

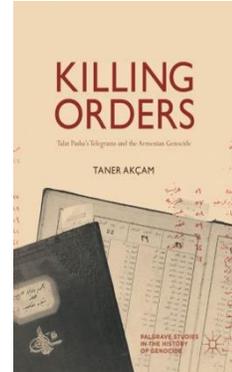


Killing Orders

Talat Pasha's Telegrams and the Armenian Genocide

Raphael Lemkin - Video

The Armenian [genocide](#) is tied to more than one hundred years of denial, and Akçam of the Strassler Family Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies claims denial was planned from the beginning. The Ottomans fed Armenians with promises of resettlement as victims were deported to the Syrian [desert](#) for elimination. The ruling pashas [relied](#) on [Germany's help](#) and worked together to keep the neutral Americans out of the war. Deception was key to realizing both aims.



[Genocide](#) deniers claim that incriminating [documents](#) published in the 1920 memoirs of Ottoman bureaucrat Naim Efendi^[1] were fakes. Şinasi Orel's and Süreyya Yuca's 1983 book^[2] questioned Efendi's very existence and alleged that his papers contained errors (including signatures, ciphers, dates) forged by Armenian journalist Aram Andonian when he edited Naim's memoirs. Thus do Grand Vizier [Talat Pasha's](#) killing orders become "falsified cables."

However, Akçam validates Naim Efendi and his memoirs, proving that Talat's [killing orders](#) are authentic. Although encryption keys and coded file registries are still closed, he also shows that Orel and Yuca are wrong about encryption methods and practices.

The author includes incriminating communications contained in Interior Ministry telegrams, often to authorities in [Aleppo](#) and signed by Talat. On December 5, 1915, one telegram orders: "The Armenians of the Eastern Provinces who come into your hands there are to be eliminated." Then on December 14, another telegram arrives: "The most important persons whose extermination should be attempted are the religious clergy." On December 24, contains a directive that Armenian reporters are to be "liquidated." And perhaps, more damning, on February 5, 1917, a telegram states that "abandoned or bereft children... are to be removed by attaching them to the deportation convoys."

Taner Akçam thus refutes a miserable century's worth of disavowals and dishonesty.

Wolfgang G. Schwanitz

Taner Akçam: *Killing Orders*, Talat Pasha's Telegrams and the Armenian Genocide, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018. 261 pp. \$39.99, paper.

^[1] Naim Bey, *The Memoirs of Naim Bey: Turkish Official Documents Relating to the Deportations and Massacres of Armenians*, compiler, Aram Andonian, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1920).

^[2] Şinasi Orel and Süreyya Yuca, *Ermenilerce Talât Pasa'ya atfedilen telgrafların gerçek yüzü* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1983).

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