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Young Turk social engineering : mass violence and the nation state in eastern Turkey, 1913-1950

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Publication date

2009

Document Version

Final published version

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Üngör, U. U. (2009). *Young Turk social engineering : mass violence and the nation state in eastern Turkey, 1913-1950*. [Thesis, fully internal, Universiteit van Amsterdam].

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Note on Transliteration and Usage

The transliteration of names and places from non-Latin alphabet sources presents numerous difficulties, some of which are irresolvable. This is particularly true when one is dealing with imperial sources, wherein the language of a document is often unrelated to that of the subject mentioned therein, thereby raising the real problem of how best to render that subject's name. For the sake of simplicity, especially for readers unfamiliar with the more sophisticated systems of transliteration from the Arabic alphabet and its variants, names from Ottoman documents are, as a rule, transliterated into their modern Turkish equivalent. Names cited in other documents are transliterated according to the Library of Congress system, except in the case of well known figures, for whom the conventional English spelling is used. Similarly, the English spellings have been retained for Turkish words that already enjoy standard English spellings, such as Pasha.

As a general rule, the names of individuals are rendered according to the empire with which they were more closely associated, whether by choice or circumstance. Hence, for example, Akçura, not Akchura. On the other hand, individuals who never lived to see their names transliterated into modern Turkish are also spelled according to the principle of simplicity. Hence, for example, Reshid, not Reşit. For those actors who published books or articles, their names are spelled here as they published them. The reader unfamiliar with Ottoman and Turkish history should be aware that family names were not adopted until 1934. When pertinent, the family name is placed in parentheses upon first mention of an individual, e.g. Kâzım (Karabekir) Pasha. The words Bey, Efendi, and Pasha are honorific titles, not last names. For place names spelling is more difficult as national affiliations interfere with imperial ones and some inconsistency will inevitably occur. Again for simplicity, place names are selected according to imperial affiliation, and spelled accordingly: Sarikamish and Diyarbekir rather than Sarıkamış and Diyarbakır respectively.

No claims are being made with regard to a subject's ethnicity, identity or presumed political loyalty, or to a territory's proper affiliation. The only intent is to make the personal and place names accessible to the English-speaking audience.

For those readers unfamiliar with Turkish spelling and pronunciation, the following simplified guide may be of use:

C, c – “j” as in “jam”

Ç, ç – “ch” as in “chest”

Ğ, ğ – a soft “g” that generally elongates the preceding vowel

I, ı – a hard “i,” something between “i” in “will” and “u” in radium

J, j – similar to the “s” in “treasure” or the French g in “gendarme”

Ö, ö – same as the German “ö” or the French “eu” as in “seul”

Ş, ş – “sh” as in “should”

Ü, ü – same as the German “ü” or the French “u” as in “lune”