

# **The Baghdad Railway and the Armenian Genocide, 1915–1916**

## **A Case Study in German Resistance and Complicity**

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The role played by German officers and officials during the Armenian Genocide has not been studied adequately and remains open to varying assessments and interpretations. Imperial Germany was the senior ally of the Central Powers during World War I and could not avoid the implications of its association with a genocidal regime in the Ottoman Empire. An examination of the policies and strategies of German military and civil authorities reveals a considerable degree of internal disagreement on what could and should be done. The matter of the Armenian workers on the Baghdad Railway is a significant case in point.<sup>1</sup>

In 1913, a German military mission under Otto V. K. Liman von Sanders was sent to Constantinople to reform the Ottoman army and secure German influence over Ottoman military affairs. The officers of the mission were given leaves of absence from their regular positions and served as Ottoman officers at their new posts. Thus, they were responsible both to the Ottoman High Command and, through the intermediary link of the head of the German military mission, to the German Supreme Army Command (*Oberste Heeresleitung*). The importance of the German officers was further increased during World War I, when the Ottoman Empire entered the conflict with a surprise naval attack on the Russian Black Sea installations at the end of October 1914, prompting a Russian declaration of war on November 2.

When, in April 1915, the Young Turk government began to exterminate the Armenians within the Ottoman Empire, the presumed participation of German officers and consuls became an issue in the press of Entente

countries (Great Britain, France, Russia). In response, the German Foreign Office (*Auswärtiges Amt*) denied any German involvement and maintained, moreover, that reports of persecutions and killings were inventions.<sup>2</sup> This denialist position was in direct contradiction to the information that the German diplomats had on hand. The German consuls reported continuously on the deportation and slaughter of Armenians. They urged their embassy in Constantinople to intervene. The German government, however, carefully avoided any interference and ordered that reports should be prepared so as to show that Armenians were guilty of treason and that measures taken by the Ottoman government were justified.<sup>3</sup> The German press was instructed to publish denials, eliciting a sharp protest by Walter Rössler, the German consul at Aleppo, who knew the contrary to be true.<sup>4</sup>

The Foreign Office's strategy was based on a position of strength. After the German defeat in 1918, this strategy was no longer feasible, and damage control was required in an attempt to whitewash the German role and place the blame entirely on its former ally. As earlier denials had undermined the credibility of the Foreign Office, it invited Johannes Lepsius to publish documentation on the German role during the genocide.<sup>5</sup> As a result Lepsius produced a collection of manipulated diplomatic documents: evidence implicating any Germans and most of the material on the Ottoman politicians was left out or deleted. The statement by Lepsius that he had had full access to the archives of the Foreign Office and that no document had been altered was false.<sup>6</sup> Although the book was a product in keeping with the designs of the Foreign Office, its international reception was not. Even Lepsius's sanitized publication included sufficient material for severe criticism of the German role in the Armenian Genocide.<sup>7</sup> The occupation and destruction of the Republic of Armenia by Turkish and Bolshevik troops at the end of 1920, however, removed the need for any further accommodating of international public opinion.

Since the 1960s research on the German role in the genocide has gained new impetus. Ulrich Trumpener discussed the politics of the German-Ottoman alliance during World War I and came to the conclusion that "the Porte's ruthless campaign against its Armenian subjects in 1915 and thereafter was intended primarily to decimate, and to disperse the remnants of, an 'unwanted' ethnic minority and only incidentally concerned with providing security against uprisings, espionage, sabotage, or any other interference with the Ottoman war effort."<sup>8</sup> On the role of the German officers, Trumpener commented that their freedom of action was circumscribed by Ottoman countermeasures, so that they had to depend on Ottoman goodwill. In sum,

the German civil and military authorities had only a limited impact on the internal affairs of the empire.<sup>9</sup>

Recently, Trumpener's conclusions have been re-examined by Christoph Dinkel and Vahakn Dadrian. Dinkel has advanced the thesis that German officers were direct participants in the decision to deport the Ottoman Armenian population.<sup>10</sup> According to Dinkel, "German officers proposed the deportations and also played a large role in ensuring that they were carried out against other German opposition."<sup>11</sup> Thus, Dinkel makes a clear distinction between the actions of German military and civilian officials in the Ottoman Empire.

Dadrian has further elaborated on this issue. Introducing additional materials, he has concluded that German participation in the decision making process on the deportations implicated not only the German military authorities but also the civilian authorities. He writes: "The speedy completion of the Baghdad Railway project was of the highest strategic importance for that war effort, a compelling necessity for winning the war in the Turkish theater of operations. The German authorities, military and civilian, were fully aware of this. Yet, for reasons of their own, they joined the Turks in the decision to deport these craftsmen."<sup>12</sup> Discussing the views of the Foreign Office on this specific decision, Dadrian asserts that its reactions were concerned more about the "foolishness" of a German officer countersigning such a decision than about the actual cooperation of the German officer with his Turkish colleagues.<sup>13</sup>

In his most recent analysis of German responsibility in the Armenian Genocide, Dadrian modified his argument as follows: "The speedy completion of the Baghdad Railway project was of the highest strategic importance for that war effort, a compelling necessity for winning the war in the Turkish theater of operations. The German authorities, military and civilian, were fully aware of this. Yet, for reasons of his own, their representative joined the Turks in the decision to deport these [Armenian] craftsmen."<sup>14</sup>

Dadrian did not introduce any new evidence to substantiate the change in his argument. Regarding the actual deportation of the railway workers, however, Dadrian now maintains that Colmar von der Goltz Pasha, a German general in Ottoman service, played a significant part in this operation: "in an affidavit signed by three Armenians involved in the construction details of the Baghdad Railway, one of whom was a doctor and the other two were railroad master builders, Goltz, with reference to a particular instance, is depicted as the actual instigator of the deportation of 21,000 Armenians."<sup>15</sup>

This study considers these conclusions. It analyzes the policies of the Baghdad Railway Company vis-à-vis the Ottoman authorities, the German military, and the Foreign Office. Throughout the war Armenians worked on the staff of the railway company in various positions. Moreover, thousands of Armenians were employed on railway construction sites. Therefore, the directors of the railway company were radically affected when the Ottoman government initiated its anti-Armenian extermination program, and the administrators of the company undertook initiatives on behalf of their Armenian employees. These steps included top-level representations with the German and Ottoman governments in Berlin and Constantinople, interventions with Ottoman provincial governors, and initiatives with individual local Ottoman officials. Thus, the activities of the Baghdad Railway Company provide insights into the strategies of the administrations concerned at various levels. The reports of the railway company provide a particular perspective on the organization of the Armenian Genocide by the Ottoman government and the policies of German military and diplomatic authorities from a non-governmental point of view. The analysis combines entrepreneurial history and research on the genocide.

It should be kept in mind, however, that the Baghdad Railway did not cross the core regions of Armenian habitation in the Ottoman Empire or the principal killing fields in the area of the Ottoman Third Army and the Syrian desert. Thus, the evidence presented here offers only limited insight into the extent of the extermination and its execution, and is not a full analysis of the Armenian Genocide as such.

### **The Railway during the First Months of the War**

Before World War I, building a railway through the Ottoman Empire to Baghdad was the most important German project abroad and had led to a large de facto German sphere of influence in the area. European railway employees who had worked for years in the Ottoman Empire and spoke its various languages gathered information on general conditions which was forwarded through their own communication network to the general directorate in Constantinople. That office was headed by the delegate of the Deutsche Bank, Franz J. Günther, who was in close contact with the German embassy. In cases of need, German diplomats transmitted Günther's reports by diplomatic pouch or by cipher telegram. In sum, the Deutsche Bank had excellent ways of obtaining information from a large area of the Ottoman Empire.

At the outbreak of World War I, direct rail connections between the Ottoman Empire and Germany were cut by Serbia. The situation was

aggravated by the mobilization of the Ottoman army, creating a constant burden on the transport capacities of the railway. After the Ottoman entry into the war the situation became critical. The railway was the most important supply line for the Ottoman capital. After the attack of the Entente at the Dardanelles on February 19, 1915, the limited capacity of the single-track line proved to be an even more serious problem.<sup>16</sup>

The situation had been foreseen by German and Ottoman strategists. To avoid the problems anticipated, a German officer, Major Kübel, was installed in May 1914 as head of the railway department of the Ottoman general staff. His task was to ensure that the capacity for military transport would be sufficient within six months. Kübel concluded that in order to achieve this he would have to be entrusted with the management of the lines. In other words, the lines would come under Ottoman state control. Although the head of the German military mission supported Kübel's objective, the Deutsche Bank and the German embassy in Constantinople opposed it. The ambassador, Hans von Wangenheim, argued that the military mission was an instrument of Germany's Middle East policy and should not be thought of as its object. On the insistence of the diplomats and the bank, Kübel was removed after a bitter struggle in July 1914. This defeat was a slap in the face of the German officer corps and would not be forgotten.<sup>17</sup>

Cooperation between the railway company and Kübel's successor, Lieutenant Colonel Böttlich, turned out to be a complicated business. Böttlich, too, supported the financial interests of the Ottoman government against those of the railway company. This taking of sides was of the utmost concern to the company. If it had previously been worried about the costs of the ongoing construction works, the situation had worsened since the outbreak of the war. The supply of building materials that had to be imported had stopped. As construction costs rose so did the costs of operating the lines. The supply of coal became a crucial question and was only improved slightly by substituting firewood. Thus, the war created a sharp rise in expenditures for the company, coupled with an increase in traffic but without a higher income. Agreements with the Ottoman government stipulated that military transport was to enjoy a sizable discount so that the costs of operating the trains were barely covered. The situation became desperate when the government refused to pay for military transport altogether, while at the same time insisting on continued maximum services. This, however, was not the only surprise. Understanding that military necessity effectively meant free railway tickets, an increasing number of civil officials and other persons presented themselves at the station declaring that they were entitled to free transport. This form of abuse constituted only a minor concern compared

with the performance of İsmail Hakkı Pasha, who was charged with the provisioning of Constantinople. The pasha started requisitioning railway cars for this purpose and saw no reason to pay for them. Moreover, he found that this service—for him free-of-charge—provided a lucrative profit through the sale of certificates for railway cars to anyone who would pay.<sup>18</sup>

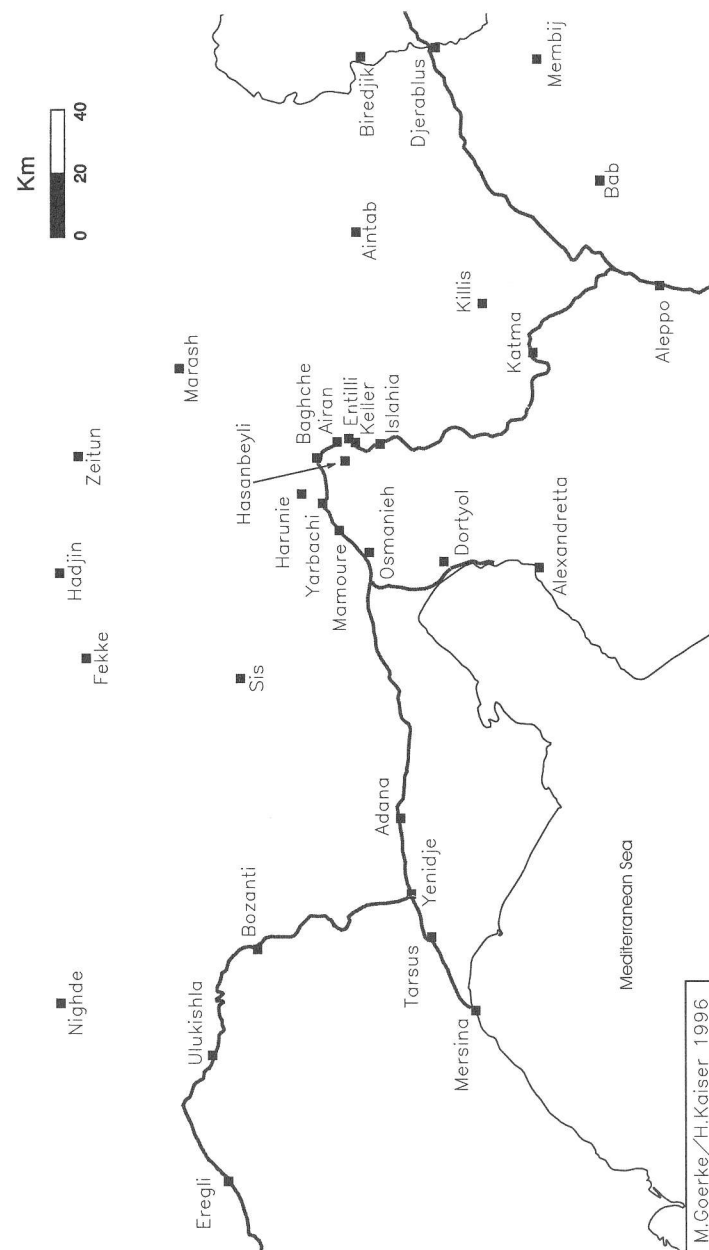
In sum, all the calculations made by the railway company had become obsolete. Although hoping for a more positive future, for the time being the crucial question was how long the enterprise could stand the drain on its capital. There was no hope that the Ottoman government would honor its commitments, as it maintained that no money was available to pay the company. One possibility for improving the situation was to include financial securities for the company in further agreements regarding new railway sections and those under construction. Negotiations dragged on for some time, however, with no practical results.<sup>19</sup>

By the end of August 1915 the debts accumulated by the Ottoman government had reached 36 million German marks and equaled almost the entire capital of the company. Günther protested at the German embassy when he learned that Böttrich had backed the Ottoman policy, and he denounced the railway company for pursuing “selfish endeavors.” He gave a detailed account of the Ottoman abuses and of Böttrich’s performance. During a debate Böttrich attacked Günther, adding that the director of the Deutsche Bank, Arthur von Gwinner, had given him unreliable information. On another occasion, Böttrich recommended to Günther some offers by the Ottoman government, although he knew that they were considerably overpriced. Admitting this, he asked Günther to be understanding of his situation.<sup>20</sup> Concluding his protest, Günther hinted at the necessity of removing Böttrich from his post.<sup>21</sup> The conflict was most unfortunate for Günther, because he needed Böttrich’s cooperation more than he imagined. The officer would subsequently play a key role in Günther’s struggle for his Armenian employees. The company employed about 880 skilled Armenians and a large number of Armenian workers on the construction sites in the Taurus and Amanus mountains, as well as in northern Syria. When the war broke out, these Armenian employees and workers had been left at their jobs to allow for progress of the railway construction.

### Railway Deportation and Concentration Camps

In spring 1915, the ruling Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) initiated the annihilation of the Armenians within the empire. The first community to be deported was the Armenian town of Zeitun.<sup>22</sup> While the male population

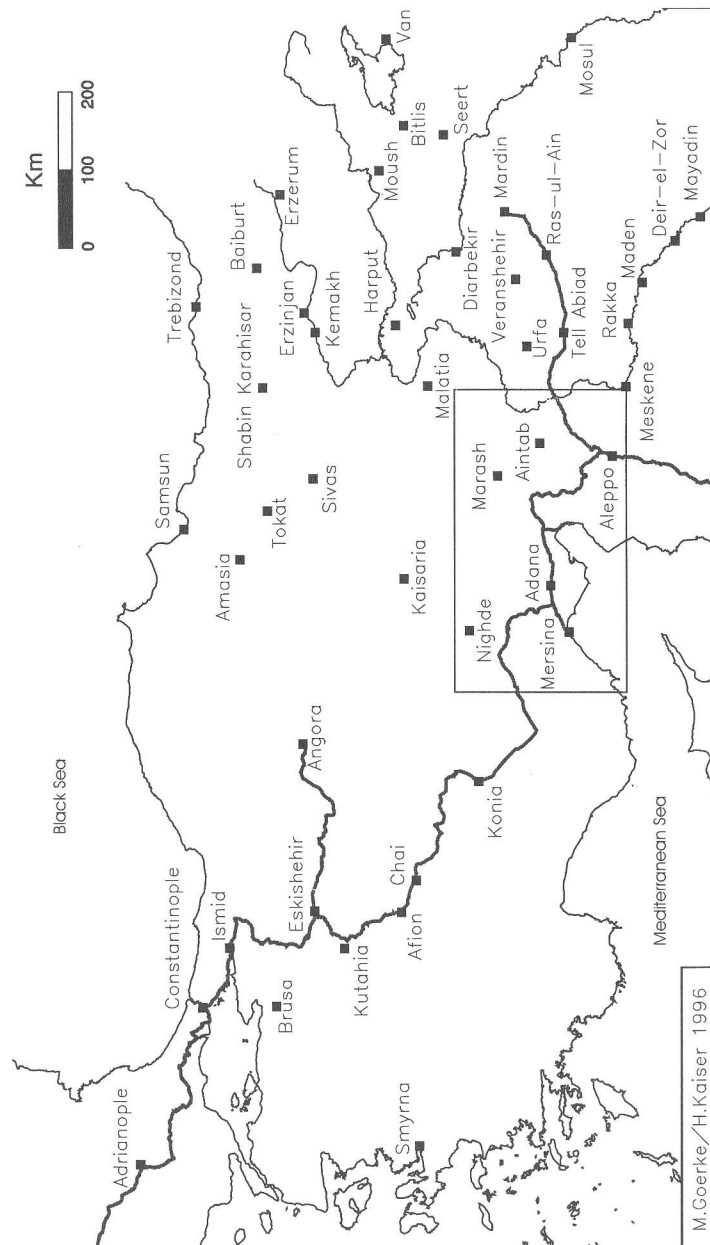
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of Zeitun was sent to the Syrian desert, women and children were first deported by and along the railway to the province of Konia, to be sent to the desert later.<sup>23</sup> Thus, the Ottoman government introduced into modern history railway transport of civilian populations toward extermination.

Franz Günther reported that the government was acting with “bestial cruelty.” Although freight cars had a standard capacity for the military transport of 36 men or 6 horses, 88 Armenians on average were pressed into sheep cars for deportation. These carriages were two tiered and partly open. Children who were born during the journey were taken from their mothers and thrown out of the carriage. Günther commented that he simply could not justify the lack of action, given that it all happened under the company’s eyes.<sup>24</sup> Shortly afterward, Günther sent to Deutsche Bank director Gwinner a photograph of a deportation train, adding that the picture showed the Anatolian Railway as “an upholder of civilization in Turkey.”<sup>25</sup> The transportation was performed under the close supervision of the government. Talaat Bey, the minister of the interior, constantly received reports on the numbers of the deportees and their current location. On October 9 and 10, 1915, the authorities at Konia reported that 11,000 Armenians who had been concentrated there had been sent south. Between October 13 and 16, 9,600 Armenians followed. During the following three days, 5,000 Armenians were sent from Konia, and 4,854, during the next two days. When deportation by rail was interrupted because of military needs, the people were marched off along the railway track. On October 23, however, 1,050 Armenians were again packed into fourteen cars from Konia.<sup>26</sup>

Almost all the railway stations became detention camps where thousands died. Beside the railway station in Konia, a large concentration camp had been established.<sup>27</sup> It was one of a series which extended along the railway to the Syrian desert. Deported Armenians remained in these camps until they were sent on to the next stop along this eastward path.<sup>28</sup> The camps were huge: Katma numbered 40,000 persons at the end of October. In November 1915, the Baghdad Railway Company was ordered to transport 50,000 Armenians from Katma to Ras-ul-Ain. The camp near Osmanieh held between 20,000 and 70,000. Thousands died from exhaustion and epidemic diseases. Exhaustion was a consequence of the forced marches and the merciless behavior of the Ottoman authorities. South of Konia at Eregli, Ottoman authorities sometimes withheld water while taxing the entry into the town.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, camps were at times “attacked” and the people butchered.<sup>30</sup>

The camps on the edge of the desert, where the survivors of the caravans from the eastern provinces met the deportees from the railway,

became the site of systematic extermination. Two engineers reported how in one day alone 300–400 women arrived completely naked at Ras-ul-Ain. Again on its arrival there, a caravan was plundered by the local Chechens and the gendarmerie.<sup>31</sup> Slaughter and death marching were the principal methods of killing, and those who were not sent south to Deir-el-Zor were starved to death at Ras-ul-Ain or killed in that vicinity.<sup>32</sup> Often living people were buried alive.<sup>33</sup> Hasenfratz, a railway employee at Aleppo, reported slaughters that took place beside the railway track between Tell Abiad and Ras-ul-Ain: “All the bodies, without exception, were entirely naked and the wounds that had been inflicted showed that the victims had been killed, after having been subjected to unspeakable brutalities. A local inhabitant stated that this was nothing in comparison with what one could see a little further down the line.”<sup>34</sup> Engineer Spieker reported from Ras-ul-Ain on the arrival of the remnants of the Armenian deportation caravans. All the boys and men over twelve years had been killed. He also gave detailed reports on the systematic mass slaughter and marching to death of women and children. A Turkish inspector told him that this time nine out of ten Armenians had been killed. The fate of those who were still alive was appalling. The engineer described how Muslim railway employees as well as Ottoman officers and soldiers took advantage of the situation. The rape of women by individual or groups of men was frequent, and a slave trade with children and women had developed. The overseer of the camp of Ras-ul-Ain, Sergeant Nouri, boasted of his raping of Armenian children. Killing Armenians had become a profitable business, and a number of Muslim employees left their jobs in order to participate in the slaughter.<sup>35</sup> Near Ulukishla in the Taurus Mountains, railway workers stated that there was nothing wrong in robbing and killing deportees, as the local *kaimakam* had ordered them to massacre the Armenians.<sup>36</sup>

### Denial and Evidence

During the summer of 1915, the German Foreign Office made greater efforts to deny the extermination than to intervene with its Ottoman ally to stop the carnage. Talaat nonetheless felt it necessary to reassure Berlin. On September 2, 1915, he communicated to the German embassy the translations of three deciphered telegrams he had sent to various provinces. The telegrams were intended to show that the Ottoman government was protecting the Armenians and supplying them with necessary provisions. The embassy, however, was skeptical about Talaat’s honesty.<sup>37</sup> Only one week later it received a report from the German consul in Adana, Dr. Eugen

Büge, who labeled Talaat’s telegrams as a “brazen deceit,” since an envoy of the Ministry of the Interior had been sent to Adana to countermand the measures stipulated in the telegrams. The local authorities followed the second order. Moreover, the local CUP leader had announced that there would be a massacre if the Armenians were not deported.<sup>38</sup> Büge’s report was forwarded to Berlin but mitigated by the comments of Acting Ambassador Ernst zu Hohenlohe-Langenburg, who maintained that the local authorities acted under the influence of irresponsible CUP leaders, ignoring the government’s orders. These CUP members were the authors of the outrages against the Armenians and other Christians. Thus, for the time being the German embassy had no proof of intentional deception by the Ottoman government. For such a conclusion to be reached, it would be necessary for Hohenlohe to disregard the fact that the Ottoman government was run by the leaders of the CUP.<sup>39</sup> Büge did not accept his superior’s reasoning and collected material to prove that his own assessment was correct.<sup>40</sup>

The Ottoman authorities soon became aware that the railway staff, too, were collecting incriminating evidence. This material contradicted the Ottoman and German propaganda efforts to downplay events and to put the blame on the victims. Djemal Pasha, commander of the Fourth Ottoman Army, issued an order treating the taking of photographs of Armenians as espionage and requiring the railway staff to hand over all photographs and negatives.<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, photographing continued. Soon it became an established procedure to disobey the Ottoman orders and to act clandestinely in conscious violation of the martial law. Günther, for example, collected intelligence on the extermination of the Armenians and forwarded the material to the Deutsche Bank in Berlin. There, Arthur von Gwinner made the material available to the Foreign Office. Gwinner and Günther were both aware of the risks involved and took precautions against discovery. Thus, Günther wrote special reports that were not registered in the company’s files and were sent separately from the official reports. Moreover, no carbon copies of these were kept. Gwinner, for his part, kept the reports in a private file that was deposited in a safe. In addition, Günther and Gwinner avoided direct references wherever possible, and thus some of the reports were kept anonymous in order to protect informants. The material collected stood in complete opposition to official German propaganda.<sup>42</sup>

In August 1915, Günther gave his assessment of events. He recounted the official Ottoman charge that Armenians had massacred Turks in the east but qualified the statement by stressing that he had obtained this information from third parties. After having assured his superior that he was not a

pro-Armenian partisan, Günther cautioned Gwinner that his information on the persecutions of the Armenians minimized their true extent, as the government was more guarded in its actions near the railways. The director was sure that the government's policy would result in the complete annihilation of the Armenians. Indeed, he estimated that already 25 percent of the 2 million Armenians in the empire had been killed, and he suspected that the eastern provinces had already been cleared of Armenians.<sup>43</sup>

### Between Humanitarian Aid and Resistance

In August 1915, while reassuring the bank director that he was leaving out the worst intelligence he possessed, Günther proposed a secret project. The Ottoman government had demanded reduced transport tariffs, but the company had refused, because only the government would benefit. Besides, a precedent for other reductions would be established. After explaining that the company was paid for the transportation of Armenians, Günther pointed to the opportunity of helping the deportees. Reports from personnel along the lines showed that any support for starving Armenians was prevented by the Turkish authorities. It had nonetheless been possible to distribute clandestinely some funds from the railway's resources, but the sums were insufficient. Adding a price list of basic foodstuffs to his report, Günther suggested secretly distributing £1,000 (Turkish). Gwinner consented immediately. As a result, Günther overspent the relief budget, although he gained Gwinner's consent for this later.<sup>44</sup>

Soon, the protected status of the company's Armenian workers began to become insecure. Local authorities and CUP circles tried to include the workforce in the deportation scheme. As direct encroachments on the construction sites had to be avoided, other solutions had been found. Although the workers enjoyed some protection, their families did not. For example, the authorities in Killis, a town from which many workers of the Amanus construction sites came, started to deport the families of workers, thereby inducing the men to leave their jobs to be with their loved ones. In Osmanieh, the military authorities threatened to confiscate the property of the Armenian railway workers and to mistreat their families.<sup>45</sup>

Winkler, the engineer responsible for the railway construction in the province of Adana, tried to protect his workers. As the local authorities seemed to act on their own initiative, he appealed to the *vali* (governor) of Adana. The *vali* told Winkler that nothing could be done, as direct orders had come from Talaat and Minister of War Enver Pasha to deport all Armenians in the province to Aleppo and further east. The first to be deported were the

Armenians of Zeitun, Hadjin, Hasanbeyli, Entilli, and Baghche, while their houses and fields were to be handed over to Muslim immigrants. As most of the workers came from these towns, they too had to be deported. Thus, the pledge to leave the Armenian workers on the construction sites was revoked. The *vali* told Winkler that unskilled Muslim immigrants would replace the deportees. Clearly, the company's operations had become a target of CUP chauvinism.<sup>46</sup>

The result of this interference was a temporary interruption of the works, while an ensuing shortage of firewood for the locomotives restricted the transport of military supplies. Winkler, who saw deportation caravans passing the constructions sites, was deeply moved by the fate of the Armenians. He had no idea how the Armenians could survive at their destination. His Armenian workers were in danger, and any chance of stopping deportations locally was unlikely. Moreover, Consul Büge had informed Winkler that the German embassy would not intervene with Enver Pasha on behalf of Armenians. In sum, many engineers felt like abandoning their jobs in protest against the deportations. This, however, would have endangered the company's negotiations with the Ottoman government on the extension of the line. Moreover, an interruption might serve as a pretext for the government to seize the line. Günther instructed Winkler to continue work under all circumstances until instructions had been received from Berlin.<sup>47</sup>

### The Struggle for the Armenian Employees and Workers

The deportation of the workers was the start of an attempted expulsion of all Armenians in the employ of the railway. The next group targeted was the company's Armenian staff. Two central demands were put forward by the Ottoman government. First, that the company's correspondence and bookkeeping was henceforth to be in Turkish, thereby removing the major obstacle to the employment of Muslims. Second, that the Armenian staff was to be dismissed and replaced by Muslims.<sup>48</sup> Günther was aware that his adversaries were determined to succeed. In regard to the language question, the company's position was not hopeless. Legally, the company was obliged to use Turkish only in correspondence with the Ottoman authorities. But insisting on its rights did not seem to be advisable, and the company tried to adopt an accommodating line. Günther played for time, pointing to technical problems while stressing his support for the Ottoman government. It was essential to avoid making immediate definite concessions.

Soon, however, playing for time was no longer an option. The Ottoman authorities started to separate the Armenian employees from their

families in order to deport the two groups separately. In Angora, the *vali* had arrested nineteen employees. The company demanded that the authorities respect the agreement with the government. As the correspondence brought no results, the company sent an envoy to Angora, but the *vali* told him that he had come too late: "C'est impossible de les restituer. Comprenez-vous: impossible!—Ils ne reviendront jamais plus." (It is impossible to restore them. Do you understand, impossible!—They can never return again.)<sup>49</sup>

Thus, it was no longer possible to follow a strategy of stalling. Günther went to Enver and Talaat to defend his other employees. In the language question, a compromise was reached during a discussion with Talaat, who consented that French could be used as a second language for a time. As for his employees, Günther refused to make any concessions. He informed Talaat that in case of deportations, it would be impossible to operate the railway efficiently and the transports would grind to a swift halt. This threat was formidable. The Ottoman armies on the Gallipoli peninsula had enough food reserves for only one or two days. They could not hold out for long without supplies from the hinterland. Thus, Günther was warning that an encroachment on his staff would inevitably lead to the defeat of the Ottoman Empire. A heated discussion ensued, but Talaat had to give up the plan of an immediate full scale deportation. On August 17, 1915, Talaat instructed the authorities at Eskishehir to postpone the deportation of the Armenian railway employees and workers. In a broader order addressed to various provinces and districts on August 29, he temporarily put off the deportation until replacements for the Armenians could be found.<sup>50</sup> This was an initial success for Günther. He had not only saved the permanent staff but managed to include the workers on the construction sites as well.

The postponement of deportations brought only a short respite, and soon the government demanded the removal of 190 porters and unskilled workers and their replacement by Muslims. Instead of deporting all the Armenian employees in the company or a total deportation from a certain location, the government planned the deportation of certain categories of workers. Once more, Günther reiterated his warnings about the effect on the transports and disclaimed any responsibility for the consequences. Again, he was successful; the deportation was postponed. On September 25, 1915, Talaat informed the authorities of various provinces and districts that the deportation of Armenians working for the railway had been put off until a decision had been reached by a special commission on railway issues. The local authorities and CUP circles nonetheless continued to deport the families of workers, thus coercing the men to join their families. It seemed

that this was done in a systematic manner. Winkler suspected that Talaat's order had been secretly revoked by a second counter order. The Ottoman army command believed the workers in the Amanus were members of secret Armenian organizations and had ordered precautionary measures. Moreover, the *vali* of Adana informed Winkler that the government's exemption was valid for only four weeks. In short, all the concessions that had been gained resulted only in a temporary respite.<sup>51</sup>

Günther then abandoned his policy of not openly seeking German diplomatic assistance and began to involve the embassy and leading German officers. Having informed Ambassador Hohenlohe that Lieutenant Colonel Böttrich had become a serious problem for his company, Günther bypassed his adversary and directly contacted General Otto von Lossow, the German military attaché, and General Fritz Bronsart von Schellendorf, chief of the Ottoman general staff. Both officers were in touch with Enver. Günther now learned that the decision about his Armenian employees as well as the language question had been delegated to a commission. Thus, the earlier agreement with Talaat Bey was at this point officially a dead letter. Moreover, the German officers had not vetoed the deportation of the employees. The decision was in the hands of a committee whose authority had been acknowledged by German officers. In addition, the commission was staffed with known CUP extremists. Summarizing the situation in a secret report to Deutsche Bank director Gwinner, Günther stated: "In the language question and in the question of the replacement of the employees by Muslims, we are on our own."<sup>52</sup>

When the special commission on railway matters convened, the CUP members proved to be particular active and zealous. It became apparent that the committee was a body to issue fiats and not to investigate the claims of the railway company. It was made clear to Günther that his invitation to meetings was only a matter of politeness. When he attended one of the sessions on October 8, 1915, he was confronted with a decision on the language question. By January 1, 1917, at the latest, all internal company correspondence had to be in Turkish. French would be allowed as a second language until July 1, 1919. Correspondence with the authorities had to be exclusively in Turkish. A positive aspect of the meeting was that the matter of the employees had not been brought up. Günther, however, feared that the plan to deport his employees was imminent; a decision could be announced at any time. Thus, Günther tried once again to secure the support of ranking German officers. Bronsart gave such assurances, and Böttrich, who was a member of the commission, promised to approach Enver to confirm that no employees would be deported during the war. To bolster Günther's moves



in Constantinople, Gwinner sought the assistance of the German Foreign Office in Berlin.<sup>53</sup>

### The Decision on Deportation and the Company's Reaction

Despite the efforts of officials of the Baghdad Railway Company, the special commission decided that the Armenian employees should be deported. Colonel Bötttrich had not only failed to secure Enver's support but had even signed the decision in his capacity as chief of the Ottoman general staff's railway department. The document, dated October 17, 1915, stated that the deportation of the railway employees was an integral part of the general deportation policy of the Ottoman government.<sup>54</sup> No further reason for the order was given. All the Armenian employees, with no exemption for those living in Constantinople, were to be deported. The staff was divided into two categories. The first category was to be deported during a period ranging from one to twelve months, while the second had to leave after one year, up to four years. The vacant places were to be filled by Muslims or men of other nationalities considered trustworthy. In cases where no Muslim replacement was available, the Armenian employee might stay longer. The replacement had to follow the prescribed procedure exactly and was to be supervised by the Ottoman authorities. No reference was made to the workers on the construction sites. In sum, the decision restated the familiar strategy of the Ottoman government. A preliminary measure to prepare for the deportation was to prevent the absence of the Armenian employees. Thus, the Ottoman railway military commissar issued a ban on all holidays and sick leaves for railway employees.<sup>55</sup>

Günther did not give up. Because protests to the Ottoman government had become useless, he contacted the German embassy and General Bronsart von Schellendorf. Explaining once more the dangers of the execution of the deportation order, Günther asked Bronsart to suggest to Enver a postponement until the demobilization of the Ottoman army after the war. Moreover, Günther proposed including a clause that the execution of the deportation have to be sanctioned by the railway company. Bronsart did not reject Günther's scheme but hesitated to become officially involved in the affair. Claiming to be incompetent regarding railway matters, he told Günther that Colonel Bötttrich considered the deportation as technically possible. Bronsart stated that he would make his decision based on consultations with the embassy and the military attaché (Lossow) since any decision in this matter involved a high risk of failure, which would force him to resign as Ottoman chief of the general staff.<sup>56</sup> His caution was probably motivated

by a desire not to antagonize Enver, with whom Bötttrich was cooperating. Enver's goodwill was of vital importance for Bronsart, as without the support of the Ottoman minister of war he would already have been removed.<sup>57</sup>

Thus, Günther did not receive the assistance he sought, but he had obtained valuable information. He knew that Bötttrich had deceived him about his personal attitudes and role in the affair. Bötttrich was not merely working in a difficult post and trying to get along with CUP circles but was a driving force behind the project. Bronsart's reference to Bötttrich as an expert on the running of the railway was a critical revelation. Therefore, Günther came to understand that his own opinions on the consequences of deportation were not undisputed in German circles. Accordingly, success with his adversaries solely on the basis of technical arguments had become unlikely. Thus, Günther modified his strategy. Keeping his principal technical argument, he concentrated his attacks on Bötttrich. The railway manager presented Bötttrich not only as a problem for the railway and the war effort, but as a threat to German political interests in general.

Not only, that Mr. Bötttrich has made no protest to the [Ottoman] War Office against the decisions of the Commission but also stooped to transmit these decisions with his signature affixed to them. *minister Bronsart*

Our enemies will someday pay a good price to obtain possession of this document, because by means of the signature of one of the members of the Military Mission, they will prove that the Germans have not only done nothing to prevent the Armenian persecutions, but certain orders to this effect have emanated from them, that is, have been signed by them.

*Günther  
Akkermann*  
The fact that this document, of which much will be said in the future, bears a German and not a Turkish signature, is precious to the Turks too, as the Military Commissioner has caustically smiling pointed out.<sup>58</sup>

Günther's arguments impressed Gottlieb von Jagow, the state secretary for foreign affairs. Having read a telegram addressed by Günther to Gwinner, Jagow remarked that it seemed to him that it was high time to protest very emphatically against the madness of the Armenian persecutions.<sup>59</sup> At the embassy, Günther's earlier complaints against Bötttrich had had some effect, too. Arthur Zimmermann, the state undersecretary for foreign affairs, had contacted Ambassador von Wangenheim to inquire about his view on Bötttrich. Wangenheim answered in full support of Günther. He explained that he had done everything he could to bridge the differences between the railway company and Bötttrich. Unfortunately, the officer displayed a complete lack of understanding of the economic and political importance of the railway. Moreover, the breakdown of railway transport predicted



by Günther might very well occur if Bötttrich was to remain at his post.<sup>60</sup> Bötttrich's signing the deportation decision had disqualified him in the ambassador's eyes. Using General von Lossow's services, the ambassador explored Bronsart's views on removing Bötttrich. Bronsart admitted that Bötttrich had his shortcomings but thought that his dismissal would be impossible, as no replacement would be available for the duration of the war. Thus, Bronsart avoided opposing Bötttrich's critics while supporting the officer on technical grounds.<sup>61</sup>

Because the Ottoman government continued to insist on the deportation and a leading officer of the military mission had identified himself with the order, tacitly supported by Bronsart, an appeal to the Supreme Army Command became necessary. The embassy turned to the Foreign Office in Berlin to secure its intervention. Von Jagow had difficulty in believing that Bötttrich had signed the decision. Having been assured that this was so, the foreign minister instructed his representative at the German military headquarters, Carl Georg von Treutler, to attempt to remove Bötttrich.<sup>62</sup> The official occasion for the initiative was provided by military attaché von Lossow, who sent a telegram to General Erich von Falkenhayn, chief of the Supreme Army Command, explaining the situation. Lossow stressed the importance of the Armenian personnel and the danger of the interruption to transport. Moreover, he drafted a telegram that Falkenhayn might send to Enver hinting at the delivery of new railway stock and an increase of traffic to Syria. Thus, a change in the general situation would necessitate a postponement of the deportations. The Foreign Office ordered the embassy to take immediate steps at the Sublime Porte, and Jagow recommended Lossow's suggestion strongly to the Supreme Army Command, arguing that the supply of the armies in Arabia, and thus the planned attack on the Suez Canal, was in jeopardy.<sup>63</sup>

General von Falkenhayn dispatched the telegram after strengthening the reference about the Armenian employees. Although the Foreign Office managed to get Falkenhayn to overrule Bötttrich's policy, the diplomats failed to get the officer removed. Like Bronsart, Falkenhayn refused to replace Bötttrich on grounds of military necessity. In a letter to von Treutler, he cautioned that information obtained from Günther was to be regarded as biased. Problems between the railway company and Bötttrich were of a monetary nature, and the Ottoman government had no money. Bötttrich was only doing his job and this might easily bring him into conflict with the railway company. Any other officer would end up in the same situation. Falkenhayn referred to the question of the railway employees only briefly at the end of letter, stating that he had done everything he could. Thus,

Falkenhayn avoided commenting on Bötttrich's role and implied that the German military's part in the affair had been settled.<sup>64</sup>

On November 22, 1915, shortly before the date of the first deportation, Bronsart informed the embassy that the deportation had been postponed, presumably for the duration of the war. Bötttrich, however, seemed to make the deportation of the Armenian employees his personal objective. On December 2, the matter was discussed in a meeting in which Günther and Bötttrich took part. Without giving any further explanation, Bötttrich insisted on the deportation of the Armenians. He declared that he had explained to Enver that the deportation was technically possible. To abrogate this decision would undermine his authority with Enver. Any interference of the Foreign Office in this military matter was out of place and unimportant, as he was acting in accordance with the German and Turkish general staffs. All opposition against him would be in vain, because he enjoyed General von Falkenhayn's full trust. Günther concluded that the deportation had become a question of Bötttrich's vanity.<sup>65</sup>

Bötttrich's behavior stood out in blatant contrast with the strategy of the Foreign Office. After the defeat of Serbia in October 1915, and the establishment of a direct land route to the Ottoman Empire, the German government was able to support its ally with equipment and troops.<sup>66</sup> The Foreign Office presumably counted on increased influence and modified its Armenian policy. In harmony with Jagow's view on the persecutions, the new ambassador, Paul von Wolff-Metternich, remonstrated with Ottoman politicians. Officially, however, the German government continued to deny the extermination of Armenians. On December 6, Metternich reported to Berlin that Bötttrich was aggravating the already delicate German position in the Armenian Question.<sup>67</sup> On receipt of reports by Günther and Metternich, Jagow contacted Falkenhayn again, this time personally. Reminding Falkenhayn of his initiative to keep the Armenian employees, Jagow added that his move had failed because of Bötttrich's resistance. Moreover, Bötttrich was thwarting all efforts to mitigate the deportation order. He was also supporting the Turkish side in other cases of diverging interests and was thus damaging the German position. In Turkey, Jagow added, the opinion was widespread that Germany had precipitated the persecution of the Armenians: "For the proof of the correctness of this view, the Turks would be able to refer with a semblance of justification to the conduct of Mr. Bötttrich."<sup>68</sup> Jagow, however, failed once more to undermine Bötttrich's position.

In the following months the Foreign Office and the military clashed continuously on Bötttrich's policies. Falkenhayn went so far as to blame the German ambassador of being partial and strengthened Bötttrich's position

by declaring that the latter was acting as a Turkish officer who had to look after Turkish interests. As he had not damaged German interests, there was no call to take steps against him. When new disputes evolved, Böttrich continued to back the Ottoman state against the railway company. The Foreign Office kept warning General von Falkenhayn of the possible consequences. Eventually, Wilhelm Gröner, the chief of the German military railway administration, sent an officer to Constantinople to investigate. The only result was that Böttrich was reminded not to forget German interests.<sup>69</sup> Two months later Gwinner warned Günther of new trouble ahead. Gwinner had spoken to Gröner about railway issues and learned that Böttrich had left a bad impression on Günther and Eduard Huguenin, the second director in Constantinople. Nonetheless, Gröner and Falkenhayn were indignant about the complaints made by the embassy which were not taken seriously. Gröner stressed that he had no other officer available for Böttrich's position and that no one else was willing to take the post. Gwinner added that it seemed Bronsart had also taken Böttrich's side. This was important because new agreements were soon to be signed. Böttrich insisted that the new contract be formulated in Ottoman Turkish, even though the language lacked the necessary precision and technical vocabulary.<sup>70</sup>

Notwithstanding the bitter struggle between the railway company and Foreign Office on the one side and the military on the other, the Armenian employees benefited from the unrelenting efforts of Günther and his allies in the embassy. The deportation order was not executed. Almost all the Armenian employees and their families survived under the protection of the railway company.<sup>71</sup>

### The Construction Works in the Amanus Mountains

The reprieve was due in part to an effort to speed up railway construction. Thus, at the end of 1915 the Ottoman government was even willing to supply work battalions for the railway company. This cooperation was necessary because the Ottoman government refused to return any of the previously deported workers.<sup>72</sup> The railway company's need for workers quickly became known all over northern Syria. The engineers had even started to recruit deportees, although this was strictly prohibited. As it was illegal to employ Armenians, exposure would have meant their immediate deportation. Therefore, many Armenians were registered under false names and nationalities, and they filled numerous positions: as doctors in railway hospitals, bookkeepers, engineers, and so forth.<sup>73</sup> In short, the construction works depended in large measure on the Armenians. Sometimes, the German

engineers hired a person, knowing that he was not trained for the job. In these cases, the motive was to save the applicant from death. A number of Armenian intellectuals and clergymen who were prime targets of the CUP were thus saved by the railway. While working together the railway engineers and Armenian staff often developed friendships. Their mutual understanding had to be hidden from Ottoman gendarmes and spies.<sup>74</sup>

The Armenian workers received regular rations and the company managed to take care of their other needs as well. The construction camps, however, were situated in an area contaminated by malaria; hygienic conditions were terrible.<sup>75</sup> Despite this, an Armenian community life began to emerge. The engineers had employed whole families, and, as a result, men, women, and even children were to be seen working along the line. In addition, the engineers organized an orphanage for the children from the deportation caravans with the help of German missionary sisters. The company hospital at Entilli became a refuge for Armenian women. Köppel, the engineer in charge at Entilli, hid about 200 Armenian girls pretending that the women were needed for breaking stones.<sup>76</sup> Armenians who had reached the camps and recovered soon developed their own initiatives to help others, and staff members advised new arrivals where to find a job. Armenian workers also married women from the passing caravans in order to save their lives. An Armenian assistant in the hospital at Yarbashi supplied medicine to the fugitives and the few who tried to offer armed resistance. In the same hospital another worker took revenge by killing Muslim in-patients who had raped and murdered Armenian deportees.<sup>77</sup>

These developments did not escape the attention of the government. In January 1916, Talaat had been informed that between 15,000 and 20,000 Armenians were in the Amanus Mountains. Many had come from Aleppo. Talaat demanded that this be rectified. He ordered an investigation to determine from where and with whose permission they had arrived, and he asked for a count of the Armenians working along the railway. In February, he received new numbers. About 7,000 Armenians instead of the official 3,130 were working on the construction in the Amanus. Thus, Talaat had proof that Armenians were hired illegally, and he demanded that the illegals be deported to their prescribed destinations.<sup>78</sup> Gendarmes came to take away individuals, but deportation on a larger scale was attempted only occasionally and usually resulted in the engineers intervening. Once again, Talaat ordered a further count. The usual procedure was to ask the railway company to submit lists of their employees.<sup>79</sup> Also, several government commissions worked along the lines registering Armenian workers under the pretext of issuing identity cards to them. These cards were supposed to secure the

stay of the workers at their jobs. Nevertheless, the commissions never had enough blank forms to provide for more than a small number. This was not an accident. The real purpose of these commissions was to prepare the deportation of the workers according to secret lists. The Armenians had been subdivided into four categories: intellectuals and young people, strong young men, workers of medium age, and all the rest. Winkler suspected that the people in first three categories were regarded as especially dangerous. On the categorization of women and children, however, he had no information.<sup>80</sup> Engineer Winkler's cautious formulations were not because of a lack of information but rather because he had reasons not to disclose his sources. Armenian officials had opened a safe in which lists had been stored overnight by police officials. The lists contained the name, the father's name, and the marital status of each worker. It was further noted whether the worker was a fugitive from deportation or in what other way the employee had arrived at the construction site. Moreover, various marks had been added to the names. Two zeros indicated that the person was considered dangerous or suspicious. The Armenian staff discovered that the Ottoman officers had telegraphed to the places of birth of these persons in order to find out more about them. Besides this, certain signs earmarked the workers for special deportation destinations.<sup>81</sup> The preparations of the commissions alarmed the engineers. They informed a German school teacher, Martin Niepage, who was on his way to Germany, that the Armenian workers were soon to be deported. Niepage appealed to the Foreign Office to rescue the Armenians in the Amanus. As it turned out, his initiative came too late.<sup>82</sup>

### The Deportation of the Armenian Workers

At the beginning of June 1916, the gendarmerie in the construction region was reinforced. Officially, the gendarmes were to hunt Armenian partisans, but it became clear that they had encircled the camps to make flight impossible. On June 13 the deportations began. Armenians were called on and immediately marched off in large groups without being allowed to make any preparations. Complete chaos ensued. Families were separated; children ran around crying. The authorities acted with the utmost of cruelty. A woman suffered an abortion in the streets, but the gendarmes still tried to push her on. The engineers sent urgent appeals to Günther in Constantinople to immediately inform the German embassy and the Deutsche Bank. The remonstrances against the deportation were ineffective, however, for the moment, all the engineers could do was to hide and save a few individuals, but mostly it was only possible to provide the deportees with some food and money.<sup>83</sup>

The operation was supervised by Colonel Avni Bey, the gendarmerie commander of Adana. By June 19, the railway traffic and construction works had stopped on the orders of Winkler. In the hospitals, patients were left without care as the staff were also deported. The spread of epidemics was feared, and cholera in fact did break out.<sup>84</sup> In a survey of the effects of the deportations, Winkler did not give the exact number of Armenians affected, as the operation was still continuing. He estimated on June 17, however, that only 2,900 out of 8,300 workers were left. Many Turkish workers had also fled, fearing the gendarmes. Armenians who had received government identity cards were not exempted. Winkler concluded that according to authoritative information deportations of Armenians working in the Taurus Mountains were also imminent.<sup>85</sup> *Yahuda almanndon koruldu*

The breakdown of transportation threatened the war efforts of the Central Powers on the Arabian fronts. General von Falkenhayn demanded von Lossow's intervention with Enver Pasha. By then, the Turkish minister of war and other authorities understood well the catastrophic effects of the deportations. Böttlich drafted for Enver a telegraphic counter order to the *vali* of Adana. It became clear almost immediately, however, that the telegram would have little effect, because the original text had been modified.<sup>86</sup> Only as many Armenians as absolutely necessary were to be allowed to return.<sup>87</sup> This was crucial, as 1,600 British and Indian prisoners of war arrived in the Amanus in terrible condition on June 25. They were the survivors of a death march from Kut-el-Amara.<sup>88</sup> At Islahia a captured British officer watched the deportation of the Armenian workers. The accompanying guards told him that the Armenians would be sent off to their death and that the prisoners of war would replace them at the construction works.<sup>89</sup> Therefore, the defeat of the British army at Kut-el-Amara decided the fate of the Armenians in the Amanus, for the Ottoman government was able to rid itself of these workers. The interruption of the construction works was therefore more likely the result of bad planning than a lack of consideration for strategic concerns.<sup>90</sup>

At about the same time, Winkler received a request from Böttlich to furnish information on four points: first, on the possibility of continuing work with the present labor force; second, if it was correct that Winkler had demanded the return of the Armenian workers or else the construction would cease; third, if it was correct that the engineers were being prevented from entering the railway tunnels; and, fourth, what the exact number of Armenians had been before the deportation. Böttlich implied that his information was that there had been approximately 15,000. At this point, Böttlich again took sides with the Ottoman government and exerted pressure



on the railway company. Although having at first been ordered to stop the deportations, now Böttrich tried to make sure that all Armenians would be expelled. Moreover, he used this opportunity to find out if the company had surreptitiously resisted Ottoman orders, thereby identifying himself even further with the anti-Armenian program of his Turkish superiors. Winkler confirmed Böttrich's information that the engineers were denied access to the tunnels but denied all the other points of the inquiry. In regard to the number of Armenian workers, he accused Böttrich of suspecting him of being a liar and demanded to know the source of his information. Winkler maintained that he did not expect or wish the return of the Armenian workers as they were useless by now. The engineer concluded by stating that he was staying at his post only out of patriotism.<sup>91</sup>

The number of the deportees was a crucial issue as the government had accused the company of sheltering 15,000 Armenians. Other estimates varied between 11,000 and 21,000. Winkler had indeed hired and kept many more Armenians than he was allowed. To defend himself, he ridiculed Ottoman statistical methods, although he himself had participated in the counts. Winkler admitted that about 1,000 Armenians more than the officially stated number had been in the camps, but these had arrived sometime after his initial count.<sup>92</sup>

The apprehension about the modification of Enver's original order to deport all Armenian workers in the Amanus was well justified. By June 29, no Armenian had returned and the few who remained were also being deported.<sup>93</sup> Shortly afterward, a special envoy of the Ottoman general staff, Lieutenant Colonel Refik Bey, arrived in the Amanus to investigate the situation.<sup>94</sup> One tunnel was blocked by fallen rocks, and no personnel was available to repair the damage. Refik promised to bring in specialists from other places.<sup>95</sup> Discussing the issue of Enver's order, Refik denied that any directives for the return of the Armenians had ever been given. Winkler concluded from the contradictions that two orders must have been issued. One had been intended only for presentation to the railway administration, whereas the second was sent to the Ottoman authorities in Adana. Refik informed him that the Council of Ministers had decided on the deportation long ago. The *vali* had received the strictest orders to that effect, and Refik added that the deportation was irrevocable. The return of a single Armenian would be unthinkable. When the order had been given to supply sufficient workers for the construction sites in the Amanus, Armenians had not been included. Thus, Refik confirmed Winkler's suspicions.<sup>96</sup> Although he knew better, Winkler told Refik that several hundred Armenians had returned and wanted to know what the latter would do. Refik answered that he would allow

Winkler to keep the specialists. When Winkler told Refik that he would be acting contrary to the decision of the Council of Ministers, Refik answered: "That does not matter; I can do it."<sup>97</sup>

### The Massacre of the Deportees

The outward change in Winkler's attitudes toward the Armenians and their importance for construction of the Baghdad Railway reflected a realistic assessment of the situation. Winkler had to take his own position into consideration, since it had been openly called into question. More important was his realization that he had lost. Within hours of the first deportation, rumors and then definite confirmation arrived about large scale massacres of the deportees.

The extermination units consisted of gendarmes led by CUP members under the command of Avni and Muslims from the surrounding villages.<sup>98</sup> The first slaughters occurred while the deportees were crossing the Amanus chain. In a narrow gorge riflemen opened fire on a convoy of men. During the day, the gendarmes robbed the deportees and at night raped and killed girls and young women. Near the destroyed Armenian village of Fundajak, the gendarmerie stopped convoys and executed blacklisted men.<sup>99</sup>

The later convoys had to pass over the corpses of their murdered colleagues.<sup>100</sup> The authorities tried to remove all traces of the massacres quickly and buried the corpses of the slain in mass graves.<sup>101</sup> One convoy which reached Urfa without any large scale massacre lost 387 out of 1,000 persons.<sup>102</sup> Another convoy was halted in a cholera- and typhus-infected area. In Urfa, Arabs informed the survivors that they would be led to their deaths. The last survivors of the convoy formed by young workers were killed near Veranshehir.<sup>103</sup>

The only aid to the convoys came from the remnants of the Armenian community of Marash, who were the next to be deported, and from the German missionaries stationed there. Not knowing what was taking place, nurse Paula Schäfer went to the Amanus to bring help to the Armenian workers. In the evening she had to leave the road because it was blocked by corpses. She found crying babies four weeks old lying in the fields. People wounded with bayonets were slowly dying along the road. Many people had been cut into pieces or burned. A pregnant woman had been impaled. One nurse in her group lost her mind and started to play with the decapitated corpse of a girl. A couple of hours later Schäfer met two convoys of deportees and bribed the gendarmes to treat the people well. She collected 150 orphaned children, but she believed that several hundred were

still dispersed in the mountains. A carriage was sent from Marash southward in the direction of Urfa to collect other children, but it had to return because the road was blocked with corpses.<sup>104</sup>

These massacres and deportations were part of the last large Ottoman cleansing campaign coordinated by Talaat in 1916.<sup>105</sup> On June 20, while Avni was still in the Amanus, Talaat ordered the authorities of Marash to support him in preparing deportations there. Talaat added that the Marash Armenians were to be sent far away from the railway and main roads.<sup>106</sup> Shortly after the deportation of the workers in the Amanus, the Armenians still serving in the work battalions of the Ottoman army were killed.<sup>107</sup> Armenians were also deported from Aleppo and Mardin to Deir-el-Zor. The concentration camp of Ras-ul-Ain had been completely emptied and part of the deportees massacred on their way to Deir-el-Zor. The deportation from the concentration camps at Deir-el-Zor started on July 22. Metternich concluded that the Armenian deportations in the eastern provinces had entered their final phase.<sup>108</sup>

### Conclusion

This investigation of the Baghdad Railway Company's reactions to the Turkish extermination policies allows a number of conclusions to be drawn about the Armenian Genocide in general and the role of the Germans in particular. In 1915-16, a uniform German position toward the Ottoman Armenians did not exist. Competing administrations and individuals shaped German policies with disastrous consequences for the Armenians, as has been demonstrated.

The railway department of the Ottoman general staff was headed by a German officer, Lieutenant Colonel Böttrich, who formulated decisions that were in harmony with the aims of the Ottoman government. By identifying himself with the Ottoman deportation policy, the officer secured his own position and gained sufficient Ottoman backing to enact a policy antagonistic toward the railway company. For Böttrich, the issue of the deportation of the Armenian workers became a tool to assert his will over the railway company. Thus, he not only signed an order for deportation but also took an active interest in its enforcement. Moreover, when the deportation of the workers in the Amanus Mountains had brought about an interruption in the supplies of several Ottoman armies, Böttrich still sided with the Ottoman deportation policy and tried to break any resistance on the part of the railway company. Therefore, Böttrich has to be seen as a dynamic factor in the execution of the Armenian Genocide. Unlike his predecessor, Böttrich was not removed from his post at the demand of the German embassy and the railway company. This

highlights the crucial duplicity of Böttrich's position as both an Ottoman and a German officer. He could check opposition from either side by stressing his Ottoman or German obligations. As it happened, however, this was not necessary, as he enjoyed the support of both of his immediate superiors, Minister of War Enver and Chief of the General Staff General Bronsart von Schellendorf. Thus, the German Supreme Army Command under General von Falkenhayn did not take any decisive steps to remove Böttrich; on the contrary, it disregarded Böttrich's critics and reinforced the officer's position.

Regarding the actual execution of the deportation of the railway workers, it is clear that General von der Goltz (Pasha) was not involved. On the way to the Mesopotamian front von der Goltz and his staff crossed the Amanus in early November 1915, that is about eight months before the final deportations started. The general died in Baghdad on April 19, 1916, two months before the Amanus deportations.<sup>109</sup> Moreover, contrary to Dadian's statement, von der Goltz was not accused of having ordered the deportation of the Armenian workers but of a concentration camp at Osmanieh. No railway construction site existed at Osmanieh. Furthermore, in their affidavit the survivors made a clear distinction between the deportation of this concentration camp and that of the Armenian workers.<sup>110</sup>

The German embassy followed a strategy of public support for the Ottoman ally and echoed official Turkish anti-Armenian propaganda, even as it reported to the German Foreign Office on what actually was taking place. The Armenian Genocide was a secondary issue for the Foreign Office, where the importance of the Ottoman contribution to the war effort was widely appreciated. With the unfolding of the Armenian Genocide, however, German economic interests were increasingly endangered. The increased German influence following the defeat of Serbia provided the basis for a gradual modification of Foreign Office policies. Stronger protests were then voiced against the persecution of the Armenians, yet no practical sanctions were imposed. The remonstrances of the German ambassador apparently made little impression on the Ottoman government. The reasons for this are to be found in the Ottoman determination to exterminate the Armenian community and in the ambassador's inability to win the support of the German army.

The Ottoman government and the ruling Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) were determined to exterminate the company's Armenian employees, just as they were to extirpate the entire Armenian population. They pursued their goal following a double strategy. This strategy combined, on the one hand, a consistent diplomatic effort to gain the railway company's consent and cooperation in the deportation of its employees, and on the



other hand, to use subordinate administrators to create a *fait accompli* at an opportune moment to make it seem that the government was not involved. In dealings with their German partners the ruling CUP members tried to hide the close cooperation of the Ottoman central administration, military officers, and local authorities. Therefore, a system of official orders and secret counter orders was employed. The counter orders reversed the former official orders that had been shown to the Germans. In critical situations, such as the resistance against the deportation program by the governor of Marash in 1916 or the interruption of railway transportation, special liaisons furnished with full executive powers were used to overcome the problems. Deportations and massacres were directed and monitored closely by officials in Constantinople. The principal methods of extermination along the railway were massacre, death marches, forced starvation and dehydration, and systematic exposure to contagious diseases.

The declared aim of the Baghdad Railway Company's policy was the protection of its interests. One of these aims was the safeguarding of its Armenian employees. Thus, conflicts with the Ottoman government were inevitable. The company fought relentlessly and used all the pressure it could bring to bear on the government to give up its plan to deport the Armenian workers. In a decisive moment, Günther warned Talaat that the deportation of his employees would interrupt supplies for the armies at Gallipoli and thus bring about the defeat of the Ottoman Empire. Utilitarian motives were clearly of importance for the company's pro-Armenian policy, but were not the only reasons. Humanitarian considerations stood behind the company's own relief efforts. Supplying the German embassy with incoming reports on atrocities, the company's director worked for a change of official German policies. The company's measures far exceeded mere diplomatic activities. The directors, as well as their staff, engaged in clandestine resistance. Against strict Ottoman orders, deportees were supplied with provisions, and railway construction sites became havens for the persecuted. The actions of individual engineers illustrate a coherent company policy.

Company resistance could not, however, prevent the deportation and massacre of the workers from the Amanus in June 1916. The destruction of this Armenian labor force amply demonstrates how the Baghdad Railway Company and its German allies had frustrated the Ottoman government's attempt to co-opt the company in its deportation scheme. The government therefore resorted to a carefully prepared *fait accompli* to defeat German resistance. The disastrous consequences for its military supply must have taught the government a lesson. Perhaps, it was this experience that ultimately spared most of the remaining Armenian employees and workers of

the railway staff and those on the construction sites in the Taurus Mountains.

The Armenian employees themselves were mainly an object of politics. Nevertheless, they developed their own strategies of resistance. While living on the edge of death, they tried to get as many other Armenians as possible into the "life boat" of the railway construction sites. New arrivals were given false identities, orphans were sheltered, and many deported girls were saved through marriage. Although extermination squads operated in their immediate vicinity, Armenians established families and tried to survive. In spite of all the suffering, they had not given up hope for a better future and negated the deadly logic of the CUP's genocidal policy. Thus, their struggle for survival was a preview of a new beginning by survivors in postwar times.

This study of the Baghdad Railway Company's Armenian policy confirms Christoph Dinkel's thesis that German officers participated in the decision to deport Armenians and tried to ensure enforcement of that decision. Vahakn Dadrian's thesis that both German military and civilian authorities, fully aware of the consequence, "joined" the Ottomans in the decision to deport the Armenian railway workers is not sustained by the evidence presented here. The German embassy, backed by the Foreign Office, supported the Baghdad Railway Company in its struggle against the Ottoman authorities and Lieutenant Colonel Böttrich. The Foreign Office secured the intervention of the Supreme Army Command and prevented the execution of the deportation decision of October 1915. This intervention possibly marked a cautious change in the Armenian policies of the Foreign Office. The case of the German army is, however, more complicated. Böttrich abetted the Turkish genocidal policy, and the Supreme Army Command generally observed a policy of noninterference in Ottoman administrative issues, while also supporting Böttrich in his capacity as an officer of the general staff of the Ottoman army. In general, the Supreme Army Command intervened only when deemed absolutely necessary. Hence, when it became clear that the consequences of the anti-Armenian policies of Böttrich and the Turkish government jeopardized the flow of military supplies, the Supreme Army Command intervened. In the case of the railway staff, it was in time; in the case of the Armenians in the Amanus, it was too late. Thus, the refusal of the Supreme Army Command to yield to the demands of the Foreign Office and the railway company to recall Böttrich seems to have been a factor in the deportation and massacre of the Armenian workers.

In sum, German involvement in the Armenian Genocide covers a spectrum ranging from active resistance to complicity. A uniform German policy did not exist. German military, civilian, and railway officials represented

different interests and accordingly followed different strategies. Often, these strategies were in conflict, as were the relations between their proponents.

## Notes

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1. In this study the term "Baghdad Railway" represents the investments of the Deutsche Bank in the Ottoman Empire. The various companies were formally independent, but all were supervised by a representative of the bank.
2. Ulrich Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire, 1914–1918* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968; reprint, Delmar, N.Y.: Caravan Press, 1989), 204–5, 217, 225; Akaby Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question, 1915–1923* (London: Croom Helm, 1984), 70, 75–76, 79, 85–86.
3. Auswärtiges Amt—Politisches Archiv (hereafter AA—PA), Türkei (hereafter TR) 183/37, zu A 22101, Zimmermann to Wangenheim, August 4, 1915.
4. AA—PA, TR 183/40, A 35046, Rössler to Bethmann Hollweg, November 16, 1915, and A 468, Rössler to Bethmann Hollweg, December 20, 1915.
5. During World War I, Lepsius had tried to stop the extermination of the Armenians through representations to Enver Pasha. Later, he published a volume of German documents on the genocide. He had, however, also been a supplier of Armenian-related political and military intelligence to the Foreign Office. Moreover, his patriotism was of the same radical nationalist brand as that of the Foreign Office officials with whom he shared an anti-Republican sentiment. In short, Lepsius was for the Foreign Office the ideal man for the job. AA—PA, TR 183/37, A 18969, Lepsius to Rosenberg, June 15, 1915. On Lepsius's nationalism, see Norbert Saupp, "Das Deutsche Reich und die Armenische Frage 1878–1914" (Ph.D. diss., Cologne, 1990), 229–30.
6. Johannes Lepsius, ed., *Deutschland und Armenien 1914–1918: Sammlung diplomatischer Aktenstücke* (Potsdam: Tempelverlag, 1919; reprint, Bremen: Donat and Temmen Verlag, 1986). On deletions in the published documents, see Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, 205–6. On the policy behind these manipulations, see AA—PA, TR 183/56, zu A 20906, Göppert to Lepsius, July 26, 1919.
7. Bundesarchiv, Abteilungen Potsdam, Auswärtiges Amt, Zentralstelle für den Auslandsdienst 562, A.N.B. no. 3844, Göppert to Lepsius, September 4, 1919.
8. Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, 67.
9. "During most of the war period, specifically until the spring of 1918, the majority of the Turkish leaders, and Enver in particular, were prepared to collaborate closely with the Reich in the military conduct of the war, but they vigorously and, on the whole, effectively resisted all German attempts to meddle in the internal affairs of the Ottoman empire." Ibid., 370. See also Frank G. Weber,

*Eagles on the Crescent: Germany, Austria, and the Diplomacy of the Turkish Alliance, 1914–1918* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1970), 145.

10. "It is certain, however, that the measures against the Armenians (including the deportation) in the Third Army's region (beginning May 1915) were not a purely Turkish 'solution' but were proposed and demanded by this circle of German officers. The same is probably true for the region under the Fourth Army." Christoph Dinkel, "German Officers and the Armenian Genocide," *Armenian Review* 44, no. 1 (Spring 1991): 120. Ohandjanian formulated independently a similar thesis based on Austro-Hungarian consular reports. Artem Ohandjanian, *Armenien: Der verschwiegene Völkermord* (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 1989), 208–21.
11. Ibid., 120.
12. Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus* (Providence, R.I.: Berghahn Books, 1995), 262.
13. "The case of Lieutenant Colonel Böttrich's indiscretion, and the ensuing panicky reaction of the German Foreign Office, has been examined above. The vehemence of that reaction did not so much attach to the cooperation of Böttrich with his Turkish colleagues at the headquarters on the authorization of the deportation of a particular segment of the Armenian population, but rather to his foolishness to reveal his active role by placing his signature on the respective order." Ibid., 292. In a recent article, however, Dadrian has referred to the German ambassador's resistance to "the unrelenting Turkish onslaught against the remnants of the victim nation." See idem, "Documentation of the Armenian Genocide in German and Austrian Sources," in *The Widening Circle of Genocide: A Critical Bibliographic Review*, ed. Israel Charny (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1994), 3:100.
14. Idem, *German Responsibility in the Armenian Genocide: A Review of the Historical Evidence of German Complicity* (Watertown, Mass.: Blue Crane Books, 1996), 132.
15. Ibid., 125–26.
16. On the railway company's policy, see Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, 285–316; Gerald D. Feldman, "Die Deutsche Bank vom Ersten Weltkrieg bis zur Weltwirtschaftskrise," in *Die Deutsche Bank 1870–1995*, ed. Lothar Gall et al. (Munich: C. H. Beck Verlag, 1995), 137–314.
17. Kübel could count on the support of his superior, General Liman von Sanders. To overcome the resistance of the army, the bank finally appealed to the German emperor. See Deutsche Bank, Historisches Archiv, Orientbüro 1031 (hereafter DB—HA, Or), Gwinner, Helfferich to Kaiser Wilhelm II, June 13, 1914. One month later the bank learned that Kübel would be soon removed: DB—HA, Or 1031, Zimmermann to Helfferich, July 14, 1914. See also Fritz Fischer, *Krieg der Illusionen: Die deutsche Politik von 1911–1914*, 2d ed. (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1978), 490. For information on the Ottoman General Staff's railway department, see Mehmet Özdemir, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Demiryollarının Kullanımı ve Bunun Savaşın Sonucuna Etkisi" (The use of railroads during

- World War I and its effect on the outcome of the war) *Dördüncü Askeri Tarih Semineri* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1989), 369–402.
18. Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, 303; AA—PA, TR 152/83, A 29586, Günther to Hohenlohe, September 1, 1915; Rafael De Nogales, *Four Years Beneath the Crescent*, trans. Muna Lee (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1926), 169.
  19. AA—PA, TR 152/83, A 29586, Günther to Hohenlohe, September 1, 1915; Großes Hauptquartier Türkei, 41c, J.38928 III, Gwinner, Stauss to Günther, July 13, 1916; Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, 290–300; Feldman, *Die Deutsche Bank*, 154–56.
  20. AA—PA, TR 152/83, A 29586, Günther to Gwinner, September 8, 1915, and A 29970, Günther to Verwaltungsrat, October 6, 1915.
  21. AA—PA, TR 152/83, A 29586, Günther to Hohenlohe, September 1, 1915.
  22. Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Dâhiliye Nezâreti Evrakı, Dâhiliye Şifre Kalemî (hereafter: BOA, DH.ŞFR.), 52/93 Talaat to Djemal Pasha, April 24, 1915, Emniyyet-i Umûmiyye Müdîriyyeti (hereafter EUM) Spec. 14; Türkiye Cumhuriyeti, Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler (1915–1920)* (The Armenians in Ottoman documents [1915–1920]) (Ankara: Başbakanlık Basımevi, 1994) (Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı, Yayın No. 14), doc. 7 (hereafter OBE); DH.ŞFR, 52/286, Talaat to Maraş district, May 9, 1915, EUM Spec.14 (OBE no. 13); DH.ŞFR, 53/312, Talaat to Konia province, June 10, 1915, EUM Spec. 32 (OBE no. 32).
  23. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 54-A/278, Talaat to Konia province, August 5, 1915, EUM Spec. 4924; DB—HA, Or 1704, Seeger, Biegel, Janson, Maurer to Embassy, August 16, 1915, encl. in Günther to Verwaltungsrat, August 21, 1915; The Papers of Henry Morgenthau, Sr., Library of Congress (hereafter Morgenthau Papers), reel 22, frame 474–75, Schreiner, May 25, 1915. For the condition of the deportees from Zeitun at Konia, see *ibid.*, reel 7, frame 557–58, Dodd to Morgenthau, May 6, 1915. In August 1915, the Armenians of Zeitun who were in Konia province were told that they might return home. Arriving in Osmanieh they learned that their real destination was the Arabian desert. See AA—PA Konsulat Adana: Armenisches (Dobbeler) to Schuchardt, September 9, 1915.
  24. “Wie es einmal vor der Geschichte zu rechtfertigen sein wird, dass dies alles unter unseren Augen geschieht, ohne dass wir uns rühren, weiss ich nicht.” DB—HA, Or 1704, Günther to Gwinner, October 14, 1915. A German military epidemiologist described the deportations along the railway as a moving “disease transport.” See Peter Mühlens, “Vier Jahre Kriegshygiene in der Türkei und auf dem Balkan” *Vor 20 Jahren*, 2. Folge (1935): 158. See also Arnold J. Toynbee, *Armenian Atrocities: The Murder of a Nation, With a Speech Delivered by Lord Bryce in the House of Lords* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915), 41; *idem*, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915–16: Documents Presented to Viscount Grey of Falloden, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs*. Preface by Viscount Bryce (London: Sir Joseph Causton and Sons, 1916; reprint, Astoria, N.Y.: J. C. and L. Fawcett, 1990) (Miscellaneous no. 31, 1916), docs. 104, 107, 108. (This Blue Book should be consulted together with *Key to Names of Persons and Places Withheld from Publication in “The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915–16: Documents Presented to Viscount Grey of Falloden by Viscount Bryce”*). United States National Archives, Record Group 59 (hereafter NA RG 59), 867.4016/307; Morgenthau Papers, reel 7, frames 557–58, Dodd to Morgenthau, May 5, 1915. Most of the reports preserved in Record Group 59 of the U.S. National Archives utilized in this study were published in Ara Sarafian, comp., *United States Official Documents on the Armenian Genocide*, vols. 1–3 (Watertown, Mass.: Armenian Review, 1993–96). On the use of sheep cars, see also Ahmet Refik (Altınay), *İki Komite İki Kütâl* (Two committees, two massacres), ed. Hamide Koyukan (Ankara: Kebikeç Yayınları, 1994), 34, 37; John A. Still, *A Prisoner in Turkey* (London: John Lane and Co., 1920), 64. In October 1915, 2,700 Armenians were deported from Konia in 36 cars, an average of 75 per car. See BOA, DH.EUM, 2. Şube, 68/100, Governor Sâmih Rif’at to Ministry of Interior, October 30, 1915 (OBE no. 123). On the standard capacity of railway cars, see DB—HA, Or 1031, (Günther) to Gwinner, Helfferich, May 20, 1914, encl. in Günther to Verwaltungsrat, May 20, 1914; Suzanne Elizabeth Moranian, “The American Missionaries and the Armenian Question: 1915–1927” (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1994), 23–24, 123–24.
  25. “Einliegend sende ich Ihnen ein Bildchen, die Anatolische Bahn als Kulturträgerin in der Türkei darstellend.” DB—HA, Or 1704, Günther to Gwinner, October 30, 1915. See also NA RG 59, 867.4016/137, Dodd to Morgenthau, August 15, 1915.
  26. BOA, DH.EUM, 2. Şube, 68/88, Judge Nâcî to Ministry of the Interior, October 10, 1915 (OBE no. 124); DH.ŞFR, 57/8, Talaat to Karahisar-ı Sâhib district, October 14, 1915, EUM Spec. 29; DH.EUM, 2. Şube, 68/92, Naci to Ministry of Interior, October 16, 1915 (OBE no. 127); DH.ŞFR, 57/65, Talaat to Eskişehir, Karahisar-ı Sâhib, Kütahya districts, October 17, 1915 EUM; DH.EUM, 2. Şube, 68/95, Sâmih to Ministry of Interior, October 19, 1915 (OBE no. 136); 2. Şube, 68/96, Sâmih to Ministry of Interior, October 21, 1915 (OBE no. 137); 2. Şube, 68/99, Sâmih to Ministry of Interior, October 23, 1915 (OBE no. 139).
  27. On August 20, 1915, the German journalist Zabel who had traveled in the interior reported to the German embassy that Armenians were directed first to the large concentration camp of Konia. There, they were allowed to sell their belongings but only to Turks in order to pay for further railway transport. Those who could not pay had to walk. Marginal note in Seeger, Biegel, Janson, Maurer to Embassy, August 16, 1915, encl. in AA—PA Konstantinopel (hereafter: Konst.) 170, J.4857, Günther to Neurath, August 21, 1915. See also Still, *A Prisoner in Turkey*, 64.
  28. DB—HA, Or 1704, Hasenfratz to Günther, October 4, 1915, encl. in Günther to Gwinner, October 16, 1915. For other descriptions and estimates of numbers, see AA—PA, Konst. 172, J.284, Hoffmann to Embassy, November 8, 1915; NA RG 59, 867.4016/212/219, Jackson to Morgenthau, September 20 and 29, 1915; *The Treatment of Armenians*, doc. 116.

29. AA—PA, TR 183/39, zu A 30012, record of statement by Paul Kern, September 13, 1915, encl. 1 in Büge to Bethmann Hollweg, October 1, 1915; NA RG 59 867.4016/200/239, Nathan to Morgenthau, September 27 and November 4, 1915. An American traveler estimated the population of the Katma concentration camp at 150,000. Memorandum by Walter M. Geddes, encl. in 867.4016/243, Horton to Secretary of State, November 8, 1915. Friedrich Freiherr Kress von Kressenstein, *Mit den Türken zum Suezkanal* (Berlin: Vorhut Verlag Otto Schlegel, 1938), 132. Kress saw the camp in October 1915. In November, the German consul at Aleppo reported repeatedly on the contamination of the road over the Taurus and Amanus mountains and in the city of Aleppo. Typhoid fever had spread because of the deportation of Armenians. Already several Armenian employees of the railway company had died. German troops along the railway line were in danger, too. See AA—PA, Konst. 409, J.9462, J.9986, Rössler to Embassy, November 5 and 15, 1915. The route between Osmanieh and Islahia was described as being "practically a cemetery." See NA RG 59, 867.4016/268, "Report by an Eyewitness," encl. in Horton to Secretary of State, January 15, 1916. For reports on the camps of Osmanieh, Mamoure, and Islahia, see "Report of Paula Schäfer," November 16, 1915, "Report by Sister Beatrice Rohner on her visit to a tent camp in Mamoure on November 26, 1915," and "Report by Sister Paula Schäfer on a visit in the tent camp of Islahia on Dec. 1, 1915," encl. in AA—PA, TR 183/40, A 2682, Schuchardt to AA, January 26, 1916. These reports were communicated to the British government and published in *The Treatment of Armenians*, doc. 117a–c. For further evidence on the camps close to the stations of Külek and Osmanieh, see Sarah Carmelite Brewer Christie, typed transcript of her personal diary, 1915–19, entries for October 1, 11, 18, 1915, as quoted in Alan Alfred Bartholomew, "Tarsus American School, 1888–1988: The Evolution of a Missionary Institution in Turkey" (Ph.D. diss., Bryn Mawr College, 1989), 114–16. On conditions and various camps in the province of Konia, see NA RG 59, 867.4016/188, Post to Morgenthau, September 3, 1915; 867.4016/189, Dodd to Morgenthau, September 8, 1915; 867.4016/226, Post to Morgenthau, October 27, 1915; 867.4016/251, Post to Peet, November 25, 1915. On Katma, see Archives du la Ministère de Guerre (France), 7 N 1254, Report of Mr. Brewster, encl. in de La Panouse to Painlevé, May 9, 1917, D no. 5037, in *Les Grandes puissances, l'Empire Ottoman et les Arméniens dans les archives françaises (1914–1918): Recueil de documents*, ed. Arthur Beylerian (Paris: Imprimerie A. Bontemps, 1983) (Publications de la Sorbonne) Série Documents—34, 352–53, no. 356. The numbers of deportees match the figure of 40,000–50,000 given by Naim Bey who according to Andonian had been at one point the "secrétaire du Bureau de la Sous-Direction des Déportés à Alep." Although the authenticity of the documents is still debated, the timing, the number of deportees, and the problems these camps produced for military transport are all confirmed by the documentation used here. Consequently, the telegram ascribed to Talaat on page 50 of Andonian's book does not pertain to the number of Armenian railway workers but to the concentration camps along the railway. This imprecision, however, might very well reflect the point of view of the Ottoman authorities, who did not necessarily differentiate between the deportees and those working for the railway construction, as the company had been hiring deportees illegally. See Aram Andonian, *Documents officiels concernant les massacres arméniens* (Paris: Imprimerie H. Turabian, 1920), 48–50; Bibliothèque Nubarian, Paris, Liasse 27, Andonian to Tarzian, July 26, 1937.
30. In the autumn of 1915, the concentration camp at Islahia was for six weeks the scene of continued robberies and slaughters by Kurds. German railway engineers could not protect the deportees. After the personal intervention of Djemal Pasha, who hanged some of the perpetrators, a temporary change occurred. See AA—PA, Konst. 172, J.283, Rössler to Metternich, January 3, 1916, no. 16. The conditions in the camps under which the Armenians survived differed radically from the luxurious lifestyle of local military commanders. See Hasan Cemil Çambel, *Makaleler, Hâtıralar* (Articles, memoirs) (1964; reprint, Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1987), 136–37. On death squads operating in the Amanus and the condition of deportees, see De Nogales, *Four Years Beneath the Crescent*, 171–72, 174, 177–78.
31. AA—PA, TR 183/38, A 28019, Rössler to Bethmann Hollweg, September 3, 1915.
32. On the death marches, see AA—PA, Konst. 172, J.283, Rössler to Metternich, January 3, 1916. Rössler reported on oral information obtained from Bastendorff. He added that this information was much more appalling than the details contained in the engineer's written report.
33. AA—PA, Konst. 172, J.284, Report by Flechsig, October 20, 1915, encl. in Hoffmann to Embassy, November 8, 1915; J.283, Bastendorff to Rössler, December 18, 1915, encl. 2 in Rössler to Metternich, January 3, 1916. The Ras-ul-Ain concentration camp was surrounded by a wall with only one guarded entrance. While people were left to die inside, mass graves were prepared in the vicinity. See Christoph Schröder, "Die armenischen Greuel," *Berliner Stadt Anzeiger*, September 25, 1919, no. 455 Morgenausgabe. See also Archives du la Ministère de Guerre (France), 16 N 2946, War Office, September 25, 1916, annex to La Panouse to Joffre, September 30, 1916, in Beylerian, *Les Grandes puissances*, 250–51; Wegner to Bonin, November 26, 1915, in Armin T. Wegner, *Der Weg ohne Heimkehr: Ein Martyrium in Briefen* (Berlin: Fleischel and Co., 1919), 16–23.
34. DB—HA, Or 1704, Hasenfratz to Günther, October 19, 1915 encl. in Günther to Gwinner, October 30, 1915. The intentional killing of Armenians is further confirmed by the behavior of the military commander of Tell Abiad. The officer blamed Arab Beduins for giving safe conduct to a caravan of Armenians. Two days later he had disappeared without leaving a trace. The Arabs had apparently taken revenge. AA—PA, Konst. 172, J.284, Hoffmann to Embassy, November 8, 1915. On Beduins helping Armenians near Tell Abiad, see Archives du la Ministère de Guerre, British Intelligence Service to Ministère de la Guerre, May 30, 1916, in Beylerian, *Les Grandes puissances*, 208–9.



35. AA—PA, Konst. 170, J.4563, Spieker, July 27, 1915, encl. in Rössler to Hohenlohe, July 27, 1915. For the same statement by Spieker, see the report by a German missionary in Konsulat Adana: Armenisches, (Dobbeler) to Schuchardt, September 9, 1915, and Konst. 172, J.283, Bastendorff to Rössler, December 18, 1915, encl. 2 in Rössler to Metternich, January 3, 1916. In 1917, a German physician recorded that along the railway an Armenian woman was worth less than a goat. The slave trade in Armenian women was a common sight at the railway stations. German and Ottoman officers, too, as well as some German railway personnel, took advantage of this situation. The engineers repeatedly tried to help, at least in individual cases. See Theo Malade, *Von Amiens bis Aleppo: Ein Beitrag zur Seelenkunde des grossen Krieges: Aus dem Tagebuch eines Feldarztes* (Munich: Lehmann, 1930), 195, 204. The *kaimakam* of Tell Abiad offered German engineers young Armenian girls for the night. Report by engineer Pieper, in Ernst Sommer, *Die Wahrheit über die Leiden des armenischen Volkes in der Türkei während des Weltkriegs* (Frankfurt a.M.: Verlag Orient, 1919), 22–23. For violations of young women by high ranking Ottoman administrators, see Konst. 172, J.284, Hoffmann to Embassy, November 8, 1915; TR 183/38, A 28019, Rössler to Bethmann Hollweg, September 3, 1915; Martin Niepage, *Ein Wort an die berufenen Vertreter des deutschen Volkes: Eindrücke eines deutschen Oberlehrers aus der Türkei* (Berlin: Als Manuskript gedruckt, n.d. [1916]), 8. See also Andonian, *Documents officiels*, 41n. 1. The violators of Armenian women came from the highest classes of Ottoman society. The governor of Aleppo, Bekir Sami Bey, seriously injured an Armenian woman while trying to rape her. See BOA, DH.ŞFR, 55–A/60, Talaat to Ali Münif Bey, September 4, 1915, Kalem-i Mahsus.
36. AA—PA, Konsulat Adana: Armenisches, J.855, Büge to Embassy, September 24, 1915. The information was supplied by railway manager Meier of Mersina.
37. AA—PA, TR 183/38, A 26474, Hohenlohe to Bethmann Hollweg, September 4, 1915. One of the telegrams was dated August 29, 1915, whereas the other two were undated. Hohenlohe, who had doubts about the value of the material, added that Talaat had told him a few days before: “la question arménienne n’existe plus.” On August 30, 1915, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador, Pallavicini, saw Talaat. Summing up the substance of the interview, he concluded that the Ottoman government regarded the Armenian Question as settled. Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Politische Abteilung (hereafter HHStA PA) XII, 209, Pallavicini to Burián, August 31, 1915, no.71/P.B. The Austro-Hungarian documents utilized in this study were collected by Artem Ohandjanian and published as *The Armenian Genocide: Documentation*, vol. 2 (Munich: Institut für armenische Fragen, 1988).
38. AA—PA, Konst. 170, J.5263, Büge to Embassy, September 10, 1915. Büge’s action was most likely agreed on with Winkler. Both men informed their respective superiors about the suspected deceit using identical arguments and on the same day. See Konst. 97, J.8078, Winkler to Günther, September 10, 1915, encl. in Hübsch to Neurath, September 15, 1915. On the role of the special envoy, see also NA RG 59, 867.4016/193, Nathan to Morgenthau, September 11, 1915. Reporting on the telegrams and the persecution of the Armenians in general, Austro-Hungarian Ambassador Pallavicini also came to the conclusion that Talaat Bey was playing a double game. See HHStA PA, XII 209, Pallavicini to Burián, August 31, 1915, no. 71/P.B; Pallavicini to Burián, September 3, 1915, no.72/P.H. Pallavicini to Burián, September 8, 1915, no.73/P.A.
39. AA—PA, TR 183/38, A 27578, Hohenlohe to Bethmann-Hollweg, September 14, 1915. Hohenlohe’s argument that Ottoman local authorities were the real culprits was probably motivated by a wish to show that his previous remonstrances with the Ottoman government had been successful. On this initiative, see A 24507, Hohenlohe to Bethmann Hollweg, August 12, 1915. See also Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, 218–19.
40. See his report of October 1, 1915 with twelve enclosed eyewitness reports. To preempt doubts about the veracity of the material, Büge notarized the statements. See AA—PA, TR 183/39, zu A 30012, Büge to Bethmann Hollweg, October 1, 1915.
41. AA—PA, Konst. 170, J.5779, Rössler to Hohenlohe, September 27, 1915, encl. 1; Huber, Niepage, Gräter, Spieker to AA, October 8, 1916, in “Die armenischen Greuel: Drei Dokumente,” *Die Friedenswarte* 18 (1916): 321–24 (doc. 1). For an earlier order, see *Germany, Turkey and Armenia: A Selection of Documentary Evidence Relating to the Armenian Atrocities from German and Other Sources* (London: J. J. Keliher and Co., 1917), 75n. See also Wegner, *Der Weg ohne Heimkehr*, 169–70.
42. German officers were reported to have stated that the lives of thousands of Armenians did not matter. See DB—HA, Or 1704, Günther to Verwaltungsrat, August 10 and September 14, 1915.
43. DB—HA, Or 1704, Günther to Gwinner, August 17, 1915.
44. DB—HA, Or 1704, Günther to Gwinner, August 17, September 7, and November 1, 1915; Gwinner to Günther, August 26 and 28, 1915. On prohibitions to give food to deportees, see De Nogales, *Four Years Beneath the Crescent*, 173; Morgenthau Papers, reel 7, frame 557–58, Dodd to Morgenthau, May 6, 1915. For a critique of the railway company asking deportees to pay for their tickets, see NA RG 59, 867.4016/189, Dodd to Morgenthau, September 8, 1915. Dodd’s colleague Post reported on the abuses of Ottoman officials who sold tickets to deportees at exorbitant rates. See RG 59, 867.4016/251, Post to Peet, November 25, 1915.
45. DB—HA, Or 305, Winkler to Günther, July 7, 1915. For the attempts by the *kaimakam* of Ras-ul-Ain to deport and kill Armenian workers, see AA—PA, Konst. 172, J.283, Bastendorff to Rössler, December 18, 1915, encl. 2 in Rössler to Metternich, January 3, 1916. By October 11, 1915 the Armenians working on the railway were the only ones left in Osmanieh. See BOA, DH.EUM, 2. Şube, 68/89, Governor Fethi to Ministry of Interior, October 11, 1915 (OBE no. 126). According to an author who had access to the Turkish military archives, the plan to remove the Armenians from the railway lines originated from the Ottoman Ministry of War and dated from May 1915. Özdemir, “Birinci Dünya Savaşı’nda,” 392–93.



46. DB—HA, Or 305, Winkler to Günther, July 7, 1915; Winkler to Riese, July 7, 1915. See also HHStA PA, XXXXVIII, 366, Dandini to Burián, August 8, 1915, Z.10/P.
47. DB—HA, Or 305, Winkler to Günther, July 7, 1915; Winkler to Riese, July 7, 1915; Günther to Verwaltungsrat, July 12, 1915. By November 1915, the construction works in the Amanus had slowed down considerably because of the deportations of qualified Armenian workers. Hans von Kiesling, *Orient-fahrten: Zwischen Ägeis und Zagros: Erlebtes und Erschautes aus schwerer Zeit* (Leipzig: Dieterich'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1921), 22.
48. For further information on the CUP's policy toward the foreign companies, see Zafer Toprak, *Milli İktisat—Milli Burjuvazi* (National economy—national bourgeoisie) (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1995).
49. DB—HA, Or 1704, Günther to Verwaltungsrat, September 14, 1915. According to an Austrian intelligence report, the employees had been massacred close to the railway station. The killings were part of a larger annihilation program at Angora that was directed by Atif Bey, a government envoy. HHStA PA, XL, 272, Konfidenten-Bericht, December 2, 1915, no. 444; see also NA RG 59, 867.4016/189, Dodd to Morgenthau, September 8, 1915.
50. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 55/64, Talaat to Eskişehir district, August 17, 1915, EUM Spec.13; DH.ŞFR, 55/318, Talaat to Konia, Angora, Hüdâvendigâr, and Adana provinces and districts of Karahisâr-ı Sâhib, Kütahya, Eskişehir, Niğde, August 29, 1915 EUM. AA—PA, Konst. 97, J.8078, Winkler to Günther, September 10, 1915; DB—HA, Or 1704, Günther to Gwinner, September 20, 1915, and Günther to Verwaltungsrat, November 5, 1918.
51. Veli to General Headquarters, August 28, 1915, in Turkey, Prime Ministry, Directorate General of Press and Information, *Documents*, vol. 1, 3d ed. (N.p., n.d.), no. 33; AA—PA, Konst. 97, J.8078, Winkler to Günther, September 10, 1915, encl. in Hübsch to Neurath, September 15, 1915; DB—HA, Or 462, Winkler to Riese, September 16, 1915; and Winkler to Günther, September 16, 1915; Konst. 97, J.7976, Büge to Embassy, September 24, 1915. Büge reported on Winkler's complaints against the *vali's* interference of the construction works. See also BOA, DH.ŞFR, 56/156, Talaat to Konia, Angora, Hüdâvendigâr, Adana provinces, İzmit, Karahisâr-ı Sâhib, Kütahya, Eskişehir, Niğde districts, September 25, 1915, EUM Spec. 593. Şükrü Bey, a special envoy with the title "deportation commissar" who was coordinating the deportation from Aleppo at that time, received similar orders on September 29 and 30, 1915. See DH.ŞFR, 56/232, EUM Spec. 48 and 56/235, EUM Spec. 85. Talaat was repeatedly involved in the cases of individual Armenian railway employees and their families. See, for example, DH.ŞFR, 55-A/226, Talaat to Kütahya district, September 12, 1915, EUM Spec. 593, and 56/239, Talaat to Karahisar-ı Sâhib district, September 30, 1915, EUM Spec. 20.
52. AA—PA, TR 152/83, zu A 29586, Zimmermann to Wangenheim, October 13, 1915; DB—HA, Or 1704, Günther to Gwinner, October 14, 1915.
53. DB—HA, Or 139, Günther to Verwaltungsrat, October 14, 1915; DB—HA, Or 462, Gwinner to Günther, October 19, 1915.
54. AA—PA, Konst. 97, J.9428, Hübsch to Neurath, October 30, 1915. The enclosed text is not a deportation order but a copy of the decision taken by the commission. It was sent to the military commissar of the Anatolian Railway, who forwarded a copy to the railway company. The text of a deportation order ascribed to Talaat has been published by Andonian. The French edition of the book does not indicate a date. Andonian, *Documents officiels*, 50; Vahakn N. Dadrian, "The Naim-Andonian Documents on the World War I Destruction of Ottoman Armenians: The Anatomy of a Genocide," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 18 (1986): 316 (no. 23) dates this telegram, January 8, 1916.
55. AA—PA, TR 183/83, A 34059, Vehbi to Anatolian Railway Co., October 31, 1915, encl. in Huguenin to Gwinner, November 6, 1915.
56. Public Record Office, London, Foreign Office 371/5265/E59024, Günther to Verwaltungsrat, October 28, 1915, no. 7702/389, translation.
57. Many initiatives to remove Bronsart had already failed when Enver Pasha and Falkenhayn met in December 1915. Falkenhayn also tried to convince Enver that Bronsart was unqualified for his position, but it was in vain, for as Falkenhayn put it, the pasha was "stuck" to his subordinate. AA—PA, Großes Hauptquartier Türkei, no. 41, Bd. 1, Treutler (?) to Jagow, March 9, 1916; Joseph Pomiankowski, *Der Zusammenbruch des Ottomanischen Reiches: Erinnerungen an die Türkei aus der Zeit des Weltkrieges* (Vienna: Amalthea Verlag, 1928; reprint, Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1969), 294; Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, 80, 85, 91.
58. AA—PA, Konst. 171, A 32610, Günther to Verwaltungsrat, October 28, 1915, encl. in Zimmermann to Metternich, November 18, 1915, J.6866. After the armistice a copy of the report fell into the hands of the British forces occupying Constantinople. See Public Record Office, London, Foreign Office, 371/5265/E59024, Günther to Verwaltungsrat, October 28, 1915, no. 7702/389, translation. It should be noted that contrary to Dadrian's claim Günther did not accuse Böttich of being "foolish enough" to sign the deportation decision but criticized him for "stooping to" (*herbeigelassen*) the action. The English translation relied on by Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide*, 262, uses the imprecise expression "has allowed himself." The word "kaustisch," however, was translated correctly as "caustic." Dadrian substituted "ecstatically" for "caustic" without indicating the change to the reader. Both deviations from the original text described here alter the meaning of the document. For another attempt that failed to get a German officer involved in the extermination of Armenians, see AA—PA, Weltkrieg, 11d.secr./10, Scheubner to Schulenburg, December 7, 1915; Paul Leverkuehn, *Posten auf ewiger Wache: Aus dem abenteuerlichen Leben des Max von Scheubner-Richter* (Essen: Essener Verlagsanstalt, 1938), 101–2.
59. AA—PA, TR, 152/83, A 31421, Günther to Gwinner, October 30, 1915, marginal note by Jagow, Berlin, October 31, 1915.
60. AA—PA, TR 152/83, zu A 29586, Zimmermann to Wangenheim, October 13, 1915, and A 30246, Wangenheim to AA, October 18, 1915; TR 152/84, A 36186, Metternich to Bethmann Hollweg, December 8, 1915.

61. AA—PA, TR 152/83, A 30574, Wangenheim to AA, October 21, 1915.
62. Ibid.; AA—PA, TR 152/83, A 31968, Neurath to AA, November 4, 1915; Großes Hauptquartier Türkei 41a–e, Jagow to Treutler, November 8, 1915, no. 201.
63. Lossow's intervention on behalf of the railway employees hints at a serious disagreement among the leading German officers active in Turkey. Unlike Bronsart and Böttlich, Lossow was on good terms with Falkenhayn and was thus not dependent on Ottoman patronage. Lossow drafted the text of the telegram Falkenhayn sent to Enver. AA—PA, TR 183/39, A 31750, Neurath to AA, November 2, 1915; TR 152/83, zu A 31421, Jagow to Neurath, November 11, 1915; Großes Hauptquartier Türkei, 41a–e, zu A 31421, Jagow to Treutler, November 2, 1915. On Lossow as follower of Falkenhayn, see Pomiankowski, *Der Zusammenbruch des Osmanischen Reiches*, 281. Lossow's action illustrates the power relations within the Supreme Army Command.
64. AA—PA, TR 152/83, A 31884, Treutler to AA, November 3, 1915; A 33741, Falkenhayn to Treutler, November 19, 1915; Chef des Generalstabes des Feldheeres, encl. in A 33741, Treutler to Bethmann Hollweg, November 20, 1915, no. 76.
65. DB—HA, Or 1704, Günther to Verwaltungsrat, December 3, 1915. The change in the attitudes of the Ottoman military might have been a result of the efforts on the part of Djemal Pasha. Djemal had tried to return the deported Armenian workers to the railway construction, but he feared that Talaat would obstruct this initiative. See AA—PA, Konst. 98, J.10365, Rössler to Embassy, November 25, 1915. On December 9, 1915, Talaat ordered the provincial authorities at Adana to report on the situation around Islahia, BOA, DH.ŞFR, 58/223, Talaat to Adana province, December 9, 1915, EUM Spec. 119. It is interesting to note that Böttlich's affinity with Enver even had deadly consequences for German soldiers. When in 1916 German physicians asked for additional precautions against typhoid fever, Böttlich sided with Enver and refused any assistance. See Ernst Rodenwaldt, *Seuchenkämpfe: Bericht des beratenden Hygienikers der V. kaiserlich-osmanischen Armee* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Verlag, 1921), 207–8. See also Helmut Becker, *Äskulap zwischen Reichsadler und Halbmond: Seuchenbekämpfung und Sanitätswesen im türkischen Reich während des Ersten Weltkriegs* (Herzogenrath: Verlag Murken-Altrogge, 1990), 406–7.
66. The first direct train from Berlin arrived in Constantinople on January 16, 1916. Carl Mühlmann, *Das deutsch-türkische Waffenbündnis im Weltkrieg* (Leipzig: Köhler and Amelang, 1940), 56; Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, 297; Weber, *Eagles on the Crescent*, 115–28.
67. AA—PA, TR 152/84, A 36186, Metternich to Bethmann Hollweg, December 8, 1915.
68. AA—PA, TR 152/84, zu A 36187, zu 36227, Jagow to Chief of Army Staff, December 21, 1915. Jagow followed Günther's argument.
69. Großer Krieg Türkei, 41c, Gröner to AA, March 22, 1916. Falkenhayn was eager not to antagonize an Ottoman ally that had offered six divisions for the eastern front in Europe. On February 11, 1916, he declared that Germany needed the Ottoman contribution to the war effort. See Gerold von Gleich, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad: Militärisch-politische Erinnerungen an den Orient* (Berlin: Scherl, 1921), 73.
70. DB—HA, Or 463, Gwinner to Günther, May 20, 1916; AA—PA, Großes Hauptquartier Türkei, 41a–e, Jagow to Treutler, July 4, 1916. Jagow transmitted a report of Metternich.
71. In 1918, after the fall of the CUP regime, a delegation of the Armenian employees thanked Günther for all his personal efforts. DB—HA, Or 1704, Günther to Verwaltungsrat, November 5, 1918. See also Özdemir, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda," 393.
72. AA—PA, TR 152/84, A 264, and A 2051, Neurath to AA, January 8 and 28, 1916. For problems in the application of the decision, see DB—HA, Or 463, Huguenin to Gwinner, January 21, 1916. The decision that workers must not return was taken after consultations between Talaat and Enver. See BOA, DH.ŞFR, 58/25, Talaat to Şükrü Bey, November 16, 1915, EUM Spec. 148. See also Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, 297–98. On transportation problems in the Amanus, see De Nogales, *Four Years Beneath the Crescent*, 165–68.
73. Krikoris Balakian (Grigoris Palakian), *Hai Goghgotan* (Armenian calvary) (Paris: N.p., 1959), 2:25, 31–32. Balakian had been bookkeeper to Klaus, the responsible engineer at Baghche. Thus, he was intimately acquainted with the policies of the company. Ibid., 23. The engineers also gave shelter to deserters from the Ottoman army. See Jacob Künzler, *Im Lande des Blutes und der Tränen: Erlebnisse in Mesopotamien während des Weltkrieges* (Potsdam: Tempelverlag, 1921), 5. For students of St. Paul's College of Tarsus working in the Amanus, see Brewer Christie, typed transcript of her personal diary, 1915–19, entry January 7, 1916, p. 47, as quoted in Bartholomew, *Tarsus American School*, 127–28. On April 13, 1916, Talaat told the provincial authorities along the railway lines that railway officers giving travel documents to Armenians were to be court-martialed. See BOA, DH.ŞFR, 62/313, Talaat to Adana, Angora, Aleppo, Hüdavendigâr, Syria, Konia provinces, Urfa, İzmit, Zor, Karesi, Maraş, Kütahya, Karahisar-ı şâhib, Niğde, Eskişehir districts, April 13, 1916, EUM Gen. 45297 Spec. 104.
74. Khoren K. Davidson, *Odyssey of an Armenian of Zeitoun*, foreword by Aram Saroyan (New York: Vantage Press, 1985), 89–122; Teodik, *Amenun Taretsuitse* (Everyone's almanac) (Constantinople: K. Keshishian, 1920), 253–66; Abraham H. Hartunian, *Neither to Laugh nor to Weep: A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide*, trans. Vartan Hartunian (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968; reprint, Cambridge, Mass.: Armenian Heritage Press, 1986), 74–77. Gräter's information that leading officials of the Baghdad Railway Company had forbidden their subordinates to help Armenians contradicts this interpretation. Gräter, Aleppo, July 7, 1916, in "Die armenischen Greuel," doc. 3. The pro-Armenian attitudes of the personnel at Aleppo are documented by their reports.
75. Hartunian, *Neither to Laugh nor to Weep*, 77. According to a German physician the malaria in the Amanus was especially serious. He estimated that up to 100 percent of the workers were infected. Insufficient provisions and inadequate

- health care, together with hard working conditions, increased the number of victims even more. The efforts of engineers to improve the conditions were insufficient. See Viktor Schilling, "Über die schwere cilicische Malaria," *Archiv für Schiffs- und Tropen-Hygiene* 23 (1919): 475–98; and his *Kriegshygienische Erfahrungen in der Türkei (Cilicien, Nordsyrien)* (Leipzig: J. A. Barth, 1921), 34–35.
76. Köppel told Elmajian: "Now listen, go over and watch them. Just see that they use the hammer, whether they break the stones or not doesn't matter. Never mind how many stones they break or how many pebbles they can prepare. Just see that they move the hammer, hitting the stone." Eflatoon E. Elmajian, *In the Shadow of the Almighty: My Life Story* (Pasadena, Calif.: N.p., 1982), 64; Balakian, *Hai Goghgotan*, 20.
  77. Davidson, *Odyssey of an Armenian of Zeitoun*, 98–101; Hovsep Der-Vartanian, *Intilli-Airani Spande, 1916: Mut Mnatsats Ech Me Mets Eghernen* (The slaughter of Entilli-Airan, 1916: A page remaining dark from the Great Catastrophe) (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1928), 15.
  78. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 59/277, Talaat to Aleppo province, January 11, 1916, EUM Spec. 197; DH.ŞFR, 60/45, Talaat to Aleppo, Adana, Konia, Angora provinces, Eskişehir, İzmit districts, January 16, 1916, EUM Spec. 6618 (OBE no. 164); DH.ŞFR, 60/157, Talaat to Adana, Aleppo provinces, January 29, 1916, EUM Spec.1; DH.ŞFR, 60/274, Talaat to Adana, Aleppo provinces, Maraş district, EUM; DH.ŞFR, 61/1, Talaat to Aleppo, Adana provinces, February 14, 1916, EUM Gen. 42564; DH.ŞFR, 61/17, Talaat to Djemal Pasha, February 15, 1916, EUM Gen. 42595 Spec. 150; DH.ŞFR, 61/128, Talaat to Aleppo, Adana provinces, February 27, 1916, EUM Gen. 43128; DH.ŞFR, 63/96, Talaat to Angora, Konia, Aleppo, Adana, Hüdâvendigâr provinces, İzmit, Eskişehir, Karahisâr-ı Sâhib, Kütahya, Niğde districts, April 25, 1916, EUM Gen. 45798 Spec. 135; DH.ŞFR, 63/75, Nazir to Maraş district, April 22, 1916, EUM (OBE no. 174). It is important to note that like in the case of the number of Armenian deportees, previously given, the documents from Ottoman Ministry of the Interior cited here confirm to some degree the contents of two other telegrams ascribed to Talaat in Andonian's book. Thus, the dating of telegram nos. 840 and 860 as January 1916 appears to be correct. Therefore, it seems that Andonian or Naim Bey did not misdate these telegrams as Dadrian supposes. See "The Naim-Andonian Documents," 316–17 (nos. 32, 38), and Andonian, *Documents officiels*, 49–51. Şinasi Orel and Süreyya Yuca, who have argued that Andonian had forged his material, did not consider the sources under scrutiny here. Thus, their thesis is to be put into question and further research on the "Naim-Andonian" documents is necessary. See Şinasi Orel and Süreyya Yuca, *The Talât Pasha Telegrams: Historical Fact or Armenian Fiction?* (Nicosia: K. Rustem and Brother, 1986).
  79. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 62/191, Talaat to Aleppo province, April 1, 1916 DH. Kalem-i Mahusu 17; DH.ŞFR, 63/23, Talaat to Angora, Konia, Hüdâvendigâr, Adana, Aleppo provinces, İzmit, Eskişehir, Karahisâr-ı Sâhib, Kütahya, Niğde districts, April 17, 1916, EUM Gen. 45454; DH.ŞFR, 63/119, Talaat to Konia province, April 16, 1916, EUM Spec. 644 (OBE no. 176); DH.ŞFR, 63/259, Talaat to Aleppo, Adana provinces, May 9, 1916, EUM Gen. 46469; DH.ŞFR, 64/104, Talaat to Adana province, May 22, 1916, EUM Spec. 41; DB—HA, Or 464, Mavrogordato to Holzmann Co., July 11, 1916, DB—HA, Or 464, Grages to Riese, July 16, 1916.
  80. DB—HA, Or 1704, Winkler to Baudirektion, June 19, 1916.
  81. Balakian, *Hai Goghgotan*, 31–32.
  82. AA—PA, TR 183/43, A 18208, Niepage, Gräter to Bethmann Hollweg, July 8, 1916. The appeal was also printed and circulated privately. See Niepage, *Ein Wort an die berufenen Vertreter*, 13.
  83. DB—HA, Or 463, Winkler to Günther, June 14, 1916, and Winkler to Günther, June 15 1916, encl. in Günther to Verwaltungsrat, June 16, 1916; Balakian, *Hai Goghgotan*, 41, 43, 48–49; Hartunian, *Neither to Laugh nor to Weep*, 85–89.
  84. DB—HA, Or 463, Metternich to AA, June 19, 1916; Or 1704, Winkler to Baghdad Railway Co., July 3, 1916; Balakian, *Hai Goghgotan*, 50.
  85. DB—HA, Or 1704, Winkler to Baudirektion, June 19, 1916; Morf, Winkler to Direktion, June 18, 1916.
  86. AA—PA, TR 152/87, A 17235, Falkenhayn to Jagow, June 29, 1916; Großes Hauptquartier Türkei, 41a–e, Jagow to Treutler, July 4, 1916, transmitting report of Metternich. Later, Refik Bey, railway expert in the Ottoman General Staff, told Winkler that Enver had not carefully read the draft before signing it. DB—HA, Or 1704, Winkler to Riese, July 7, 1916; AA—PA, TR 152/87, A 16479, Metternich to AA, June 21, 1916; TR 152/87, A 16478, Neurath to AA, June 21, 1916; Or 463, Neeff, June 16, 1916; Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, 306.
  87. AA—PA, TR 152/87, A 16815, Metternich to AA, June 15, 1916.
  88. DB—HA, Or 464, Winkler to Generaldirektion, June 27, 1916, Balakian, *Hai Goghgotan*, 58–59.
  89. "The following morning we noticed a crowd of men, women, and children moving off along the road and looking very wretched. Our guards said that these were Armenians who had been working on the line, but were being taken away to make room for our troops, who would be set to work in their place; they also added that these Armenians would be marched off into a waterless spot in the hills, and kept there till they died." Harry Coghill Watson Bishop, *A Kut Prisoner* (London: John Lane and Co., 1920), 70.
  90. DB—HA, Or 1704, Winkler to Riese, July 7, 1916. Winkler found that Refik Bey, a railway expert, was quite ignorant of the organization of a railway.
  91. DB—HA, Or 1704, Winkler to Riese, June 28, 1916. Winkler's statements were confirmed by Görke, an expert of the German military. AA—PA, Großes Hauptquartier Türkei, 41a–e, A 18132, Görke to Bevollmächtigten Generalstabsoffizier des Deutschen Feldeisenbahnchefs Konstantinopel, July 1, 1916; A 19974, Großer Krieg Türkei, 41c, encl. in Metternich to Bethmann Hollweg, July 7, 1916.
  92. The railway directors must have gathered from Winkler's evasive comments that the number of Armenian workers was significantly higher than admitted.

- Winkler was obviously depending on a tacit mutual agreement in this matter. DB—HA, Or 1704, Winkler to Baudirektion, June 19, 1916, and Winkler to Riese, June 28, 1916. Balakian, *Hai Goghgotan*, 49, 86, estimated the number of deportees to be 11,000, out of 11,500 Armenian workers. Hartunian, *Neither to Laugh nor to Weep*, 83, estimated the Armenian labor force at 12,000. Schäfer estimated the two convoys she had met at 7,000 persons. See Sommer, *Die Wahrheit über die Leiden*, 32–33. A report of the U.S. embassy in Constantinople estimated the number of Armenian workers at 9,000–11,000. The diplomats had possibly received this information from the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NA RG 59, 867.4016/291, Philip to Secretary of State, July 21, 1916, no. 1973. Other estimates of deportees was to be 21,000 Armenian survivors. Archives diplomatiques du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Nantes (hereafter MAÉ/Nantes), Beyrouth, carton 130, Yirekian et al. to Military Governor of Baghche, July 21, 1919, and carton 137, Hovnanian, Kabayan, Gueukdjian, December 20, 1918.
93. Some of the workers had been hidden by German officials. See, for example, Elmajian, *In the Shadow of the Almighty*, 65–66; DB—HA, Or 463, Neurath to AA, June 29, 1916; Or 464, Winkler to Grages, July 7, 1916. The last to leave were the specialists whose families were deported from Marash and Killis. See AA—PA, Konst. 279, J. I 1574, Grages to Metternich, July 20, 1916.
94. Refik had been the second director of the Ottoman military railway department under Böttlich. Therefore, he understood well the company's strategies to save their Armenian workers. Refik labeled these initiatives as "unpatriotic." See DB—HA, Or 1704, Winkler to Riese, July 7, 1916.
95. Talaat ordered the dispatch of workers from Smyrna to the Taurus construction sites. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 66/196, Talaat to Aydın province, August 6, 1916, EUM.
96. Refik's statement is confirmed by an order from the Ministry of War to the province of Adana. No Armenians were to return and during future deportations from the Amanus and Taurus, interruptions in the work were to be avoided. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 65/59, Talaat to Adana province, June 22, 1916, Kalem-i Mahsus no. 52. See also Balakian, *Hai Goghgotan*, 50.
97. DB—HA, Or 1704, Winkler to Riese, July 7, 1916. All evidence contradicts Winkler's statement on the return of deportees. He may have been bluffing to test Refik.
98. MAÉ/Nantes, Beyrouth, carton 137, Hovnanian, Kabayan, Gueukdjian, December 20, 1918. This report contains abundant evidence of single perpetrators. On the participation of CUP members, local administrators, and Muslim clergy, see carton 130, André to Administrateur en Chef, n.d., Sandjak du Djebel Bérékét; on the role of Muslim villagers, see Hartunian, *Neither to Laugh nor to Weep*, 93–94.
99. Der-Vartanian, *Intilli-Airani Spande*, 24, 27, 32–33, 34, 35; Davidson, *Odyssey of an Armenian of Zeitoun*, 106–7; Hartunian, *Neither to Laugh nor to Weep*, 90; AA—PA, TR 152/89, A 19650, Khatschadurian to Rohner, July 9, 1916, encl. in Rössler to Bethmann Hollweg, July 10, 1916.
100. Davidson, *Odyssey of an Armenian of Zeitoun*, 116; Der-Vartanian, *Intilli-Airani Spande*, 24, 27; Hartunian, *Neither to Laugh nor to Weep*, 91. Andonian, *Documents officiels*, 52, estimated the number of Armenian young men who were massacred at the outset of the deportation at 1,800.
101. Der-Vartanian, *Intilli-Airani Spande*, 42; Balakian, *Hai Goghgotan*, 48. A British prisoner of war, however, still saw corpses lying close to the main road over the Amanus. See Edward Herbert Keeling, *Adventures in Turkey and Russia* (London: John Murray, 1924), 40; Bishop, *A Kut Prisoner*, 70.
102. The deportees of this convoy were comparably lucky. "It was made up mostly of widows, old folks, the weak, children, left-overs." The governor of Marash, who resisted CUP extermination designs, was protecting the deportees in his jurisdiction: "The gendarmes who had brought us from Baghtche were now sent back. The good Ismayale Kemal Pasha had appointed new ones and had told them that I was in this group. They had strict orders to take our convoy to Aintab safely. But beyond that, toward Biredjik, toward Der-el-Zor, the slaughterhouse, he had no jurisdiction." Hartunian, *Neither to Laugh nor to Weep*, 89, 98. Hartunian's statement on the governor of Marash seems to be confirmed by an official Ottoman document. In April 1916, Talaat ordered Djemal Pasha to inquire into the governor's performance, as the latter was suspected of helping Armenians. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 63/100, Talaat to Djemal Pasha, April 25, 1916, EUM Gen. 45797 Spec. 24. Survivors estimated the number of deportees murdered between Baghche and Marash to be more than 2,500, out of 21,000 deportees; MAÉ/Nantes, Beyrouth, carton 130, Yirekian et al. to Military Governor of Baghche, July 21, 1919.
103. AA—PA, TR 152/89, A 19650, Khatschadurian to Rohner, July 9, 1916, encl. in Rössler to Bethmann Hollweg, July 10, 1916. Davidson had been warned by a friendly gendarme not to cross the Euphrates if he wanted to live. See Davidson, *Odyssey of an Armenian of Zeitoun*, 120–22; Künzler, *Im Lande des Blutes*, 76–77.
104. AA—PA, TR 183/44, A 21969, Schäfer to Peet, July 13, 1916, in Rössler to Bethmann Hollweg, July 29, 1916; Sommer, *Die Wahrheit über die Leiden*, 32–33; Balakian, *Hai Goghgotan*, 53–54; Hartunian, *Neither to Laugh nor to Weep*, 95–100. Naim Bey and Andonian, too, credit Köppel with special efforts to save his Armenian employees and their families. He hid Armenian orphans in empty dynamite boxes. According to Andonian, *Documents officiels*, 51, 52–53, Köppel was reprimanded by his superiors for his actions a few days later.
105. Talaat's order to deport the Armenian workers was confirmed to the U.S. embassy by the Ottoman Foreign Ministry. On the motives behind this order an American diplomat recorded that "Minister of Foreign Affairs admitted to me that this had been done to prevent the concentrating of Armenians. He added that these people were hiding and thought that employment with the Germans would save them from further molestation." NA RG 59, 867.4016/291, Philip to Secretary of State, July 21, 1916.
106. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 65/38, Talaat to Maraş district, June 20, 1916, EUM. As in the case for the deportation of the railway workers, the Marash deportation





## Finishing the Genocide

### Cleansing Turkey of Armenian Survivors, 1920–1923

LEVON MARASHLIAN

Between 1920 and 1923, as Turkish and Western diplomats were negotiating the fate of the Armenian Question at peace conferences in London, Paris, and Lausanne, thousands of Armenians of the Ottoman Empire who had survived the massacres and deportations of World War I continued to face massacres, deportations, and persecutions across the length and breadth of Anatolia.<sup>1</sup> Events on the ground, diplomatic correspondence, and news reports confirmed that it was the policy of the Turkish Nationalists in Angora, who eventually founded the Republic of Turkey, to eradicate the remnants of the empire's Armenian population and finalize the expropriation of their public and private properties.

### Expropriation of Armenian Properties

At the core of the policy to eliminate the Armenian survivors was the question of how to redistribute the enormous wealth that had been expropriated by the old Ottoman government. The nascent Nationalist government of the embryonic Turkish Republic took legislative and physical actions to confiscate even more properties and to hold on to the properties that had been seized during World War I.

Government agencies and individuals had taken possession of large amounts of land, houses, churches and other structures as well as all kinds of goods and personal effects, down to the clothing off people's backs, on the basis of a law passed in May 1915: "The Regulations Concerning the

was carefully prepared. On April 17, 1916 Talaat ordered an exact count of all Armenians in Marash, DH.\$FR, 63/22, Talaat to Maraş district, EUM Spec. 6. Moreover, Talaat wished to know how many Catholics and Protestants were left in Marash, DH.\$FR, 63/40, Talaat to Maraş district, April 18, 1916, EUM Gen. 45494 Spec. 5. The Catholic Armenians were allowed to remain in Marash, DH.\$FR, 63/76, Talaat to Maraş district, April 22, 1916, EUM Spec.590. About a month after the deportation, Talaat asked for the exact numbers of deported Armenians before and after Avni's arrival, DH.\$FR, 66/65, Talaat to Maraş district, July 25, 1916, EUM Spec.1626. Presumably, the mission of Avni had been necessitated by the refusal of the governor of Marash to obey the deportation orders. During the preceding months, the governor had repeatedly assisted Armenians. See Hartunian, *Neither to Laugh nor to Weep*, 73, 99.

107. Raymond H. Kévorkian, "Recueil de témoignages sur l'extermination des amele tabouri ou bataillons de soldats- ouvriers arméniens de l'armée ottomane," *Revue d'histoire arménienne contemporaine* 1 (1995): 289–303.

108. AA—PA, TR 183/43, A 18548, Metternich to Bethmann Hollweg, July 10, 1916; TR 183/44, A 21969, Rössler to Bethmann Hollweg, July 29, 1916. Armenian women who had survived a march from Adana to Mardin were ordered to go to Deir-el-Zor, too. DH.\$FR, 66/21, Talaat to Diarbekir province, July 18, 1916, EUM Gen.49557 Spec.39. In October 1916 Wegner saw on his journey from Baghdad to Aleppo along the Euphrates the last Armenian survivors. Close to the river near Meskene he found a pile of human bones. See *Der Weg ohne Heimkehr*, 164–67.

109. Kiesling, *Orientfahrten*, 6–7; Oberstlt. a.D. Raith, "Deutschtum in Persien," *Mitteilungen des Bundes der Asienkämpfer* 11 (1929): 107–8.

110. MAÉ/Nantes, Beyrouth, carton no. 137, Hovnanian, Kabayan, Gueukdjian, December 20, 1918. The copy of the affidavit utilized here is deposited at the French Foreign Office archives in Nantes. Dadrian quoted from a copy now preserved in the Nubarian Library in Paris. A full discussion of Dadrian's theses on von der Goltz's role in the Armenian Genocide is beyond the scope of the present article. From the available evidence, however, it seems doubtful that von der Goltz was involved in the events at Osmanieh.