

4-29-2018

01 On Takvim-i Vekayi

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Recommended Citation

Guerguerian, Krikor, "01 On Takvim-i Vekayi" (2018). *Special Organization*. 1.
https://commons.clarku.edu/special_org/1

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Authenticity
of Ottoman Official Documents
established by the Extraordinary Turkish
Court Martial

Most of the official Turkish documents we are presenting to the scholar community, either in Turkish Osmanli text, or in modern Turkish transcription ^{litera} and English translation, are published mostly for the first time.

The question of authenticity of these official documents is above all doubt and controversy.

Many of these documents in their entirety, others partially had been read during the trial carried out by the Turkish Extraordinary Court Martial in the presence of the authors who had composed them and signed, or passed in the records of the Court Martial after establishing their authenticity, or reproduced in the indictments of the Imperial Attorney General and the sentences delivered by the Court Martial.

Some documents, that ^{appear} ~~we are using~~ ⁱⁿ this case study, had not been used in the files of the Turkish Extraordinary Court Martial, as far as, similarly ^{beyond of} are ^a above any doubt. As ~~the~~ ^a proofs of authenticity, scholars ~~may~~ may refer to the study published 1965 in "Hushamadian Medz Yegherni" Memorial Book of the Major Tragedy, Atlas Press, 1965, Beirut, Lebanon, pages 221-258.

The documents mostly in Osmanli, are published by the Ottoman Government in the official Gazette "Takvim-i Vakayi Divan-ı Harb-ı Örfi Zabıt Ceridesi", which ~~is~~ exceptionally published the records of the Turkish Extraordinary Court Martial. All other newspapers in several languages published in Constantinople had their sources in "Takvim-i Vakayi Divan-ı Harb-ı Örfi ^{Muhakemat-ı} Zabıt Ceridesi". Respective translations are available in Armenian, English, French, Greek newspapers published in Constantinople and other major cities of Turkey. But the Collections of these newspapers are very difficultly available. American, British, French and other Embassies at Constantinople ^{during} in the period of 1918-1923 ~~respectively~~ communicated to their respective governments, but ~~the~~ such collections are not complete.

The Turkish Extraordinary Court Martial established the authenticity of the documents before using them in the trial of the authors and accomplices of the Armenocide and prior to deliver the sentences.

The Turkish Ministry of Internal Affairs, as well as the Department of the Post and Telegraph, the Commission of Inquiry ^{to establish the criminals and prepare the dossiers} as well as the Turkish Court Martial officially requested from the Turkish competent authorities in Constantinople and (in the) provinces the official documents concerning the deportation and the massacre of the Armenian people.

Both civil and military authorities either in Constan-

tinople or in the provinces, mostly the Governors General, Police Commissioners, and Post and Telegraph Office Department of the Ottoman Empire communicated to the Ministry of Internal Affairs or directly to the Court Martial or the Inquiry Commission ^{at Constantinople} the official documents both originals or certified copies they could find in the provinces.

Besides, both Turkish and Allied civil and military authorities found through investigations in Constantinople and in the provinces Turkish official documents concerning the Armenocide.

The official documents, both original or certified copies sent to the Ministry of Internal Affairs were directly communicated to the Attorney General of the Court Martial.

Some examples, illustrated with photostatic reproductions, will explain the evidence of which we stated above theoretically.