

BOOK REVIEW

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ARŞİV BELGELERİYLE ERMENİ FAALİYETLERİ 1914-1918 (ARMENIAN ACTIVITIES IN THE ARCHIVE DOCUMENTS 1914-1918)

(Ankara: Turkish General Staff Military History Archives and Strategic Studies Institute (ATASE) and
General Staff Supervision Directorate Publications, 2005, 2 Volumes)

Publication No: 2005/29, 2005/30, First Edition, Volume I: Table of Contents, Introduction, Facts through Documents; Part 1: Modern Turkish and English Translations of the Documents; Part 2: Facsimiles of the Documents and Transcripts; Part 3: 1914 Census Statistics; Volume II: Table of Contents, Introduction, Part 1: Modern Turkish and English Translations of the Documents; Part 2: Facsimiles of the Documents and Transcripts; Volume I: 717 pages; Volume II: 653 pages. ISBN: 975-409-312-1 / 975-409-317-2

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The Turkish General Staff has brought the realities of the Armenian relocation to public attention by publishing in book form the documents in its archives regarding the Armenian activities in the years 1914-1918. The first two volumes of these series have been published under the title “Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents 1914-1918” through the efforts of The Military History Archives and Strategic Studies Institute (ATASE) and the Supervision Directorate of the Turkish General Staff.

The aforementioned books consist of the copies of the original documents written in Ottoman Turkish, the modern Turkish and English translations of these, and the relevant pictures that have been put together without any commentary. They reveal expressly the Armenian activities and organizations and demonstrate through official records and correspondence who were the real perpetrators of part of the events that took place in the territories of the Ottoman Empire in 1914-1918, that is, the part that is deemed inhuman.

Contrary to the “genocide” allegations made by the Armenian community, these documents and pictures reveal the sufferings of human beings that were subjected to torture and cruelty and were even massacred by the Armenian gangs.

The First Volume of the “Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents” demonstrates how and under what conditions the relocation decision, which the Armenian community has described as “genocide” all these years, was taken -- by referring to the Ottoman Government and Ottoman Army records and correspondence. It states the activities of the Armenian gangs, giving especially exact copies of correspondence that show the decisions taken at the Dashnak committee meetings regarding the action plans. The Dashnak documents indicate the changes that were to be made in the plans according to the way the Ottoman Army would perform in the war. They also give an appraisal of the arms supplies that were to come from Russia and the Dashnak plans for enlisting in the Russian Army in accordance with the decisions taken at the meetings organized by the Dashnak committee. Furthermore, this volume includes the pictures of those who were massacred, some of them tortured to death, by the Armenian gangs before the Ottoman Government took the relocation decision.

Another point that calls for attention in the First Volume is the nature of the regulations issued for the relocation of the Armenians. This is a list of the guidelines to be observed to protect the material rights of the Armenians to be relocated, to ensure the safety of their lives and to provide them with shelter during their journey

Also, on the basis of documents, the First Volume shows how, while the war went on, the Armenian gangs continued to block the roads, massacre civilians and loot the arms and food depots in the name of the enemy, that is, the Russian forces, even after the relocation decision was taken.

The Second Volume consists mostly of documents, including pictures, attesting to the massacres staged by the Armenian gangs.

This scientific research objectively displays the facts in their entirety. It indicates the reasons for the relocation, showing how exactly the Ottoman state was forced to struggle against the Armenians who had become the “internal enemy” during a war being waged against foreign forces.

The documents follow a chronological order and are classified according to subject matter. Furthermore, they have been translated into modern Turkish and into English and that will facilitate greatly the researchers’ job in the course of their scientific studies.