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

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## 1. Introduction

This study argues that from 1913 to 1950, the Young Turk regime subjected Diyarbakir, an ethnically heterogeneous space, to various forms of nationalist population policies aimed at ethnically homogenizing the region and including it into the Turkish nation state. It builds upon the work of other scholars who evolved the thesis that the international system of nation states throughout the past two centuries developed from a pre-national global order of states with culturally heterogeneous territories, into a self-perpetuating system of nation states that produces nationalist homogenization by virtue of various forms of population policies. The study is limited in time and space to addressing population policies in the Young Turk era (1913-1950) in Eastern Turkey. It begins with the Young Turk seizure of power in the 1913 coup d'état and ends with the end of Young Turk rule in 1950.<sup>1</sup> It will describe how Eastern Turkey as an ethnically heterogeneous space was subjected to various forms of nationalist population policies aimed at transforming the region into an ethnically homogeneous space to be included into the Turkish nation state. The focus will be on an account of the implementation of these nationalist population policies in the eastern provinces, in order to exemplify the policies in detail. This study argues that the Young Turk nationalist elite launched this process of societal transformation in order to establish a Turkish nation state. In this process, ethnically heterogeneous regions were subjected to more encompassing and more violent forms of population policies than other regions. The eastern provinces were one of these special regions. This study highlights the role played by the Young Turks in the identification of the population of the eastern provinces as an object of knowledge, management, and radical change. It details the emergence of a wide range of new technologies of population policies, including physical destruction, deportation, spatial planning, forced assimilation, and memory politics, which all converged in an attempt to increase ethnic homogeneity within the nation state.

This introduction will delineate the skeletal frame of the study. First, it will define the foundations of its theoretical approach, which will range from general theory on nation formation to unpacking the concepts of 'population policies' and 'social engineering'.

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<sup>1</sup> A brief note about terminology is in order. In this study I will follow Zürcher's use of the term 'Young Turk era' to bundle together the Committee of Union and Progress (*Ittihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti*) and its descendant the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*), which ruled the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic in the period 1913-1950. This study advances the argument that a strong continuity of population policies can be observed between the CUP era (1913-1918) and the Kemalist era (1919-1950). Erik-Jan Zürcher, "The Ottoman Legacy of the Turkish Republic: An Attempt at a New Periodization," in: *Die Welt des Islams*, vol.32 (1992), pp.237-53. 'Eastern Turkey' will refer to the area east of the line Adana-Giresun, more or less bounded by the former Ottoman provinces of Sivas, Erzurum, Trabzon, Van, Bitlis, Mamuret-ul Aziz, Aleppo, and Diyarbakir – the latter being the main theater of exemplification in this study.

Second, the introduction will articulate a clear problematization by formulating concrete research questions about the subject at hand. It will then go on to provide methodological vehicles for answering the research question, and survey the relevant sources. Finally, it will explain how the structure and composition of the thesis is built up.

## **Theoretical approach**

The world we inhabit is a world of nation states. It embodies a global nation-state system and contemporary nation states are involved in a variety of power, exchange, and communicative relationships that together combine to form a closely knit, complex system of interdependence. This interdependence provides the foundation for the worldwide system of international interaction and remains the key vessel of social and political meaning in the world today. The nation-state system as we currently know it developed through at least three phases: the first saw the emergence of a core nation-state system in Europe, the second saw the internal consolidation and external expansion of that system to the rest of Europe, and the third witnessed its maturation as it spread globally to envelop the entire world.<sup>2</sup> It will be argued that the nationalist homogenization of space was usually an unintended (but directional) process of the first phase, but in many cases a specifically pursued (and coercive) policy during the latter two phases. In this model, the nation-state system is viewed as a relatively autonomous, self-perpetuating system whose dynamics, mechanisms, and logic produce processes of nationalist homogenization, resulting in various forms of population policies as a function of nation formation.

Theories on the emergence of the nation-state system in this first phase have focused on military capacity,<sup>3</sup> internal pacification,<sup>4</sup> the role of wars,<sup>5</sup> and capitalism,<sup>6</sup> as well as other factors. Although these studies diverge in their narrative and explanations, they converge to the same conclusion that in the long term, a new nation-state system developed out of this historical process. The nascence of a nation-state system in Europe can roughly be traced

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<sup>2</sup> This interpretation borrows heavily from James Mayall, *Nationalism and International Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); John W. Meyer et al., "World Society and the Nation State," in: *American Journal of Sociology*, vol.103, no.1 (1997), pp.144-81; Dankwart A. Rustow, *A World of Nations: Problems of Political Modernization* (Washington, DC: The Bookings Institution, 1967).

<sup>3</sup> Anthony Giddens, *The Nation State and Violence: Volume 2 of A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985); Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), vol.2: *The Rise of Classes and Nation States, 1760-1914*.

<sup>4</sup> Norbert Elias, *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation: soziogenetische und psychogenetische Untersuchungen* (Basel: Haus zum Falken, 1939); Id., "Processes of State Formation and Nation Building," in: *Transactions of the Seventh World Congress of Sociology, Varna, September 14-19, 1970* (Louvain: International Sociological Association, 1972), vol.3, pp.274-84.

<sup>5</sup> Charles Tilly, "Reflections on the History of European State-Making," in: Charles Tilly (ed.), *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp.3-83; Id., "States and Nationalism in Europe, 1492-1992," in: *Theory and Society*, vol.23, no.1 (1994), pp.131-46.

<sup>6</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System* (New York: Academic Press, 1974-1981).

from the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) to the First World War. The Treaty of Westphalia can be seen as marking the historical shift to a new international order in its infancy, in which states formalized recognition of the nation state as the dominant principle of state formation. The structure that developed in Europe was characterized in particular by the consolidation of territorial control, centralization, functional differentiation and coordination of government, the penetration of society by administrative apparatuses, and mutual recognition of state autonomy.<sup>7</sup> In this period, the American Declaration of Independence (1776) and the French Revolution (1789) were two additional watersheds that set the standard for the future development of global processes of state formation. Once the concepts of self-determination and national sovereignty were born, they were destined to play a major role in the development of the nascent nation-state system as it spread to Italy and from there on, eastwards into the Habsburg, Ottoman, and Russian empires.

The nation state became the political product of the ideology of nationalism *par excellence*. In a nutshell, the nation state implies the parallel and simultaneous occurrence of a state and a nation. In other words, “the doctrine holds that humanity is naturally divided into nations, that nations are known by certain characteristics which can be ascertained, and that the only legitimate type of government is national self-government.”<sup>8</sup> In the ideal nation state, the population consists of the nation and only of the nation, that is, they coincide exactly: every member of the nation is a resident of the nation state, no member of the nation should reside outside it, and most importantly, in principle no non-members of the nation are to reside in the state. Although there are practically no ideal nation states, total, maximum, or sufficient homogeneity remains a prime ideal of the nation state. Even when nationalists include all members of an ethnic group, non-inclusion is *ipso facto* tantamount to exclusion. It is precisely here that the structurally exclusive nature of nationalism lies, even though there are broader sociological ramifications to this phenomenon, for one can argue that all group formation entails exclusion.<sup>9</sup> The concept of nation-state sovereignty was based on two principles: territoriality, and the exclusion of external actors from domestic authority structures. States began to codify activities and norms uniformly over their territory: laws,

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<sup>7</sup> Jason Farr, “Point: the Westphalia Legacy and the Modern Nation State,” in: *International Social Science Review*, vol.80, no.3/4 (2005), pp.156-9; Janice Thompson, “State Sovereignty in International Relations: Bridging the Gap Between Theory and Empirical Research,” in: *International Studies Quarterly*, vol.39, no.2 (1995), pp.213-34.

<sup>8</sup> Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism* (London: Blackwell, 1994), p.1.

<sup>9</sup> Andreas Wimmer, *Nationalist Exclusion and Ethnic Conflict: Shadows of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Daniel Chernilo, *A Social Theory of the Nation State: The Political Forms of Modernity beyond Methodological Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 2007).

national standards, cultural policy, and spatial planning.<sup>10</sup> The Westphalia Treaty had “acknowledged that boundaries drawn around territory circumscribed a single political and legal unit over which the state had sovereignty. The idea of zonal frontiers between core areas of control was rejected and from then, individuals owed allegiance to a specific territory which linked them to sovereign control.”<sup>11</sup> Constructing precise boundaries was now of paramount importance as their location would determine “for millions of people the language and the ideas which children shall be taught at school, ... the kind of money they shall use, the markets in which they must buy and sell; it determines the national culture with which they shall be identified, the army in which they may be compelled to serve, the soil which they may be called upon to defend with their lives.”<sup>12</sup> The characteristics of the new nation state were boundedness in space (territorial unity) and later population (homogeneity), but unboundedness in time (transgenerationality and permanence guaranteed by symbolic national culture and the education system).<sup>13</sup>

The composition of the population had hardly been important in pre-national states. Before the rise of the nation state, “governments presided over an ordered ethnic diversity, and no one supposed that uniformity was desirable or that assimilation to a common style of life or pattern of culture was either normal or possible.”<sup>14</sup> In this first stage of the nation-state system, if homogenization of the population had emerged, this had been a functional necessity and was not necessarily engineered from above by political elites.<sup>15</sup> According to this interpretation, the economic viability of industrialized societies had required a single national culture: homogeneity was a functional requisite of economic life.<sup>16</sup> According to another perspective, because

the European states-making process minimised the cultural variation within states and maximised the variation among states within a homogeneous population, ordinary people were more likely to identify with their rulers, communication could run more efficiently, and an innovation that worked well in one segment

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<sup>10</sup> Connie L. McNeely, *Constructing the Nation State: International Organization and Prescriptive Action* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995), pp.1-13.

<sup>11</sup> Ewan W. Anderson, “Geopolitics: International Boundaries as Fighting Places,” in: *Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol.22, no.2-3 (1999), pp.125-36, at p.127.

<sup>12</sup> S. Whittemore Boggs, *International Boundaries* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940), p.5.

<sup>13</sup> Joep Leerssen, *National Thought in Europe: A Cultural History* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007), pp.145-58. The notion of the unity and indivisibility of the nation state has been interpreted in various ways, from power-based explanations of sovereignty to the transfer of religious values: just as God was indivisible according to monotheistic doctrines, now the nation was ‘une et indivisible’. Monica Duffy Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Violence: Identity, Interests, and the Indivisibility of Territory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), pp.17-33.

<sup>14</sup> William H. McNeill, *Polyethnicity and National Unity in World History* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1986), p.16.

<sup>15</sup> For a dissenting view see: Anthony W. Marx, *Faith in Nation: Exclusionary Origins of Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp.143-64.

<sup>16</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), pp.39, 52.

was likely to work elsewhere as well. People who sensed a common origin, furthermore, were more likely to unite against external threats. Spain, France, and other large states recurrently homogenised by giving religious minorities – especially Muslims and Jews – the choice between conversion and emigration.<sup>17</sup>

Slowly, the contours of modern nationalist homogenization began to emerge. As the principle of sovereignty shifted from dynasties into nations, the structure, formation, and character of populations now came to matter for the functioning of the nation state. Homogenization became an ideal, a model, and a policy.

For centuries after Westphalia, nationalism was still an elite phenomenon, but during the nineteenth century in Europe it spread widely and became popularized among different classes as well as peoples. The system expanded to the world through colonization, imposition, imitation, and domino effects as nationalist elites in multi-ethnic empires and in colonies learned from the European example.<sup>18</sup> Within multi-ethnic empires, ethnic groups were now ‘discovered’ by competing nationalisms as populations to function as the nation. New nation states were established and ultimately, state formation came to be limited to one type of group: nations. This process gave birth to the second stage of the nation-state system, when it spread to the rest of Europe and Asia, roughly from the end of the First World War to the end of the Second World War.<sup>19</sup> Between 1918 and 1945, the great multi-ethnic dynastic land empires (Habsburg, Ottoman, and Russian) collapsed and their territories were replaced by new, nationalist orders, and colonial sea empires gained strength. In this era, nationalism was produced by elites and received by populations. The stock of existing ideas and sentiments among various groups interacted with nationalist ideas, rejecting them, displacing older ideas, and re-interpreting them through traditional lenses. Although there was differentiation within the nation-state system, nationalist thought was largely trans-ideological. Leaders across the political spectrum, from Lenin to Woodrow Wilson believed in national self-determination as the basic principle for political legitimacy.<sup>20</sup> This crucial stage marked a dramatic expansion and intensification of the system as both the quantity of states and the quality of their interdependence increased. It saw further integration and weaving together of nation states in institutions such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and

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<sup>17</sup> Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1990* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1990), pp.79, 106-7.

<sup>18</sup> Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

<sup>19</sup> Aviel Roshwald, *Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires: Central Europe, Russia and the Middle East, 1914-1923* (London: Routledge, 2001).

<sup>20</sup> Antonio Cassese, *Self-Determination of Peoples: A Legal Reappraisal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp.11-36.

the League of Nations.<sup>21</sup> Legislative activities within these organizations attempted to lay down requirements and rules of statecraft.<sup>22</sup> This process saw increasing interdependence, isomorphism, and integration between nation states, for example in terms of education, economy, and technology. In this period, more and more nation states engaged in inter-state relations that were increasingly conceived in terms of inter-nation relations, rather than mere inter-state relations.<sup>23</sup>

Territorialization proceeded to play an increasing role in the system. Nationalism is the quintessential set of beliefs that involves the ideological mobilization and appropriation of territory and the struggle for control of land.<sup>24</sup> Rather than an extension of primordial ethnic modes of territorial perception, the dynamics of nationalism warrant the large-scale production and construction of geography and space in terms of the natural property of nations.<sup>25</sup> In this second phase, the nation-state system came to cover most of the space in the world, leaving little room for non-national space. In this process, cartographic knowledge acted as a technology of nationalist world-view through a spatialization of race.<sup>26</sup> The nation state, the product of European nationalism, was a prescriptive and normative idea that projected race onto space, or in the words of George Mosse, “the linking of the human soul with its natural surroundings.”<sup>27</sup> In other words: certain peoples were believed to *belong* in certain territories. That this was an expressedly global process is attested to by the view that “one way of studying the naturalization of nationness is to pursue the international; for underlying all the competing nationalisms of the modern era lies a fundamental vision of the global order itself, a vision of the international.” The global order of nation states brought “the transnational imagining of nation states as a world community or global family”. Spectacles such as the Olympic Games, the Eurovision Song Festival, or the Football World Cup, for

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<sup>21</sup> Frederick S. Northedge, *The League of Nations: Its Life and Times, 1920-1946* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1986); Michel Marbeau, *La Société des Nations* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2001).

<sup>22</sup> Cassese, *Self-Determination of Peoples*, pp.37-162.

<sup>23</sup> Giddens, *The Nation State and Violence*, pp.255-93.

<sup>24</sup> Robert J. Kaiser, “Homeland Making and the Territorialization of National Identity,” in: Daniele Conversi (ed.), *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp.229-47.

<sup>25</sup> Anthony D. Smith & Colin Williams, “The National Construction of Social Space,” in: *Progress in Human Geography*, vol.7, no.4 (1983), pp.502-18; Guntram H. Herb, “National Identity and Territory,” in: Guntram H. Herb and David H. Kaplan (eds.), *Nested Identities: Nationalism, Territory, and Scale* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), pp.9-30.

<sup>26</sup> Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991, transl. Donald Nicholson-Smith), p.111 ff.; Peter J. Taylor & Colin Flint, *Political Geography: World-Economy, Nation State and Locality* (Harlow: Prentice Hall, 2000); Jeremy W. Crampton, “Maps, Race and Foucault: Eugenics and Territorialization Following World War I,” in: Jeremy W. Crampton & Stuart Elden (eds.), *Space, Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), pp.223-44; Liisa Malkki, “The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees,” in: Akhil Gupta & James Ferguson (eds.), *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), pp.52-74.

<sup>27</sup> George Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), p.202.

example, provide a ceremonial arena “for nations to take their place at the table (or on the playing fields) of the family of nations.”<sup>28</sup>

The development of nation states in the second era differed considerably from the more gradual and evolutionary formation of western European states. In this phase the nation state became “a deliberately erected framework” and “an artificial, engineered institutional complex, rather than one that has developed spontaneously by accretion”.<sup>29</sup> Consequently, homogenization in this phase was not simply an unintended outcome of contingent, uncontrollable circumstances, or put more precisely: a long-term, unplanned but directional process. States now pro-actively “worked to homogenize their populations and break down segmentation by imposing common languages, religions, currencies, and legal systems, as well as promoting the construction of connected systems of trade, transportation, and communication”.<sup>30</sup> These processes of homogenization were expressed in phases and shocks of ethnic unmixing, for example when minorities (forcibly or voluntarily) migrated to kin states.<sup>31</sup> For villages, regions, classes, and other groups which stayed in place and continued to identify with their village, region, or class, the organization of a homogeneous national identity “required an immense effort of symbolization, communication and education, to superimpose these extensive identifications on the preceding identifications of kin and proximity.”<sup>32</sup> This era saw immense reorganizations of populations, ranging from forced assimilation to forced migration and genocide, processes of population policies that brought more homogeneity within nation states and increasing congruence to the nation-state system. Although these processes have been studied as autonomous examples of the aspirations of each nation state, the transnational dimension seems to be unmistakable.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Liisa Malkki, “Citizens of Humanity: Internationalism and the Imagined Community of Nations,” *Diaspora*, vol.3, no.1 (1994), pp.41-68, at p.42.

<sup>29</sup> Gianfranco Poggi, *The Development of the Modern State: A Sociological Introduction* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1978), p.95; Jon G. Wagner, “The Rise of the State System: 1914-1950,” in: Roy R. Andersen, Robert F. Seibert & Jon G. Wagner (eds.), *Politics and Change in the Middle East: Sources of Conflict and Accommodation* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1982), pp.74-93.

<sup>30</sup> Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, A.D. 990-1992* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), p.100.

<sup>31</sup> Rogers Brubaker, “Aftermaths of Empire and the Unmixing of Peoples,” in: Karen Barkey & Mark von Hagen (eds.), *After Empire: Multiethnic Societies and Nation-Building: The Soviet Union and the Russian, Ottoman and Habsburg Empires* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), pp.155-80.

<sup>32</sup> Abram de Swaan, “Widening Circles of Identification: Emotional Concerns in Sociogenetic Perspective,” in: *Theory, Culture & Society*, vol.12 (1995), pp.25-39, at p.31; Clifford Geertz, “The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States,” in: Id., *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1973), pp.255-310.

<sup>33</sup> For an early study of these processes see: Stephen P. Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities: Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey* (New York: Macmillan, 1932). For three excellent discussions at a later point in time see: Joseph B. Schechtman, *European Population Transfers, 1939-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946); Id., *Postwar Population Transfers in Europe, 1945-1955* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962); Id., *Population Transfers in Asia* (New York: Hallsby Press, 1949).



The third phase of the nation-state system saw its maturation as the end of alternative orders (colonialism and Communism) heralded an era of post-colonial and post-Communist nationalism, roughly from the end of World War II up to present times. This era saw the rise of the United Nations, the prime international intergovernmental organization of global scope and universal membership, a complex system that serves as the central site for multilateral diplomacy. The nation-state system now had global coverage and was firmly anchored in its most central international institution.<sup>34</sup> The nation-state system was more than the sum of its parts. The UN both symbolically and actively acted as an engine through which this process of nation-state formation was structurally enforced and reinforced, for example in the establishment of Pakistan and India. In this phase, homogenization was a defining quality of the system.<sup>35</sup> Cultural nationalism, for example, now became territorialized as states sought to impose monocultures on their populations, and nationalism, initially emancipatory, assumed racial forms.<sup>36</sup> This phase also witnessed the first systematic criticisms of the darker sides of nationalism.<sup>37</sup>

The evolution of the nation-state system from the first to the second phase was not a teleological process that necessarily led to the third stage. Although this “dynamic of the state system” was drifting in a certain direction (increasing integration as well as increasing homogenization), this process was an unplanned, unintended, and never finished work-in-progress. It has been a blind process, and the nation states of the world, both political elites and populations, have together produced it. The direction of that process is towards more homogenization, although significant trends serve as counterpoints in the process, such as ethnic federalism, transnational migration, and multiple citizenship.

A brief recapitulation of the theory is that the international system of nation states developed from a pre-national global order of states with culturally heterogeneous territories into a self-perpetuating system of nation states which, in continuous interdependence, produces nationalist homogenization by virtue of various forms of population policies. For this study, the conceptual model will function as a backdrop against which the phenomenon of nationalist homogenization in Eastern Turkey will be analyzed. This thesis is a case study of those processes of homogenization.

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<sup>34</sup> Karen A. Mingst & Margaret P. Karns, *The United Nations in the Twenty-First Century* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2006), pp.17-52.

<sup>35</sup> Mark Levene, “The Limits of Tolerance: Nation State Building and What it Means for Minority Groups,” in: *Patterns of Prejudice*, vol.34, no.2 (2000), pp.19-40; Id., *Genocide in the Age of the Nation State* (London: Tauris, 2005), two volumes.

<sup>36</sup> Joep Leerssen, *National Thought in Europe: A Cultural History* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007), p.151.

<sup>37</sup> Walker Connor, “Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying?” in: *World Politics*, vol.24, no.3 (1972), pp.319-55.

## Conceptual explorations

In this study, the two concepts of ‘population policies’ and ‘social engineering’ are central to an understanding of the techniques of nation formation. Therefore, before turning to a synopsis of the literature in the field of Young Turk population policies and social engineering, it is important to unpack these concepts as analytical categories by providing a brief overview of their origins in the relevant literature.

The genesis of the concept of social engineering can be roughly traced to three traditions of scholarly literature: an early twentieth-century one involving the study of any form of behavior control, an interwar one focusing on progressivist state-sponsored policies of societal transformation, and a post-World War II tradition on violent, nationalist interventions in the population. These traditions will be briefly outlined, using key thinkers of each tradition to highlight their main arguments.

The first references to the term social engineering originated in late nineteenth-century discussions by philanthropic industrialists on ‘the social question’ – the social consequences of capitalist industrialization for blue-collar workers. In these debates, arguments were raised that surveillance and control of employees’ behaviour on a group scale would prevent them from striking and would increase production.<sup>38</sup> These ideas were further developed by the American historian William Tolman, who was initially interested in the improvement of social relations between employers and employees, and later in the application of sociological knowledge in labour markets. In a book he wrote in 1909 he defined it as the application of science (most notably social science) in human resource management such as employee registration, education, hygiene, and others.<sup>39</sup> Though these conceptions of social engineering remained vague and were unrelated to later uses, in time they gradually developed, as its agents shifted from being employers to politicians, and its objects from employed staff to the population at large. The trend had been set: modern science was to be applied to engineer human beings rationally on a collective level.

The transition from the first to the second phase was heralded by scholars critical of the power relations between social science and social policy. This tradition was dominated by

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<sup>38</sup> For a relevant study see: David Östlund, *Det sociala kriget och kapitalets ansvar: Social ingenjörskonst mellan affärsintresse och samhällsreform i USA och Sverige 1899-1914* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Stockholm University, 2003). The concerned Dutch manufacturer Van Marken was one of these progressive employers, struggling for the rights of employees. In his vision of what he called “the social task of employers”, the latter were responsible for establishing social institutions for their staff. As such, he argued, powerful industrialists were “social engineers”. Jacob C. van Marken, “Sociale ingenieurs,” in: *Delftsche Corps-Almanak* (1894), pp.155-70.

<sup>39</sup> William H. Tolman, *Social Engineering* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1909).

political and social scientists interested in exploring the function of their science.<sup>40</sup> These scholars especially concerned with “the role of applied social science in the formation of policy”,<sup>41</sup> and efforts of improving society as “social doctors”.<sup>42</sup> This was the age of progressivism, during which social science was applied as a scientific and therefore sacred means to reshape society. Now, political elites saw the population over which they wielded power as raw material to shape and craft as they saw fit. At this point, political thinking became influenced by scientism, viewed as suitable for steering intrastate politics.<sup>43</sup> According to Ian Hacking, throughout the nineteenth century rationalization was accompanied by the production of a wealth of statistical data by state bureaucracies across Europe. Experts, concerned to fashion order and legibility, collected and systematized numerical material about all aspects of society, including manufacturing, trade, health, religion, and ethnicity.<sup>44</sup> The rise of the modern population census was vital for the planning of any society, often along ideological lines.<sup>45</sup> In the age of nationalism, ultimately these categories often served to engineer perfect societies through scientific population policies.

In the early twentieth century, many countries ventured into experimenting with social engineering. In the China of the 1930s, social science was mobilized to engineer rationally a new society. This was “a movement toward an empirical study of society in order to control the social, political, and economic forces at work”, and reflected “a belief in the technocratic potentials of the social sciences.”<sup>46</sup> But in the United States as well, expert bureaus and institutes for social and economic research (such as the Social Science Research Council) were established in a concerted effort to engineer a new society, governed through rational, objective, problem-solving, scientific method and by value-free social scientists. The means rather than the ends defined politics in this age. One author suggests that influential American elites were deeply affected by the scientism of that age and by its overweening presumptions that most aspects of human life could best be apprehended by rational calculus and

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<sup>40</sup> M.F. Ashley Montagu, “Anthropology and Social Engineering,” in: *American Anthropologist*, vol.48, no.4, pt.1 (1946), pp.666-7.

<sup>41</sup> Philip M. Hauser, “Social Science and Social Engineering,” in: *Philosophy of Science*, vol.16, no.3 (1949), pp.209-18, at p.209.

<sup>42</sup> Joseph S. Davis, “Statistics and Social Engineering,” in: *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, vol.32, no.197 (1937), pp.1-7, at p.3; Clarence Case, “Technocracy and Social Engineering,” in: *Sociology and Social Research* (1932), pp.331-46.

<sup>43</sup> Fred Eidlin and Richard Appelbaum, *Social Science, Social Engineering, and Public Policy* (Chicago, IL: American Political Science Association Proceedings, 1983).

<sup>44</sup> Ian Hacking, *The Taming of Chance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Id., “Biopower and the Avalanche of Printed Numbers,” in: *Humanities in Society*, vol.5, nos.3-4 (1982), pp.279-95.

<sup>45</sup> Marc Ventresca, *Counting People when People Count: Global Establishment of the Modern Population Census, 1820-1980* (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, Department of Sociology, 1995).

<sup>46</sup> Yung-chen Chiang, *Social Engineering and the Social Sciences in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p.1.

investigation. Social reform was a duty as society was discovered by social scientists, to whom “the promise of applied science could be so awe-inspiring that reformers sought to apply the lessons and principles of engineering to the ruling of America itself.”<sup>47</sup> Another author argues that government officials, deeply committed to a vision of the engineered future, believed that World War I offered an unparalleled opportunity to instill a variety of ‘progressive’ values into untold numbers of men in an effort to build a national community that was “morally healthy”. The American government thus attempted to create a homogeneous national culture through the use of education, recreation, and repression at the many military training camps dotted across the country during the war.<sup>48</sup>

The noted sociologist Karl Mannheim was one of the first to reinterpret the concept in his work as the relationship between social theory and political practice.<sup>49</sup> He wrote, “Planning is the reconstruction of an historically developed society into a unity which is regulated more and more perfectly by mankind from certain central positions”.<sup>50</sup> Later he developed his thesis and introduced the term ‘social techniques’, which he defined as “the sum of those methods which aim at influencing human behaviour and which, when in the hands of the Government, act as an especially powerful means of social control.” According to Mannheim, these techniques were generally applied by totalitarian dictatorships, and allowed “the exertion of an influence which penetrates into our private lives”.<sup>51</sup> His colleague sociologist Karl Popper also studied social engineering by framing it in a two-volume criticism of ancient and modern enemies of democracy. Writing during an unimaginably destructive world war, he ascribed agency to the concept social engineering, thereby giving it a face: “The social engineer believes that man is the master of his own destiny, and that in accordance with our aims we can influence or change the history of man just as we changed the face of the earth”.<sup>52</sup> Popper distinguished between “piecemeal social engineering” and “utopian social engineering”, criticizing the latter for envisioning the total reorganization of societies based on intransigent ideological convictions.<sup>53</sup> The research trend had now explicitly veered towards criticizing these type of exercises of power. It is important to note

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<sup>47</sup> John M. Jordan, *Machine-age Ideology: Social Engineering and American Liberalism, 1911-1939* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), p.3; John F. McClymer, *The Emergence of Social Engineering in America, 1890-1925* (Stony Brook: State University of New York microfilm, 1974).

<sup>48</sup> Nancy K. Bristow, *Making Men Moral: Social Engineering During the Great War* (New York: New York University Press, 1996).

<sup>49</sup> Karl Mannheim, *Ideologie und Utopie* (Bonn: Cohen, 1929), pp.67-77.

<sup>50</sup> Karl Mannheim, *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction: Studies in Modern Social Structure* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1940), p.193.

<sup>51</sup> Karl Mannheim, *Diagnosis of Our Time: Wartime Essays of a Sociologist* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1943), pp.1-2.

<sup>52</sup> Karl Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies* (London: Routledge, 1945), vol. I: *The Spell of Plato*, p.17.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, chapter 9.

here that although sociology may have given birth to social engineering, it also provided the critique.

One of the most eloquent texts on social engineering was formulated by James Scott in a cogent but in many ways unfinished argument. Adopting Popper's notion of "utopian social engineering", Scott defined social engineering as born out of 'high modernism', the aspiration to "rationally engineer all aspects of social life in order to improve the human condition." Social engineering entails legibility and calculability of both the physical and the human aspects of society, thereby disregarding and eradicating local knowledge, which he called *mētis*. He detected four key components of legibility: the administrative ordering of nature and society; a high-modernist ideology; an authoritarian, activist state; and a prostrate civil society, unable to resist these policies.<sup>54</sup> Scott provided examples of social engineering in Germany, Brazil, France, China, Tanzania, India, Ethiopia, and Mozambique, involving a range of policies, from urban architecture to forestry planning, and from agricultural collectivization to deportation and rural settlement. One of the countries he analyzed was the Soviet Union. Here, perhaps more than anywhere else, social engineering was as massive as it was violent. According to Amir Weiner, there, it involved a "comprehensive plan for the transformation and management of society, one that would create a better, purer, and more beautiful community through the removal of unfit human weeds."<sup>55</sup>

When the study of social engineering entered its third phase, its scholars were influenced by the previous traditions. The focus of the research had shifted towards the more malign manifestations of population policies as scholars recognized that coercion, if not outright violence, was often at the heart of these policies. Psychologist Stephen Pinker defined social engineering as "the desire to remake humanity by coercive means," informed and inspired by "the belief that humanity advances through a struggle in which superior groups (race or classes) triumph over inferior ones."<sup>56</sup> No discussion of this phase of social engineering can ignore the indispensable contribution made by Michel Foucault, who never used the term social engineering, rather coining the terms 'governmentality', 'biopolitics', and 'biopower'. He nevertheless defined biopower as "numerous and diverse techniques for

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<sup>54</sup> James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), pp.4-5, 88.

<sup>55</sup> Amir Weiner, "Nature, Nurture, and Memory in a Socialist Utopia: Delineating the Soviet Socio-Ethnic Body in the Age of Socialism," in: *The American Historical Review*, vol.104 (1999), pp.1114-55; Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).

<sup>56</sup> Steve Sailer, "Q&A: Steven Pinker of 'Blank Slate,'" in: *UPI National Correspondent*, 30 October 2002.

achieving the subjugations of bodies and the control of populations.”<sup>57</sup> For Foucault, social engineering consisted of technologies of population policies.

This was precisely what was at stake in the discussion on social engineering: the population. In a comparative study Maria Quine argued that the discipline of demography rendered the population the focus of social engineering policies: “society became a laboratory and the body a battleground for would-be planners urging politicians to intervene directly in the evolutionary process.” These statesmen shared a belief “that the state should intervene in the private sphere in order to promote desirable biological and social change”, for example “to murder en masse the racially unsound.”<sup>58</sup> Although Fascist Italy’s nationalist population policies were an archetypical example of social engineering,<sup>59</sup> the zenith of social engineering in the twentieth century was reached in Nazi grand schemes scientifically to “Germanize” (*Germanisieren*) Central and Eastern Europe. The science that was to inform the Generalplan Ost was Nazi science, an idiosyncratic amalgam of demography, anthropology, economics, biology, sociology, and geopolitics. Götz Aly and Susanne Heim studied this gigantic social engineering policy during World War II, focusing on how the distinct ideological imprint in Nazi policies

combined racial, population and structural policy in a comprehensive and unified concept for ‘German reconstruction in the East’. The simplest and cheapest ‘solution’ was a population policy that was as deliberate as it was brutal. Founded on the racist norms of National Socialist society, it developed these into a practical instrument of social engineering. The resettlement of whole population groups created freedom of movement for the realization of vast projects, allowed the necessary funding to be ‘released’ and cleared the way for the attempted construction, by force and at the expense of other people, of a society that was to be a model of efficiency in its social and economic organization and infrastructure.<sup>60</sup>

In other words, destruction and construction were intricate parts of Nazi social engineering. Although Aly and Heim may give disproportionate prominence to the role of economic factors, theirs is an empirical study of one of the most violent episodes of social engineering in modern history. Zygmunt Bauman, in his thought-provoking *Modernity and the Holocaust*, provided more analysis to this thesis, advancing the argument that one can explain the Holocaust out of this modernist ethos. His definition of social engineering included the terms,

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<sup>57</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (New York: Vintage Books, 1980), vol.1, p.140.

<sup>58</sup> Maria Sophia Quine, *Population Policies in Twentieth-Century Europe: Fascist Dictatorships and Liberal Democracies* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp.14-5, 132.

<sup>59</sup> See e.g. David G. Horn, *Social Bodies: Science, Reproduction, and Italian Modernity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).

<sup>60</sup> Götz Aly & Suzanne Heim, *Architects of Annihilation: Auschwitz and the Logic of Destruction* (London: Phoenix, 2003), p.74.

perfection and utopia, therefore building on Popper's formulation: "policies meant to bring about a social order conforming to the design of the perfect society." This perfect society is a garden in which discordant social groups are "weeds" that must be destroyed, "not so much because of what they are, as because of what the beautiful, orderly garden ought to be". This is an inclusive as well as exclusive process captured by the term "creative destruction".<sup>61</sup> Finally, Donald Bloxham offered a recent definition that is concise and pointed. For him, social engineering and population policies are interchangeable concepts, "a series of coercive state measures in pursuit of population homogeneity".<sup>62</sup>

Homogenization of nation states is pursued by means of a range of strategies extending from the least coerced policies such as gradual integration to massively violent ones including genocide. Heather Rae provides a detailed analysis for nationalist homogenization in the modern system of sovereign, identity-based states. She argues that whereas processes of nation-state formation may have developed autonomously in Western Europe, in many other cases across the globe, political elites actively pursued policies of "pathological homogenization".<sup>63</sup> Although her study exclusively focuses on nationalist social engineering, it manages to communicate convincing arguments about the nature of population policies. Milica Zarkovic Bookman introduces a helpful taxonomy of strategies of nationalist social engineering and connects social engineering to nationalist policies of augmenting one ethnic group's societal and political power vis-à-vis its rivals by engineering the demographic increase of the in-group and demographic decrease of the out-group(s). According to her analysis, six strategies of social engineering stand out for their prevalence and relevance. These include: 1) tampering with census numbers; 2) pro- and anti-natalist policies to raise the birth rate relative to that of perceived opponents; 3) assimilation of targeted groups into one's own cultural identity; 4) forced population movement to dilute the proportion of undesirable elements in particular areas; 5) boundary alterations to tilt certain subnational units' numerical balances in their own favor, or outright irredentism; and 6) economic and political pressures and incentives to make certain group members feel inclined to leave the country.<sup>64</sup> Finally, one can suggest that in the most extreme case, genocidal destruction is the most violent (and least deployed) of all these possible strategies of population policies.

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<sup>61</sup> Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Oxford: Polity, 1989), p.91. For further analyses see: Tilman Schiel, "Modernity, Ambivalence and the Gardening State," in: *Thesis Eleven*, vol.83 (2005), pp.78-89; Matt Szabo, "Managerial Ecology: Zygmunt Bauman and the Gardening Culture of Modernity," in: *Environments*, vol.30, no.3 (2002), pp.55-70.

<sup>62</sup> Donald Bloxham, *Genocide, the World Wars and the Unweaving of Europe* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2008), p.101.

<sup>63</sup> Heather Rae, *State Identities and the Homogenisation of Peoples* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

<sup>64</sup> Milica Zarkovic Bookman, *The Demographic Struggle for Power: The Political Economy of Demographic Engineering in the Modern World* (London: Frank Cass, 1997). For a study emphasizing deportation as the main form of demographic

## **Problematization**

How was Eastern Turkey molded by Young Turk population policies? How did the Turkish nation come into being? Why was the Turkish process of nation formation so violent? Why do political elites launch policies to increase homogeneity in their societies? How effective are these policies? These will be the guiding questions in this study. The common denominator to which the chapters in this study can be reduced to is the main theme of population policies. There follows a synopsis of the main discussions in the field of Young Turk population policies that will provide the outlines of an emerging academic literature on this subject.

The Ottoman Empire and its successors, including Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey, have not remained immune to the era of population policies and social engineering. Especially after 1912, two consecutive regimes manned by a generation of Young Turks persisted in launching processes of population policies on Ottoman society, most specifically on particular ethnic groups and particular regions. Sociologically, these events were constituents of the ‘dark side’ of the Turkish process of nation formation, during which the moral and physical exclusion of minorities was a defining feature. Altogether, the violence and counterviolence cost millions of people their lives. Listed and studied in isolated fashion, the various campaigns of violence may seem incidental and singular events, sudden explosions neatly encapsulated in time and space. But a more systematic examination reveals clear ideological, motivational, and organic links and interdependencies between them. Given the status quo of isolated case studies, contextualization seems required. It is an aim of this study to pull these scattered events together in order to problematize them and to consider what can be posited about any possible bigger picture. Observed coherence between different types of population policies may be useful to an understanding of the whole.

Turkish-nationalist social engineering consisted of a broad scope of policies ranging from marginalization, isolation, incarceration, border alteration, deportation, forced assimilation, and population exchange, through to outright indiscriminate massacre, and in the most extreme case, fully fledged genocidal destruction. The fate of the victims depended on their perceived ethnic and political distance from the newly proclaimed Turkish national identity, as well as on the contingency of war or international politics. The nationalist mindset of Young Turk social engineers allowed them to disregard feedback from the population so that ethnicity was equated with loyalty. Thus, for example, loyal Christian Armenian

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engineering see: John McGarry, “‘Demographic Engineering’: The State-Directed Movement of Ethnic Groups as a Technique of Conflict Regulation,” in: *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 21, no.4 (1998), pp.613-38.



government employees were doomed to be excluded, whereas tax-evading Muslim Turkish peasants were categorized into this new identity. Others, such as Muslim Kurds or Sephardic Jews, were considered slightly more ‘Turkifiable’ than others, albeit ambiguously. Much of this was carried out with little regard for proclaimed and real loyalties. Once these processes of persecution escalated, points of no return were reached fast enough to erase millions from their ancestral lands in just years.

What is the sum to date of research on Young Turk social engineering? It is not widely contested that the establishment of nation states in the post-Ottoman territories was a long and arduous process in modern history, marking the transformation of a multi-ethnic empire into nation states set upon homogenizing their populations. Students of Young Turk social engineering have established that in Turkey encompassing campaigns of homogenization were carried out by a generation of politicians, who managed to maintain power and persisted in implementing plans of demographic homogenization, carried out under the banner of nation building. The following paragraphs will summarize the main debates on Young Turk social engineering, utilizing key studies and seeking to patch them together to contribute to an integrated perspective of this small but burgeoning field.

In an early article Mark Levene argued that once the Western ideology of nationalism percolated into Ottoman politics, it was only a matter of time before ‘Eastern Anatolia’ became a laboratory for nationalist visions of the future. When the Young Turks gained the upper hand in the region, the violent process of nation formation they launched came to engulf a mosaic of victims.<sup>65</sup> Hilmar Kaiser deepened this notion and demonstrated in pioneering research that the treatment of the Armenians and Syriacs and the deportation of Kurds and Greeks were integral parts of the Young Turk policy of social engineering. Arguing that this scheme envisioned the cultural assimilation of Muslims and exclusion of non-Muslims, he drew a parallel with wartime Nazi policies in Eastern Europe by aptly titling the project as ‘Generalplan Ost 1915’.<sup>66</sup> Further aspects of these deportation and settlement policies were catalogued by Fuat Dündar, who emphasized the precision of the Young Turk administration of ethnonationalist homogenization.<sup>67</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser’s authoritative study

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<sup>65</sup> Mark Levene, “Creating a Modern ‘Zone of Genocide’: The Impact of Nation- and State-Formation on Eastern Anatolia, 1878-1923,” in: *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, vol.12, no.3 (1998), pp.393-433.

<sup>66</sup> Fikret Adanır & Hilmar Kaiser, “Migration, Deportation, and Nation-Building: The Case of the Ottoman Empire,” in: René Leboutte (ed.), *Migrations et migrants dans une perspective historique: permanences et innovations* (Florence: European University Institute, 2000), pp.273-92; Hilmar Kaiser, “The Ottoman Government and the End of the Ottoman Social Formation, 1915-1917,” paper presented at the conference *Der Völkermord an den Armeniern und die Shoah*, University of Zürich, 7 November 2001, at: <<http://www.hist.net/kieser/ahet/Essays/EssayKaiser.html>>.

<sup>67</sup> Fuat Dündar, *İttihat ve Terakki’nin Müslümanları İskân Politikası (1913-1918)* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2001); Id., *Modern Türkiye’nin Şifresi: İttihat ve Terakki’nin Etnisite Mühendisliği (1913-1918)* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2008).

*Der verpasste Friede* described many aspects and detailed histories of CUP social engineering. It rightly emphasized that the homogenizing efforts between 1913 and 1938 could be seen as nation-state policies on an imperial scale.<sup>68</sup> In a later article Kieser made the persuasive argument that in the Young Turk era the notion of ‘modernity’ became a discourse legitimizing the use of state violence.<sup>69</sup> Beyond descriptive studies of the violence itself, Hamit Bozarslan’s work minutely analyzed many aspects of Young Turk violence, periodizing broadly and cutting through the mystifying barrier of 1923. His studies catalogued how the Young Turk political elite apprehended the nature and meaning of its violent policies.<sup>70</sup> These were the first instances in which the debate on Young Turk social engineering was taken seriously as an autonomous and legitimate field of study and expertise.

Periodization remains a far from settled issue. In an account of the Turkish nation-building process, Taner Akçam traced its key aspects and linked it to the forced Turkification of Anatolia up to the establishment of the Republic. According to this interpretation, the Armenian genocide was a constituent aspect, as well as the apex, of this long and violent process.<sup>71</sup> Others have periodized social engineering from 1923 on. In an extensive volume describing the anti-Jewish measures and policies of the Kemalist regime, Rıfat Bali has pointed out that although the Ottoman Jews may have never been targeted genocidally, neither were they ever to be included in the Turkish nation. His study described how during the Kemalist era the Turkish Jews were targeted for linguistic assimilation and economic and administrative exclusion.<sup>72</sup> An alternative interpretation was offered by Ayhan Aktar, who argued that no Muslim ethnic group was considered to be a minority. According to Aktar, the Kemalists excluded Armenians, Greeks, and Jews from society through economic Turkification, isolation, and expulsion, due to the political essentialization of these groups by the Young Turk elite.<sup>73</sup> Finally, the expulsion and exodus of surviving and remaining Armenians from the eastern provinces have been thoroughly treated by Berna Pekesen and Vahé Tachjian.<sup>74</sup> During the Young Turk era, for many of these ‘non-Turkifiable’ minority groups, ethnicity was often equated with loyalty.

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<sup>68</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Der verpasste Friede: Mission, Ethnie und Staat in den Ostprovinzen der Türkei 1839-1938* (Zürich: Chronos, 2000).

<sup>69</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser, “Modernisierung und Gewalt in der Gründungsepoche des türkischen Nationalstaats (1913-1938),” in: *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*, vol.57, no.3 (2006), pp.156-67.

<sup>70</sup> Hamit Bozarslan, “Vocabulaire politique de la violence: l’exemple jeune turc,” in: François Georgeon & Etienne Copeaux (eds.), *Les mots du politique de l’Empire ottoman à la Turquie kémaliste* (Paris: CHDT, 1999), pp.45-54; Id., “Structures du pouvoir, coercition et violence en Turquie républicaine,” in: Semih Vaner (ed.), *La Turquie* (Paris: Fayard, 2005), pp.225-49.

<sup>71</sup> Taner Akçam, *Türk Ulusal Kimliği ve Ermeni Sorunu* (Istanbul: Su, 2001), pp.49-147, 161-74.

<sup>72</sup> Rıfat Bali, *Bir Türkleştirme Serüveni 1923-1945: Cumhuriyet Yıllarında Türkiye Yahudileri* (Istanbul: İletişim, 1999).

<sup>73</sup> Ayhan Aktar, *Varlık vergisi ve ‘Türkleştirme’ politikaları* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2000), pp.101-34.

<sup>74</sup> Berna Pekesen, “The Exodus of Armenians from the Sanjak of Alexandretta in the 1930s,” in: Hans-Lukas Kieser (ed.), *Turkey Beyond Nationalism: Towards Post-Nationalist Identities* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006), pp.57-73; Vahé Tachjian,

Some scholars have rightly pointed to the variegated nature of Young Turk social engineering, involving not only a human cost, but also the reorganization of space. For example, Erol Ülker wrote, “Turkification was a project of nation-building, aiming to keep the unity of the empire under the domination of a Turkish national core.” Mildly glossing over the destruction of Ottoman Armenians and Ottoman Syrians,<sup>75</sup> as well as the formative influence of these events for the infrastructure of the envisioned Turkified state, Ülker maintained that the CUP had ‘Anatolia’ incorporate ‘Kurdistan’ as a form of nationalist geopolitics.<sup>76</sup> A similar approach was adopted in a comprehensive analysis of Turkish-nationalist social engineering using the local example of Urfa by Kerem Öktem. He interpreted social engineering as a double-edged sword, involving the exclusion of non-Turkish people but the nationalist incorporation of their space, such as churches, schools, and other buildings.<sup>77</sup> In his detailed study of the Armenian genocide, Donald Bloxham nuanced and complicated the image of clear-cut categories of perpetrators and victims in the post-genocidal period. He, too, extended the chronological reach forwards, confronting a series of episodes of violent population policies in Eastern Turkey.<sup>78</sup> Utilizing Republican archival material, Soner Çağaptay traced the roots of nation formation in the Turkish Republic to the *millet* system with its established categories of people. According to him, potential Turks could only become Turks after a process of filtration, involving a full identity change.<sup>79</sup> Finally, in a recent article Nesim Şeker has discussed the deportation of the Ottoman Armenians as a “radical shift in the management of ethnic conflict from an imperial tradition to one peculiar to nation state formation”, and recognized that only proactive decisions by political elites could bring forth massive processes such as the Armenian genocide.<sup>80</sup>

These works constitute a sophisticated and impressive corpus of research literature on the subject, and should not be easily dismissed as drops in the ocean. Considering the reluctance of scholars to work dedicatedly on these themes, these studies have gone some way

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“Expulsion of the Armenian Survivors of Diyarbekir and Urfa, 1923-1930,” in: Richard G. Hovannisian (ed.), *Armenian Tigranakert/Diarbekir and Edessa/Urfa* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda, 2006), pp.519-38.

<sup>75</sup> The latter is analyzed in great detail in: David Gaunt, *Massacres, Resistance, Protectors: Muslim-Christian Relations in Eastern Anatolia during World War I* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2006).

<sup>76</sup> Erol Ülker, “Contextualising ‘Turkification’: Nation-Building in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1908-18,” in: *Nations and Nationalism*, vol.11, no.4 (2005), pp.613-36; Id., “Assimilation of the Muslim Communities in the First Decade of the Turkish Republic (1923-1934),” in: *European Journal of Turkish Studies* (2007), <http://www.ejts.org/document822.html>.

<sup>77</sup> Kerem Öktem, “Incorporating the Time and Space of the Ethnic ‘Other’: Nationalism and Space in Southeast Turkey in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries,” in: *Nations and Nationalism*, vol.10, no.4 (2004), pp.559-78.

<sup>78</sup> Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), in particular pp.97-111; Id., *Genocide, the World Wars and the Unweaving of Europe* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2008).

<sup>79</sup> Soner Çağaptay, *Islam, Secularism and Nationalism in Modern Turkey: Who is a Turk?* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006).

<sup>80</sup> Nesim Şeker, “Demographic Engineering in the Late Ottoman Empire and the Armenians,” in: *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol.43, no.3 (2007), pp.461-74, at p.471.

to assuaging the thirst of students of Young Turk population policies. One can synthesize from the foregoing that although research on this theme is developing rapidly, at present it still lacks many elements. Some of the research avenues open for exploration include themes such as the positioning of the Armenian genocide within the larger framework of Young Turk social engineering. The treatment and experiences of less well studied minorities such as Syriacs, Circassians, Pontian Greeks, Kizilbash, and Yezidis still await more investigation. Another issue is the problem of the longitudinal perspectives of structural continuities in forms and appearances of violence. The field also suffers from a dire lack of purely empirical studies of specific locations or regions. A final, pivotal aspect of the subject is the economic motives and consequences of the persecutions, largely ignored by scholars who have studied this sensitive topic.<sup>81</sup>

## Method

This study can be located in the field of historical sociology, the comparative and theoretical study of human societies. Historical sociology attempts to pursue four lines of inquiry: social criticism, pattern identification, scope extension, and process analysis.<sup>82</sup> The present study is a combination of process analysis and pattern identification that together form a sociologically informed history. Process analysis identifies causal mechanisms of broad scope as well as conditions that affect activation, interaction, and outcomes of those mechanisms. It tries to determine how, why, and under what conditions certain processes (in our case population policies) have developed. Reconstructing these processes by which societies change engages historical sociologists in looking simultaneously at organizational settings, individual biographies, interpersonal networks, contested bodies of thought, and connections among all of them.<sup>83</sup> From this particular lens, this is not an expressively bottom-up or top-down study, or feminist, subaltern or deconstructivist study. It does not exclusively feature chronologies of decision-making processes in power centers based on primary sources, nor present narratives

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<sup>81</sup> Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de "Milli İktisat" 1908-1918* (Ankara: Yurt, 1982) largely dodges the thorny question of the wartime confiscations of Armenians. Cf.: Hilmar Kaiser, "Armenian Property, Ottoman Law and Nationality Policies during the Armenian Genocide, 1915-1916," in: Olaf Farschid, Manfred Kropp & Stephan Dähne (eds.), *The First World War as Remembered in the Countries of the Eastern Mediterranean* (Beirut: Orient-Institut, 2006), pp.49-71; Bedross Der Matossian, "From Confiscation to Appropriation: Historical Continuity and the Destruction of the 'Armenian Economy' in the Ottoman Empire," in: *The Armenian Weekly*, vol.73, no.16 (24 April 2007), pp.22-3, 27.

<sup>82</sup> Charles Tilly, "Historical Sociology," in: *International Encyclopedia of the Behavioral and Social Sciences* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2001), vol.10, 6753-7; Stephen A. Kent, "Historical Sociology," in: Edgar F. Borgatta & Rhonda J.V. Montgomery (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Sociology* (New York: Macmillan, 2000), vol.2, pp.1195-1202.

<sup>83</sup> Peter Hedström & Richard Swedberg (eds.), *Social Mechanisms: An Analytical Approach to Social Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Norbert Elias, "Zur Grundlegung einer Theorie sozialer Prozesse," in: *Zeitschrift für Soziologie*, vol.6 (1977), pp.127-49.

of the lived experiences of the people based on oral histories. Rather it sets out to trace policies and processes in their relative integration and comprehensiveness.

Pattern identification is the search for recurrent structures and sequences across time and space. This methodology assumes that causally independent, particular historical episodes that may seem unique in fact do not only spring from a common historical source, but also resemble each other as they follow common principles, abstracted from time and place.<sup>84</sup> It is a secondary, more modest aim of this study that its outcomes will serve for future studies focusing more on pattern identification, by comparing how processes of population policies repeat themselves in essentially the same form in other societies as well. Thus, theory will function as a framework guiding narrative and analysis, but theory formation will not be the prime objective of this study. Other disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, political science, and history will be raided, and an eclectic mixture of their methods used: theory, oral history, and archival investigation.

A large part of this study will focus on mass violence, the study of which is problematic for various reasons. Three issues in particular beset the study of mass violence, involvement and detachment being a starting point. The tension between involvement and detachment as a general problem in the academy has been dealt with at some length,<sup>85</sup> and the study of violence is particularly problematic from this point of view. Many people find the topic intrinsically repulsive, and many react with strongly condemnatory emotions. Though a certain amount of passion and involvement can determine a student's or scholar's choice for this topic, it requires a great deal of detachment to sift through multitudes of documents and memoirs detailing very intimate details of killing. The suicide of Iris Chang, reportedly suffering depression whilst doing research on Japanese war crimes in China, may have been an extreme example of personal involvement,<sup>86</sup> but even a seasoned researcher such as Robert J. Lifton could confess in the introduction to his book *The Nazi Doctors* that, during the research process, he had "nightmares about Auschwitz, sometimes involving my wife and children."<sup>87</sup> In the preface to his volume *The Dark Side of Democracy*, Michael Mann, too, thanks his friends and family for keeping him "sane amid such a disturbing research

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<sup>84</sup> Ton Zwaan, *Civilisering en Decivilisering: Studies over Staatsvorming en Geweld, Nationalisme en Vervolgung* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2001), pp.19-36.

<sup>85</sup> Norbert Elias, "Problems of Involvement and Detachment," in: *British Journal of Sociology*, vol.7, no.3 (1956), pp.226-52; Lewis A. Coser, "Social Involvement or Scientific Detachment: The Sociologist's Dilemma," in: *The Antioch Review*, vol.28, no.1 (1968), pp.108-13.

<sup>86</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 20 November 2004.

<sup>87</sup> Robert J. Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide* (New York: Basic, 1986), p.12.

project”.<sup>88</sup> All in all, intensive research on violence can be straining when emotionally involved, and detachment remains important.

Second, practical difficulties hinder the study of mass violence. The practices of genocidal violence demonstrate that even in highly bureaucratic and strictly formal situations, orders for killing are rarely passed down in written form. Most often, major decisions are taken orally and secretly, generating a paucity of key documents to work on. Even in cases where a wealth of material exists, historians rarely stumble over explicit formulations.<sup>89</sup> Social scientists face problems of another nature: for them it is practically impossible to carry out experiments involving violence. It would be a breach of the ethical assumptions of voluntary participation and inflicting no harm to subjects to gauge respondents’ physical and psychological reactions, for example in an experiment during which they would physically injure or even actually kill other human beings in a role-playing game.<sup>90</sup> Some social scientists have used substitute methods for research on matters related to violence,<sup>91</sup> whereas in group situations real-life simulations have been illuminating but controversial.<sup>92</sup>

Robert Hayden pointed out that “genocide has been a tool for building a number of nation states that are now honorable members of the world community”.<sup>93</sup> This brings us to the third problem: the politicization of especially the term ‘genocide’, due to the identity politics of certain states. Political violence is politically very sensitive. This tautology manifests itself when governments discontented with scholars searching for ‘skeletons in the closet’ deny access to archival collections and libraries, or prohibit them from conducting field work. The opposite situation is also possible: governments may try to foster or manipulate research by funding politically useful research, by pushing for the establishment of academic chairs at home or abroad, or by offering scholarships.<sup>94</sup> This dense political and moral field has affected how scholars have approached the Young Turks. Compared to other violent dictatorships in the first half of the twentieth century, such as Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, or the Soviet Union, the assessment of the Young Turk regime has been relatively mild.

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<sup>88</sup> Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p.X.

<sup>89</sup> Israel W. Charny, “The Study of Genocide,” in: Israel W. Charny (ed.), *Genocide: A Critical Bibliographic Review* (London: Mansell, 1988), pp.1-19.

<sup>90</sup> John M. Darley, “Methods for the Study of Evil-Doing Actions,” in: *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, vol.3, no.3 (1999), pp.269-75.

<sup>91</sup> Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974).

<sup>92</sup> Philip Zimbardo, *The Lucifer Effect: How Good People Turn Evil* (London: Rider, 2007).

<sup>93</sup> Robert M. Hayden, “Schindler’s Fate: Genocide, Ethnic Cleansing, and Population Transfers,” in: *Slavic Review*, vol.55, no.4 (1996), pp.727-48, at p.732.

<sup>94</sup> Examples are both the Turkish and the Armenian governments’ manipulation of research on the Armenian Genocide, Israel’s sacralization and monopolization of Jewish victimhood in the Holocaust and Iran’s willingness to sponsor Holocaust denial, the Ukrainian parliament’s official declaration of the 1932-33 famine as genocide, and the Rwandan government’s exclusion of Hutus from the category of Rwandan genocide victims.

Once the Young Turk dictatorship had consolidated its position as the legitimate regime of a sovereign nation state, in international politics it could count on positive appreciation by many European countries. This thesis that the Young Turk leadership was naïve, benevolent, and relatively powerless in the face of overwhelming circumstances, a myth summarily dismissed by Kieser,<sup>95</sup> is a lingering and ill-recognized legacy of the Young Turk era that haunts the field. In the face of the voluminous, sophisticated, and growing body of literature on other dictatorial regimes of the first half of the twentieth century,<sup>96</sup> research on Young Turk social engineering took off relatively late and is struggling with many challenges. The study of mass violence is one of these challenges. Unlike violence in modern German history, mass violence in Turkey in the first half of the twentieth century remains remarkably underresearched, both in Ottoman-Turkish studies and in genocide studies in general.<sup>97</sup> The reluctance to study violence stems partly from Turkey's "special" place in world politics as a loyal ally of the West during and after the Cold War. The study of violence and various episodes of expulsions in the (post-)Ottoman era has not yet been able to wrest itself from the dense moral field and reach a sense of normality that reigns in discussions on mass violence under Nazism or Stalinism, for example. Other important challenges, such as archival power and overcoming memory politics, require a separate analysis and are beyond the scope of this study, although memory politics will be treated in a separate chapter.

This study is also the story of a city and a region, the Turkish southeastern province of Diyarbakir. It is a relatively focused regional study that aims to understand the global by concentrating on the local, since it is the region, the city, the village where population policies can best be studied and its implications be measured.<sup>98</sup> The focus on a locality rather than an

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<sup>95</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser, "Sammelrezension Der Völkermord an den Armeniern 1915/16: neueste Publikationen," in: *Sehepunkte*, vol.7, no.3 (2007), at: <<http://www.sehepunkte.de/2007/03/10400.html>>

<sup>96</sup> The literature is too vast to summarize here but one important contribution is: Amir Weiner (ed.), *Landscaping the Human Garden: Twentieth-Century Population Management in a Comparative Framework* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003). Other comparative volumes that lack treatment of or chapters on the Young Turk dictatorship are e.g.: Jerzy W. Borejsza & Klaus Ziemer (eds.), *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes in Europe: Legacies and Lessons from the Twentieth Century* (New York: Berghahn, 2006); Günther Heydemann & Eckhard Jesse (eds.), *Diktaturvergleich als Herausforderung* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1998); Shlomo Avineri & Zeev Sternhell (eds.), *Europe's Century of Discontent: The Legacies of Fascism, Nazism and Communism* (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2003); Hans Maier (ed.), *Totalitarianism and Political Religions* (London: Routledge, 1996), volume I: *Concepts for the Comparison of Dictatorships*; MacGregor Knox, *To the Threshold of Power, 1922/33: Origins and Dynamics of the Fascist and National Socialist Dictatorships* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Stephen J. Lee, *European Dictatorships, 1918-1945* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008); David G. Williamson, *The Age of the Dictators: A Study of the European Dictatorships, 1918-53* (Harlow: Pearson, 2007); Allan Todd, *The European Dictatorships: Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

<sup>97</sup> Notable exceptions are: Erik-Jan Zürcher (ed.), *Türkiye'de Etnik Çatışma* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2005); Dominik J. Schaller & Jürgen Zimmerer (eds.), *Late Ottoman Genocides: The Dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and Young Turkish Population and Extermination Policies* (London: Routledge, 2009).

<sup>98</sup> For successful applications of the regional method of studying nationalism see: Mark Mazower, *Salonica: City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews 1430-1950* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 2004); Rogers Brubaker et al., *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); Anastasia

ethnic group implies a rejection of the biases of methodological nationalism in area studies.<sup>99</sup> This study proceeds beyond these cleavages and studies the locale with its inhabitants, in their interdependence.

## Sources

The various aspects and elements of Young Turk social engineering researched in this study are widely documented in official and unofficial documentary collections, private archives, parliamentary proceedings, memoirs, party protocols, missionary collections, consular correspondence, manuscripts, diaries, maps, photo collections, oral histories, and many other sources around the globe. The bulk of these primary sources exist in the states that were involved in one way or the other in Eastern Turkey, most notably the Ottoman Empire, Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, Russia, Great Britain, and the United States. This corresponds to an enormous corpus of source material that is mostly stored in the official state archives of these countries, in Istanbul, Berlin, Vienna, Paris, Moscow, London, and Washington. Equally relevant collections are kept in the military archives, of which the Ottoman ones are in Ankara, the German ones in Freiburg, and the Russian ones in Moscow. Considerable parts of these archival collections have been published and all these archives have been opened for research, albeit under differing conditions. Several non-state collections, too, bear importance for the study of this episode and have been partly used.<sup>100</sup>

The Ottoman archival material (kept in Istanbul) is overwhelming and concerns the material up to the end of the First World War. The Ottoman state consistently and elaborately documented its political and social existence at practically all administrative levels in its long history. During the first phase of Young Turk rule (1913-1918), both high and low-level civil and military functionaries worked in all corners of Ottoman society. The contact between

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Karakasidou, *Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood: Passages to Nationhood in Greek Macedonia, 1870-1990* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997); Hervé Georgelin, *La fin de Smyrne: du cosmopolitisme aux nationalismes* (Paris: CNRS, 2005).

<sup>99</sup> For critique see: Biray Kolluoğlu-Kırh, "From Orientalism to Area Studies," in: *Centennial Review*, vol.3, no.3 (2003), pp.93-112; Richard Handler, "On Dialogue and Destructive Analysis: Problems in Narrating Nationalism and Ethnicity," in: *Journal of Anthropological Research*, vol.41, no.2 (1985), pp.171-82.

<sup>100</sup> These include the archives of Ottoman (including Armenian) political parties, Western missionaries, and the Armenian church. The archive of the Young Turk party was destroyed or hidden, and the remainder is currently spread out in the hands of offspring, historians, and libraries. The Armenian Dashnaksutiun party keeps its archives near Boston and has not opened them up for research yet. The Armenian patriarchate has moved several times and access to its archives in Istanbul or Jerusalem is difficult. Conversely, useful Armenian oral histories and memoirs have been collected in the library of the Armenian Studies department at the University of California in Berkeley, at the Bibliothèque Nubar in Paris, at the Institut für Diaspora- und Genozidforschung in Bochum, at the Armenian Research Center of the University of Michigan, and in the archives of the Zoryan Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The archives of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) are stored in the Houghton Library of Harvard University and in libraries of several other universities, including Bilkent University in Ankara. Important manuscripts of Protestant and Dominican missionaries can be found in the university library of Basel University, in the Bibliothèque du Saulchoir in Paris, and in the Danish national archives. The League of Nations keeps biographies of survivors of the Armenian genocide in its library in Geneva.



these bureaucratic stations has generated a large amount of material such as reports, memoranda, and telegrams. The correspondence between the Grand Vizier (the precursor of the modern Prime Minister) and the clerks of the Interior Ministry includes both top-down orders and bottom-up reporting. This archive is in particular important for following the organization of population policies. In 1994 a relatively arbitrary selection of these documents was published.<sup>101</sup> Specifically, the collections ‘Internal Ciphers’ (*Dahiliye Şifre*) and ‘General Security’ (*Emniyet-i Umumiye*) deserve particular attention, provided they are handled with the necessary care and source criticism. The Turkish Republican Archives (kept in Ankara) are at least as voluminous and relevant for this study. The proclamation of the Republic in 1923 saw the transfer of Ottoman state institutions to the new Anatolian capital and the further bureaucratization of the state. The research conducted in these archives offers an intimate view into the functioning of a one-party dictatorship. Here too, the relevant collections are that of the Interior Ministry, as well as the Office of the Prime Minister, in particular, the ‘Catalogue of Cabinet Decisions’ (*Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları Kataloğu*), ‘Catalogue of the Prime Minister’s General Directorate of Proceedings’ (*Başbakanlık Mualemât Genel Müdürlüğü Kataloğu*), and others. A large part of the collections at both of these archives are used extensively and for the first time in this study.

For the World War I period, the German documentation is an authoritative source, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The Germans enjoyed freedom of movement and privileged access to military zones (including the eastern provinces) where ordinary civilians could not travel. Second, Germany was the Ottoman Empire’s military ally during the war. Therefore, the secret and internal German consular and military reports are not susceptible to the criticism that Western sources were propagandistic and biased. On the contrary, these sources are characterized more than usually by authenticity and veracity, because German military and political leaders were convinced that it was in Germany’s interest to depict events as truthfully as possible. German consuls were stationed in important cities such as Erzurum, Aleppo, Trabzon, Urfa, Mosul, and Adana, and several German officers had been appointed to high positions in the Ottoman army. In 1919 the German Protestant missionary Johannes Lepsius published a selection of hundreds of official German documents, some of which were edited and manipulated to silence allegations of German involvement in war

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<sup>101</sup> *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler (1915-1920)* (Ankara: T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 1994); *Armenians in Ottoman documents (1915-1920)* (Ankara: Turkish Republic Prime Ministry General Directorate of the State Archives, Directorate of Ottoman Archives, 1995).

crimes. In 2005, the documents were published in their original state.<sup>102</sup> German military reports have been published as well.<sup>103</sup>

Partly on the same grounds, the American documentation is also relatively reliable as well. For geopolitical reasons, the United States of America kept amicable relations with the Young Turk regime. During World War I, the United States remained neutral until 1917 and apart from the Germans, they were the only Westerners who had access to the Anatolian hinterland. The US had consuls stationed in important cities such as Konya, Harput, Urfa, and Aleppo, who closely witnessed the population policies and wrote valuable reports on them. The American consul at Harput, for example, Leslie Davis, after considerable fieldwork on the destruction of the local Armenians, wrote a thick report that was published in 1989.<sup>104</sup> In general, most consular reports were sent to the American ambassador Henry Morgenthau, whose diaries were republished in 2004.<sup>105</sup> In that same year, a volume of relevant American official documents was also published.<sup>106</sup> As an ally of the Ottoman Empire, Austria-Hungary had diplomats and military attachés stationed in Anatolia. A large collection of Austrian documents, comprising twelve volumes, was published in 1995. Much like the German documents, they offer a great deal of detailed information on the interior affairs of the Empire.<sup>107</sup>

France was in a state of war with the Ottoman Empire and after August 1914 had no diplomats stationed in Turkey. The available French sources therefore mostly concern the international political dimension of the ‘Armenian question’. They cover the relations between Armenian political parties (many of which had bureaus in Paris), the Ottoman state, and the French government. In 1983 a broad but not exhaustive selection of documents from the French Foreign Ministry archives was published.<sup>108</sup> A selection of documents on the political involvement of France with the fate of Ottoman Kurds was published in 2005.<sup>109</sup> The same applies to Great Britain, which had kept close relations with the Young Turks but briefly

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<sup>102</sup> Wolfgang Gust (ed.), *Der Völkermord an den Armeniern 1915/16: Dokumente aus dem Politischen Archiv des deutschen Auswärtigen Amts* (Hamburg: Zu Klampen, 2005).

<sup>103</sup> Hilmar Kaiser (ed.), *Eberhard Count Wolffskeel Von Reichenberg, Zeitoun, Mousa Dagh, Ourfa: Letters on the Armenian Genocide* (Princeton & London: Gomidas Institute, 2004).

<sup>104</sup> Susan K. Blair (ed.), *The Slaughterhouse Province: an American Diplomat's Report on the Armenian Genocide, 1915-1917* (New Rochelle, NY: Caratzas, 1989).

<sup>105</sup> Ara Sarafian (ed.), *United States Diplomacy on the Bosphorus: The Diaries of Ambassador Morgenthau, 1913-1916* (Princeton & London: Gomidas Institute, 2004).

<sup>106</sup> Ara Sarafian (ed.), *United States Official Records on the Armenian Genocide, 1915-1917* (Princeton & London: Gomidas Institute, 2004).

<sup>107</sup> Artem Ohandjanian (ed.), *Österreich-Armenien, 1872-1936: Faksimile Sammlung Diplomatischer Aktenstücke* (Wenen: Ohandjanian Verlag, 1995).

<sup>108</sup> Arthur Beylerian (ed.), *Les Grandes puissances, l'empire ottoman et les Arméniens dans les archives françaises (1914-1918): documents* (Paris: Université de Paris I-Panthéon-Sorbonne, 1983).

<sup>109</sup> Hasan Yıldız (ed.), *Fransız Belgeleriyle Sevr- Lozan- Musul Üçgeninde Kürdistan* (Istanbul: Doz, 2005).

receded from the Ottoman-Turkish internal scene during World War I. During the war Britain published the famous *Blue Book*, a collection of eyewitness testimonies with an analytical epilogue by Arnold Toynbee.<sup>110</sup> The original publication was full of blanks as the names of many people and places were obscured in order to safeguard sources, and they remained so in facsimile editions that were published over the years. The *Blue Book* was therefore accused of merely constituting ‘atrocity propaganda’, parallel to the anti-German war propaganda about Belgium. In 2005 it was carefully republished with restoration of the obscured names, all of which referred to authentic witnesses from a range of backgrounds.<sup>111</sup> The minutes of both Houses of Parliament regarding discussions on the destruction of Ottoman Armenians were published as well.<sup>112</sup> Later, British Foreign Office documents on the internment of Young Turk war criminals in Malta,<sup>113</sup> and the fate of Kurds in the Young Turk era, were also published.<sup>114</sup>

A wealth of other sources can be tapped when studying Young Turk population policies. These include for example newspapers, the ones of the armistice era (1918-1923) being particularly useful. In these years, the atmosphere of freedom brought veritable torrents of articles on the violence of the population policies. The newspapers that were tolerated by the Young Turk regime are useful insofar as they offer a glimpse of how the regime propagated its ideology to the masses. Official state reports of various committees and inspectorates were published by the regime and by scholars who found these reports during their research, such as Cemil Koçak and Mehmet Bayrak.<sup>115</sup> Memoirs of contemporaries are a relatively unreliable but nonetheless indispensable source of places, times, persons, and stories that can show how subjective perceptions of the world by political elites shaped their attitudes and policies. They often contain information lost or censored in the etiquette of official correspondence. There is a large body of memoir literature of Young Turks, various European diplomats involved in Turkey, Armenian survivors of the genocide, and various nationalist activists. Most of these are ridden with apologia. Furthermore, since in this timeframe Eastern

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<sup>110</sup> Arnold Toynbee (ed.), *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire 1915-16: Documents Presented to Viscount Grey of Fallodon, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1916).

<sup>111</sup> Ara Sarafian (ed.), *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire 1915-16: Documents Presented to Viscount Grey of Fallodon by Viscount Bryce* (Princeton & London: Gomidas Institute, 2005).

<sup>112</sup> Ara Sarafian (ed.), *British Parliamentary Debates on the Armenian Genocide 1915-1918* (Princeton & London: Gomidas Institute, 2003).

<sup>113</sup> Vartkes Yeghiayan (ed.), *British Foreign Office Dossiers on Turkish War Criminals* (Pasadena, CA: AAIC, 1991).

<sup>114</sup> For a pro-Turkish selection of documents: Bilâl N. Şimşir (ed.), *İngiliz belgeleriyle Türkiye’de “Kürt sorunu” (1924-1938): Şeyh Said, Ağrı, ve Dersim ayaklanmaları* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1991); for a selection of documents critical of the latter: Ahmet Mesut (ed.), *İngiliz Belgelerinde Kürdistan 1918-1958* (Istanbul: Doz, 1992).

<sup>115</sup> See e.g. the appendices in: Cemil Koçak, *Umûmî Müfettişlikler (1927-1952)* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2003), pp.295-330; Mehmet Bayrak (ed.), *Kürtler ve Ulusal-Demokratik Mücadeleleri: Gizli Belgeler - Araştırmalar - Notlar* (Ankara: Özge, 1993); Id., *Açık-Gizli/Resmî-Gayriresmî Kürdoloji Belgeleri* (Istanbul: Öz-Ge, 1994).

Turkey was a peasant society consisting mostly of illiterate villagers, the number of memoirs that detail the lives of these local people can be counted on the fingers of one hand. For Eastern Turkey, one name is indispensable in this regard: Mıgırđıç Margosyan, an Armenian author from Diyarbakir city. With remarkable vitality of style, a good sense of realism, and with a darkly humorous edge, Margosyan has chronicled the aftermath of the genocide and the ebb and flow of the 1940s in at least six books that proved very useful for this research.<sup>116</sup>

This study also aims to fill a gradually shrinking gap in the study of oral history in Eastern Turkey. For the past five years, I have continuously searched and fortunately also found respondents willing to relate their personal experiences or their family narratives. These interviews were all semi-structured and taped. While some of these witnesses of the era were unwilling or unable to speak, and others agreed to speak but wished to remain anonymous, many others were happy to do so, and occasionally even provided me access to their ego-documents. My subject position as a ‘local outsider’, being born in the region but at the same time raised abroad, facilitated the research as it gave me the communicative channels to delve deep and recede at the right times. It also provided me with a sense of immunity from the dense moral and political field in which most of this research is embedded. In the patriarchal society that Eastern Turkey is, my gender identity as a young man to a certain degree impeded research into the experiences of women – even if those women were old enough to be my grandmother.<sup>117</sup> Then again, the quest for the exclusionary practices of Young Turk population policies does not only lead to Eastern Turkey, but one also has to search in other societies, such as Syria and Armenia. The traces of exclusion led me to Diyarbakir Armenians in Amsterdam, Diyarbakir Kurds in Stockholm, Diyarbakir Syrians in Hannover, and Diyarbakir Bulgarian Turks in Rotterdam. They were not necessarily aware of the fact that the logic of Young Turk population policies aimed at excluding some and including others in the region, had shaped their lives and defined their interdependences.

Oral history research on this topic has been conducted by many other scholars as well, and these have been of great help. These publications of oral histories include for example works by Leyla Neyzi, Donald and Lorna Miller, Kemal Yalçın, Otto Jastrow, Susan Meiselas, and Ahmet Kahraman.<sup>118</sup> One name in particular is worthy of mention for the

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<sup>116</sup> Mıgırđıç Margosyan, *Gávur Mahallesi* (Istanbul: Aras, 2002); Id., *Çengelliğne* (Istanbul: Belge, 1999); Id., *Biletimiz İstanbul’a kesildi* (Istanbul: Aras, 2003); Id., *Söyle Margos nerelisen?* (Istanbul: Aras, 1998); Id., *Kirveme Mektuplar* (Diyarbakır: Lis, 2006); Id., *Tespîh Taneleri* (Istanbul: Aras, 2007).

<sup>117</sup> Jukka Törrönen, “The Concept of Subject Position in Empirical Social Research,” in: *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, vol.31, no.3 (2001), pp.313-30.

<sup>118</sup> See e.g. her books: *İstanbul’da Hatırlamak ve Unutmak: Birey, Bellek ve Aidiyet* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1999); Idem, *Küçük Hanım’dan Rubu Asırlık Adam’a: Neziye Neyzi’dan Oğlu Neziye Neyzi’ye Mektuplar 1947-1948* (Istanbul: Sel Yayıncılık, 1999); Idem, “Ben Kimim”: *Türkiye’de Sözlü Tarih, Kimlik ve Öznellik* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2004).

Diyarbakir region: Şeyhmus Diken. In recent years, this Diyarbakir-based researcher published many interviews with elderly Diyarbakir natives, many of whom had lived under the Young Turk regime. These published interviews are a veritable goldmine of information, for example about the destruction of Diyarbakir's Christians, the workings of the dictatorship in the region, the fierce competition between local elites, or the deportations of Diyarbakir's Kurds.<sup>119</sup> This wide range of sources has made possible a multi-dimensional account of Young Turk population policies in Eastern Turkey between 1913 and 1950.

Last but not least, one fundamental problem with the sources needs to be addressed. Historians understand that significant amounts of source material in dictatorships have seriously been destroyed, censored, culled, purified, or separated into sealed depots. This was as much a process of actively destroying incriminating evidence as it was of latent silencing in the making of sources, the creation of archives, and the narrating by contemporaries.<sup>120</sup> The case of the Young Turk regime is no exception, and there is compelling evidence that a series of serious destructions of source materials occurred. Not only was the scale of these processes of silencing and destruction considerable, but the period and type of documents that were destroyed pertain to key moments in the population policies in the crucial period 1913-1950.<sup>121</sup> The construction of nationalist historiographies after 1913 compounded this process (see Chapter 7). These processes of silence and destruction bear consequences for utilizing the documentation as historical evidence, in that informed conjecture and extrapolation need to be additional methods of analysis. The same vigilance must be observed when using the sources written by the regime's enemies: its victims and opponents. These sources are often obscure and contain strong biases, such as exaggerating the suffering, inflating the number of victims, demonizing the Turks, and denying victim collaboration and passivity. Commentary on these sources will be offered in the relevant footnotes.

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Donald E. Miller & Lorne Touryan-Miller, *Survivors: An Oral History of the Armenian Genocide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Kemal Yalçın, *Seninle güler yüreğim* (Bochum: CIP, 2003); Id., *Sarı Gelin: Sari Gyalin* (Köln: n.p., 2004); Otto Jastrow (ed.), *Die mesopotamisch-arabischen Qəltu-Dialekte* (Wiesbaden: Kommissionsverlag Franz Steiner GmbH, 1981), vol.II; Susan Meiselas, *Kurdistan in the Shadow of History* (New York: Random House, 1997; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008, second edition); Ahmet Kahraman, *Kürt İsyancıları: Tedip ve Tenkil* (Istanbul: Evrensel, 2003).

<sup>119</sup> Şeyhmus Diken, *Diyarbakir diyarım, yitirmişem yanarım* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2003); Id., *Sırrını Surlarına Fısıldayan Şehir, Diyarbakır* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004); *Bajarê Ku Razên Xwe Ji Bircên Xwe Re Dibilîne: Dîyarbakir* (Diyarbakır: Lis, 2006); Id., *Tango ve Diyarbakır* (Diyarbakır: Lis, 2004); Id., *İsyancı Sürgünleri* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2005); *Amidalular: Sürgündeki Diyarbakirliiler* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2007).

<sup>120</sup> See: Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2007).

<sup>121</sup> This argument is discussed for the Armenian genocide in: Ara Sarafian, "The Ottoman Archives Debate and the Armenian Genocide," in: *Armenian Forum*, vol.2, no.1 (1999), pp.35-44; Vahakn N. Dadrian, "Ottoman Archives and Denial of the Armenian Genocide," in: Richard G. Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian Genocide; History, Politics, Ethics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), pp.280-310; Taner Akçam, 'Ermeni Meselesi Hallolunmuştur': *Osmanlı Belgelerine Göre Savaş Yıllarında Ermenilere Yönelik Politikalar* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2007), pp.15-36.

## **Structure and composition**

The thesis is organized in six parts. Chapter 2, 'Nationalism' will paint a picture of social and economic life in Eastern Turkey, in particular Diyarbekir province. The advent of nationalism to the region will be considered as both an Ottoman domino-effect, and as a function of the European centrifugal spread of nationalism. In order to provide an account of the local people, it will attempt to avoid and deconstruct methodological nationalism by using anthropological research on the region. It will try to circumvent rosy pictures of a pre-nationalist society where brotherhood and peace reigned supreme, as well as deterministic images of a complex society doomed to be the locus of a nationalist struggle or inevitably subjected to colonial rule. This chapter will further attempt to provide an account of how the concepts of nationalism and population policies entered Ottoman society with the result that ultimately, a small group of Turkish nationalists, the Young Turks, theorized a large-scale nationalist transformation of Ottoman society, including the eastern provinces. It will use theoretical and conceptual tools to digest and interpret this projection onto the region's heterogeneous population in an attempt to include the region in the construction of a homogeneous Turkish core state. The chapter will conclude with an analysis of the Ottoman loss of power in the Balkans, and argue that this was the trigger that made possible the progress from idea to act, and enabled the launch of the policies.

Chapters 3 to 7 will closely examine the history of Young Turk population policies in Diyarbekir. Chapter 3, 'Genocide, 1915-16', will describe and explain the mass violence that was unleashed against Ottoman Christians in Diyarbekir province during World War I. The chapter is divided into three parts: first, it will trace the genocidal tendencies of the Young Turks to the crisis of 1914-15 and their entry in the war. Second, it will concentrate on Diyarbekir province and describe the persecution process of Armenians and other Christians in that region. Third, it will analyze how that persecution developed into genocidal destruction by focusing on how local elites in Diyarbekir interpreted, organized, and intensified the destruction of Armenians. The chapter will focus on the close interdependence of victimization and perpetration, the importance of local elites in any genocidal process, and how the genocide can be placed in the broader structure of Young Turk population policies. This approach will attempt to capture the complexity of processes of mass violence.

Chapter 4, 'Crafting the nation-state: planning, modernizing, civilizing', will address some of the social transformations that took place in Diyarbekir under Young Turk rule. These were relatively autonomous processes of social change resulting from ongoing

developments and historical events, as well as authoritarian top-down policies aimed at intentionally engineering social change. The chapter will open by surveying the power struggles in Diyarbekir in the aftermath of the war, arguing that during the armistice (1918-23) a nearly seamless continuity emerged between the Committee of Union and Progress and the Kemalist movement. Second, the chapter will focus on how the war created new categories and augmented old categories of social outsiders in Diyarbekir, characterizing it as ‘the city of orphans, converts, whores, and bandits’. Third, it will portray how the Young Turk regime saw ‘modernization’ as a panacea that would bring all these people to order by ‘civilizing’ them into a ‘healthy population’. Furthermore, the city of Diyarbekir became the object of high-modernist utopias of urban planning. Finally, the discussion will draw conclusions and parallels with comparable policies under similar regimes.

Chapter 5, ‘Deportations of Kurds, 1916-1934’, will describe and interpret forced migrations, alternately known as population transfers or simply deportations, as one among the many tactics of social engineering. It will particularly deal with the deportations of untold numbers of Kurds from Eastern to Western Turkey in the course of roughly two decades. The Young Turk dictatorship used forced population transfer as a strategy of “Turkifying” the country’s eastern provinces. Before describing how the Young Turks organized three major phases of deportations, it will trace the aetiology of these policies in the immediate aftermath of the Young Turk seizure of power in 1913. In order to provide a more complete understanding of this process, the chapter will analyze the deportation process as a two-way project of deporting non-Turks away from, and settling Turks into the eastern provinces, in particular Diyarbekir province. These two vectors of population transfer geared into each other, rendering the deportations a tool of demographic Turkification. The chapter presents a detailed narrative of three phases of Young Turk deportations of Kurds and settlement of Turks in the years 1916, 1925, and 1934. It will draw a systematic comparison between the three phases and emphasize the continuity of population policies in the Young Turk era, without overlooking the subtle differences between the three waves of deportations. Alongside many official texts including justification, laws, logic, and procedures, the chapter will also heavily draw on memoirs and oral histories to portray the experiences of deportees.

Chapter 6, ‘Culture and education in the eastern provinces’, will present those two important patterns of nation formation. Starting from World War I, the Young Turks acted upon ideas to take the nationalist message ‘to the people’. Due to the war and subsequent deconcentration of power, they were not able effectively to devise and carry out grand cultural and educational projects. But after 1923, the regime took the lead in assigning the culture and

education offices of the single-party dictatorship to launch ambitious projects of nation formation. This chapter will explore how the party penetrated the eastern provinces using the educational infrastructure of tens of thousands of schools in order to impose the spread of Turkish culture in Eastern Turkey. Diyarbakir region, special because it was earmarked to become “a center of Turkish culture in the East”, was infused with Turkish culture with particular care. The chapter will also address how high levels of coercion during this process produced high levels of popular resistance towards the government’s policies.

Chapter 7, ‘The calm after the storm: the politics of memory’, will outline how the Young Turk project of crafting a modern nation state included more than violent policies that affected physically multitudes of human beings. Mentally, the young nation state was still a blank, and needed a national memory. The continuous process of defining and fine-tuning a national identity entailed a parallel process of defining and fine-tuning national memory. This chapter will focus on aspects of Young Turk memory politics, in particular how their memory politics intervened in existing patterns of memory in Diyarbakir. It will also devote attention to how the mass violence of the last Ottoman decade was remembered by the population and the government.

Finally, chapter 8 will review the main findings and conclusions of this study, and address the problem of the effectivity of these forms of population policies.