothing new of practical values for the future security of life or property,” and it only announces “the order to enforce existing laws, or as regulations in harmony with them.” Terrell to Olney, 24 October 1895, FRUS, 1895, vol. II, 1325–26; Verheij, “Diyarbakir and the Armenian Crisis of 1895,” 95–96.

136. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide*, 151–54; Levene, “The changing face of mass murder,” 445; Verheij, “Diyarbakir and the Armenian Crisis of 1895,” 96; Verheij, “Die armenischen Massaker von 1894–1896,” 85.

137. Verheij, “Diyarbakir and the Armenian Crisis of 1895,” 97; the same argument appears in Gölbaşı, “1895–96 Katliamları,” 140–63. On the other hand, according to Selim Deringil, “there is substantial evidence, albeit circumstantial, that points in the direction of his benign neglect, if not actual covert support for the perpetrators of the massacres and forced conversions”: “The Armenian Question is finally closed,” 351.

138. Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, 55.

139. *Ibid.*, 55; Bloxham and Göçek, “The Armenian Genocide,” 361.

140. Verheij, “Diyarbakir and the Armenian Crisis of 1895”; *idem.*, “‘Les frères de terre et d’eau.’ Sur le rôle des Kurdes dans les massacres arméniens de 1894–1896,” 225–76; Gölbaşı, “Hamidiye Alayları: Bir Değerlendirme,” in *1915: Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım*, 164–75.

141. *Ibid.*, 135, 138. Verheij notes that there is not much evidence regarding Hamidiye involvement in the rural areas generally, “notwithstanding the fact that Kurds featured much more heavily as identifiable perpetrators there than in urban environments” in the province of Diyarbakir. *Ibid.*, 138.

142. *Ibid.*, 136.

143. Gölbaşı, “Hamidiye Alayları: Bir Değerlendirme”; Verheij, “Diyarbakir and the Armenian Crisis of 1895,” 136.

144. Gölbaşı, “1895–96 Katliamları,” 156; Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, 56.

145. Verheij, “Diyarbakir and the Armenian Crisis of 1895,” 138. See also Gölbaşı, “1895–96 Katliamları,” 162.