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## ARMENIAN MIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN THE LAST QUARTER OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY\*

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### ABSTRACT

*In this study it is aimed to determine the reason why the Armenians emigrated to the USA, to reveal the developments that took place between the two countries as a result of this movement and to discuss how the Armenian immigrants were monitored in their new country by the Ottoman Empire. As most studies in the literature focus on the Armenian Deportation period, this article offers some insights into the numbers of the Armenians migrating to the USA before the deportation.*

**Key Words:** *Armenian Immigration, USA, Ottoman Empire, Numbers of Immigrant*

### 19. YÜZYILIN SON ÇEYREĞİNDE AMERİKA BİRLEŞİK DEVLETLERİ'NE ERMENİ GÖÇÜ

#### ÖZ

*Bu çalışmada Ermenilerin ABD'ye göç etmelerinin nedenini belirlemek, bu hareket sonucunda iki ülke arasında meydana gelen gelişmeleri ortaya çıkarmak ve Ermeni göçmenlerin yeni ülkelerinde Osmanlılar tarafından nasıl izlendiğini tartışmak amaçlanmıştır. Bu konu üzerindeki çalışmaların çoğu Ermeni tehciri dönemine odaklandığı için, bu makale tehcirden önce ABD'ye göç eden Ermenilerin sayıları hakkında bazı görüşler sunmaktadır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Ermeni Göçü, ABD, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Göçmen Sayısı*

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### Introduction

The first contact of the Ottoman Empire with the United States was commercial, and in 1830 a “Trade and Navigation Treaty” between the Ottoman Empire and the United States gave “most favored nation” status to the United States and granted the rights and privileges enjoyed by other foreigners to United States citizens.<sup>1</sup> Before long, these concessions were to become a headache for the Ottoman Empire as its emigrants to the United States followed the relatively easy path to U.S. citizenship and the protections of such a treaty when they returned home.

With the “open door” policy and free-seas approach after 1890, the United States doubled its commerce with Europe, Eastern Asia and the Ottoman Empire. Consequently, the volume of commerce between the United States and the Ottoman Empire reached \$6.2 million in 1899, through the efforts of Standard Oil, Singer Sewing Machine, American Tobacco and other American companies. At the same time the efforts helped expand international commercial activities.<sup>2</sup>

Initially, developing commercial activities and the needs of the American labor market incited in the Armenians, like so many other peoples, the dream of immigrating to the United States, and the first Armenians who found the means to emigrate and made a secure life for themselves in America eventually gave up their original idea of returning home. But the situation in their homeland was changing. Although propaganda material against the Ottoman Empire had been produced in the US ceaselessly for more than a century, unaware of their future implications, the Ottoman authorities of the time had done nothing but archive the publications they deemed important. On June 5, 1895, however, an effort was made by persons engaged in propaganda to justify an armed Armenian separatist movement with a report attributed to the Associated Press, alleging that the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire were under such heavy oppression they had been choosing to die by the sword.<sup>3</sup> In a subsequent effort to mold public opinion in the United

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<sup>1</sup> Çağrı Erhan, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkilerinin Tarihsel Kökenleri*, İmge Kitabevi, Ankara, 2001, s. 123–124.

<sup>2</sup> Simon Payaslian, “The United States Response to the Armenian Genocide,” **Looking Backward, Moving Forward: Confronting the Armenian Genocide**, ed. Richard G. Hovannisian, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 2003, s. 51–80.

<sup>3</sup> BOA. (General Directorate of State Archives Ottoman Archives Office) *HR. SYS.* Dos. 2740, No. 8.

Kingdom and promote pressure against the Ottoman Empire, on March 17, 1899 the *Daily Post* of Liverpool reported that 40,000 Armenians displaced from their lands were suffering greatly in Eastern Anatolia.<sup>4</sup> Today, both these press accounts are taken at face value and accepted as truth by those who accuse a whole nation of a dreadful crime.

The 1877-78 Ottoman-Russian War was a historic turning point for the Ottoman Empire, which was left alone in Europe and lost most of its lands in the European region, as well as Cyprus. As the postwar treaties paved the way to the eventual disintegration of the Empire, the most significant treaty articles were those regarding reforms in the Six Provinces (*Vilayat-î Sitte*), where an Ottoman-subject Armenian majority was alleged. These treaties were also a milestone for the Armenians, who eventually formed many separatist movements and then, with the Ottoman lands awash in blood and pain, chose to emigrate.

This study aims to describe the more subtle and unique reasons behind Armenian emigration to the United States, to reveal the developments Armenian American citizenship brought about between the two countries, and to discuss how the Armenian immigrants were monitored in their new country by the Ottoman Empire. In contrast to most studies, which focus on the Armenian Deportation period, this article offers some insights into the numbers of Armenians migrating to the United States before the deportation.

#### **The Citizenship Agreement of August 11, 1874**

Ottoman citizens who acquired US citizenship are classified in two groups. The first group is these who changed their citizenship with the approval of the Sultanate and in accordance with Ottoman citizenship regulations. In the second group those people who emigrated without the approval of the Ottoman government before publication of the Ottoman Law of Citizenship in 1869 (1285 in the Hegira calendar), resided in the United States long enough to earn the right to obtain a US passport and then applied to the Ottoman Directorate of Citizenship for approval of their US citizenship on a case-by-case basis.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> BOA. *HR. SYS.* Dos. 2759, No. 46.

<sup>5</sup> BOA. *Y. PRK. HR.* Dos. 19, No. 12.

Realizing its inability to prevent its non-Muslims abroad from changing citizenship, in 1869 the Ottoman government had enacted the Ottoman Law of Citizenship (Tabiiyet-i Osmaniye Kanunnamesi), inspired by the French Law of 1851. According to this law, everyone living on Ottoman soil was counted as an Ottoman citizen and those claiming to be foreign citizens had to prove their claim. In addition, anyone who entered the service of another country could be removed from citizenship. Those who already had done so were required to inform the authorities of their status within fifteen days of enactment of the law and to leave the service in question within the time they were granted. People removed from citizenship of who voluntarily changed their citizenship were prohibited from reentering Ottoman lands. Foreign citizenship of the people who had changed their citizenship without official approval would not be accepted, instead, such people would be counted as Ottoman citizens<sup>6</sup>.

Unlike the United States, European countries did not protect Ottoman citizens who changed citizenship without official approval then returned to Ottoman soil. France, for example, did not accept citizenship applications from Ottoman immigrants without official approval of the Ottoman authorities. The United States, however, is obliged to protect its citizens, whether US born or not, and to mobilize its armed forces for this purpose, whether or not that citizenship was obtained legally under the laws of and immigrant's homeland. Thus, among the hundreds of thousands of Europeans who immigrated to the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were those who intended to reside there for five years and become US citizens in order to avoid military duty or other obligations when they returned to their home country. Since the US protection of these individuals meant support for their evasion of their obligations, European countries attempted to remove that protection by concluding citizenship agreements. Under the first such agreement, for example, Germany accepted its emigrants' citizenship changes on condition that individuals returning to and residing in Germany for two years would revert to German citizenship. While England, Italy, Sweden, Norway and other countries also signed citizenship agreements, the US

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<sup>6</sup> Gülnihal Bozkurt, *Alman ve İngiliz Belgelerinin ve Siyasi Gelişmelerin Işığında Gayrimüslim Osmanlı Vatandaşlarının Hukuki Durumu (1839–1914)*, TTK yay., Ankara, 1989, s. 148–149.

Consulate protected defecting Ottoman citizens indefinitely and made each case into a political matter.<sup>7</sup>

The “Citizenship Change Agreement” of August 11, 1874, signed by the Ottoman Minister of Foreign Affairs, Arifi Pasha, and the Ambassador of the United States to Istanbul, George H. Boker (who started his commission in 1871), and later amended is reprinted in appendix 1. Disputes over some of the clauses, however, prevented it from being put into practice.<sup>8</sup> Eventually, in 1893, the Ottoman Empire declared that the Armenians who fled to the United States and changed over to US citizenship would not be allowed to reenter Ottoman soil even if they held US passports.<sup>9</sup>

The US Senate proposed an amendment of the agreement’s second clause,<sup>10</sup> replacing “shall be deemed” with “may be deemed” in the provision “in case any citizen of one party who, after taking citizenship of the second party, returns to and resides on the soil of the first party for more than two years, that person shall be deemed to have the intent of never returning to soil of the second party. In addition, the Ottoman National Assembly decided on September 1, 1886, that the Turkish text of the agreement comprising five clauses and one appendix would be amended to match the French text of the agreement comprising six clauses and one appendix. The assembly also decided on January 2, 1889, to accept the proposal of the US Senate, and on January 8, the Ottoman government also accepted the proposal of the US Senate. The US Senate, however, raised new difficulties, which postponed the publication and official declaration of the agreement by the US government.<sup>11</sup>

According to the report of a special commission (*Meclis-i Mahsus*) dated August 2, 1890, some Ottoman citizens who had taken US citizenship, and then returned to Ottoman soil were travelling to other countries just to have their passports validated so that they would not lose their changed citizenship

<sup>7</sup> BOA. *Y. PRK. HR.* Dos. 27, No. 7; Edwin Munsell Bliss, **Turkey and the Armenian Atrocities: A Reign of Terror from Tartar Huts to Constantinople Palaces**, Edgewood Publishing Company, 1896, s. 548–549.

<sup>8</sup> Çağrı Erhan, **Türk-Amerikan İlişkilerinin Tarihsel Kökenleri**, s. 228–234.

<sup>9</sup> BOA. *Y. A. RES.* Dos. 68, No. 50, Lef 1.

<sup>10</sup> BOA. *Y. A. RES.* Dos. 55, No.53. Lef 1; İlhan Kaya, **Shifting Turkish American Identity Formations in The United States**, Ph.D. diss., Florida State University, 2003, s. 53.

<sup>11</sup> BOA. *Y. A. RES.* Dos. 68, No. 50, Lef 2; BOA. *Y. PRK. HR.* Dos. 27, No. 7. Archive documents do not match the text of agreement given in the book by Fahir Armaoğlu. Fahir Armaoğlu, **Belgelerle Türk–Amerikan Münasebetleri**, TTK Basımevi, Ankara, 1991, s. 17–18.

under the two-year residence rule.<sup>12</sup> On June 8, 1891, therefore, the special commission decided that the measures in place did not prevent immigrants with US citizenship from returning in the specified time limit and that the Citizenship Change Agreement as amended must be executed to solve the ongoing problems.<sup>13</sup>

On July 8, 1891, the Ottoman Council of Ministers delivered its opinion that “any person who resides on US soil for 5 years becomes a US citizen and has to reside on US soil once every two years. In case of execution of this agreement the matter will be automatically resolved, because in that case the citizenship record of a person who does not return to US soil once every two years shall be removed from the records by the consulate.”<sup>14</sup> On December 20, 1893, the Special National Assembly, however, decided further amendment of the second clause was needed because the current agreement allowed neutralized US citizens who had returned to Ottoman soil to visit another country for a short time before the two years expired to have their passport validated by the US embassy and so to preserve their US citizenship. The solution would be to require such individuals to return to US soil in order to preserve their US citizenship.<sup>15</sup>

Negotiations regarding the Armenians returning to Ottoman soil after taking US citizenship were restarted in 1893. Although it was the position of the Ottoman government that Ottoman citizens who wished to change citizenship were required to obtain approval in accordance with the Ottoman Citizenship Regulations, US laws stipulated that any person who resided on US soil for five years would be admitted to US citizenship, and the United States would protect such persons (appendix 2). In the opinion of the Ottoman government, the provisions of the Ottoman Citizenship Regulations were as valid as the US law in question. Consequently, while the US ambassador was invited to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for comprehensive negotiations, in light of the known harmful activities of some returned Armenians, the Ottoman authorities implemented interim measures until an agreement was executed.

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<sup>12</sup> BOA. *Y. A. RES.* Dos. 55, No.53. Lef 2.

<sup>13</sup> BOA. *Y. A. RES.* Dos. 55, No.53. Lef 5.

<sup>14</sup> *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler*,: General Directorate of State Archives Ottoman Archives Office Publication, İstanbul, 1988, Volume 10, Document No. 4.

<sup>15</sup> BOA. *Y.A.RES.* Dos.68, No.50, Lef 1.

Accordingly, the Armenians returning from the United States with US citizenship would not be taken into custody when they disembarked but would be handed over to the US Embassy and forced to return to the United States in three to five days. If they refused to return to the United States or if they wished to regain Ottoman citizenship, they would be processed by the Ottoman government. But, this practice would not apply to those who took US citizenship before the year 1869.<sup>16</sup> In apparent concurrence with these procedures, the US Ambassador sent a letter of thanks to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the case of Paul Pedikyan, who came to Istanbul in 1893 with a US passport.<sup>17</sup>

### **Ottoman Migration Policy and Armenian Emigration**

Throughout the nineteenth century, as the desire to migrate to the New World kept growing within the nations of the Old World, the United States of America received a substantial portion of this migration because, in order to settle its expansive geography and meet its large workforce demand, it accepted virtually every immigrant regardless of qualifications. Although the Ottoman Empire was significantly disturbed by its subjects' migrating there and changing citizenship, the United States continued to disregard the Ottomans' concerns, giving rise to occasional tension in relations between the two countries.

The US government knew that the main reason of the Ottoman government decided to prevent Armenian emigration was the Armenians' desire to acquire the protections of US citizenship in order to foment the secession of some of the Empire's Anatolian provinces and establish an Armenian state. Yet, the United States did nothing to prevent Armenian immigration.<sup>18</sup>

Clearly then, the Armenian emigration had political as well as the more usual economic and social motivations. According to *Haik*, an Armenian newspaper published in the United States, the Hunchakian and Çeraz parties subsidized Armenian emigration with monetary donations from Armenians in

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<sup>16</sup> The Ottoman Law of Citizenship took effect in 1869. BOA. *Y. A. RES.* Dos.68, No.49, Lef 1; **Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler**, Volume 16, Document No. 65.

<sup>17</sup> BOA. *Y. A. RES.* Dos. 68, No. 50.

<sup>18</sup> BOA. *Y. PRK. A.* Dos. 8, No. 66; Edwin Munsell Bliss, **Turkey and the Armenian Atrocities**, s. 549; Edith Abbott, **Immigration: Select documents and Case Records**, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1924, s. 231.

the United States.<sup>19</sup> The detective agency commissioned by the Ottoman government to monitor the Armenians in Boston portrayed this funding as a sort of investment: the Armenian parties were aiming to promote Armenian emigration in order to gain more donors for their cause.<sup>20</sup> Ultimately, the donors themselves were to be part of the return, and, *Haik* explained in 1895, emigration would be prohibited thereafter.<sup>21</sup>

In 1899, the Ottoman Council in Barcelona, Yusuf Bey, reported that the illegal emigrants were embellishing their rationale for emigration with stories of massacre, oppression and horror.<sup>22</sup> Such tales, like the propaganda mentioned earlier, were taken at face value by the American government and general public and today are construed as real events.

Because Ottoman prohibitions on migration did not prevent the outflow of Armenians, the Empire resorted to a policy utilized by other European countries: permitting emigration of people, together with their families, after they agreed to sell all of their properties and assets.<sup>23</sup> By 1896, the Ottoman Empire, having found it undesirable for US Armenians to return to the Ottoman soil, now feared those prevented from reuniting with their families would begin to harbor all kinds of malice. While the problems involving the families of immigrants who changed citizenship continued for a long time, the Ottoman government did not allow families of Armenians who travelled to the United States for commerce, but remained Ottoman citizens, to join them.<sup>24</sup> With the adoption of the Law of 1908 the prohibition on emigration of the Armenians to the United States, legislated by the previous government after the Armenian revolt of 1894, was abolished, and all were free to go anywhere they wanted.<sup>25</sup>

Whether migrating legally or illegally, Armenians tried every possible way of leaving the Ottoman Empire by every landing and port. They did not mind walking many kilometers or riding on donkeys and mules as well as

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<sup>19</sup> BOA. *Y. A. HUS.* Dos. 285, No. 3.

<sup>20</sup> BOA. *HR. SYS.* Dos. 2855, No. 68.

<sup>21</sup> **Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler**, Volume 32, Document No. 30.

<sup>22</sup> Akram Fouad Khater, **Inventing Home: Emigration, Gender, and the Middle Class in Lebanon, 1870–1920**, University of California Press, California, 2001, s. 48.

<sup>23</sup> BOA. *A. MKT. MHM.* Dos. 533, No.2.

<sup>24</sup> BOA. *A. MKT. MHM.* Dos. 658, No.42, Lef 3.

<sup>25</sup> BOA. *DH. SYS.* Dos. 67, No. 1–6; BOA. *DH. MUI.* Dos. 8–3, No. 12, Lef 4; BOA. *Y. A. RES.* Dos. 68, No. 63.



railways.<sup>26</sup> According to the Ministry of Interior Affairs, some who obtained transit certificates in Anatolia to engage in trade in Istanbul used the ports of Istanbul to flee and the Izmir ports were used in the same way.<sup>27</sup> Armenians living in Aleppo, Diyarbakir, Bitlis, Hakkâri and Van provinces used Iskenderun landing and Mersin port until controls were increased and they had to board ships from uncontrolled shores to gain passage to Cyprus, which served as their transit camp.<sup>28</sup> Meanwhile, some Armenian merchants brought Harput Armenians from Mersin to Marseilles and Liverpool, from which they sailed to the United States,<sup>29</sup> and French post steamers travelling to Marseilles picked up Armenians from the Lebanese coast and brought them to Marseilles after stopping by Izmir port.<sup>30</sup> Others were transported by European steamers from the Jounieh and Jubayl landings in Lebanon to Marseilles, Barcelona and Liverpool.<sup>31</sup> French ships landing at Trabzon port for the hazelnut trade also took emigrants from the Black Sea ports to Marseilles.<sup>32</sup>

Although some Armenians even used Egyptian and Bulgarian routes to reach foreign countries,<sup>33</sup> the most significant transit point was Marseilles,<sup>34</sup> from which the Armenians sailed either directly or via other ports to the United States.<sup>35</sup>

That the Ottoman government was not able to stop Armenians from illegally leaving the country stemmed as much from collaboration of foreign

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<sup>26</sup> Peter Morton Coan, *Ellis Island Interviews*, Checkmark Books, New York, 1997, s. 395; Robert Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands: Armenians in America, 1890 to World War I*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1983, s. 60-62; Isabel Kaprielian-Churchill, *Like Our Mountains: A History of Armenians in Canada*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal, 2005, s. 30.

<sup>27</sup> BOA. Y. PRK. DH. Dos. 2, No. 86; BOA. ZB. Dos. 419, No. 162; BOA Y. MTV., Dos.72, No.60.

<sup>28</sup> BOA. Y. PRK. ASK. Dos. 83, No. 32.

<sup>29</sup> *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler*, Volume 13, Document No. 47; Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands*, s. 60; Kaprielian-Churchill, *Like Our Mountains*, s. 28.

<sup>30</sup> BOA. Y.PRK. UM. Dos. 26, No. 97.

<sup>31</sup> Khater, *Inventing Home*, s. 52.

<sup>32</sup> Kaya, *Shifting Turkish American Identity Formations*, s. 47.

<sup>33</sup> BOA. A. MKT. MHM. Dos. 540, No. 25, Y. PRK. AZN. Dos. 20, No. 40; BOA Y. MTV. Dos. 258, No. 11; *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler*, Volume 15, Document No. 79; Sarkis Narzakian, *Memoirs of Sarkis Narzakian*, Gomidas Institute, Ann Arbor, MI, 1995, s. 98–99; BOA. Y. A. HUS. Dos. 517, No. 41, Lef 1.

<sup>34</sup> BOA. ŞD. Dos. 2794, No. 3; *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Osmanlı–Fransız İlişkileri I*, Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, Ankara, 2002, s. 94–116.

<sup>35</sup> BOA. HR. SYS. Dos. 2735, No. 38; French ports especially, such as Le Havre and Cherbourg, were used. Coan, *Ellis Island Interviews*, s. 395, 401.

authorities and merchant companies with the emigrants as it did from the neglect of Ottoman officials. But, that just set the tide of migration in motion. Once the Armenians reached the United States, they searched for ways to bring over their families, and the ones left behind sought ways to leave the country. As a result, the Ottoman archives are full of correspondence concerning this problem. The Ottoman government gave the necessary approvals to reunite the families of Armenians who migrated through legal channels, but those emigrants were required never to return in order to prevent malicious elements from reentering the country under foreign the protection of foreign citizenship.<sup>36</sup>

### **Ottoman Surveillance on the Armenian Immigrants in the United States**

At first, the Ottoman Empire did not pay much attention to the “malicious” activities of Armenians in the United States. In fact, on September 30, 1889, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Sait Pasha reported to Grand Vizier Kamil Pasha that the Armenian immigrants lacked the power to affect US public opinion.<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, on October 9, the ambassador in Washington, Mavroyeni Bey, reported that around two hundred Armenians had held a meeting in Hoboken, New Jersey, at which a monk named Ossep Saraciyani gave a speech that was hypocritical and political in nature.<sup>38</sup>

Previously, on September 6, 1889, the *New York Times* had reported that the first in a series of meetings planned by the Armenians was held in Hoboken. It was arranged by a committee formed in Hoboken and Jersey City, where around 300 Armenians worked in the silk mills. S. Gabriel was the chairman, P.M. Arvad the secretary, H. Sarrafian the treasurer, and H. S. Tavshandjian, H. Topralianian and K. Bogdanian were members. Their objective was to organize meetings in all cities of the eastern states where Armenians lived. In one of the meetings led by M. Oscanian a priest known as Dr. Saragian made a penetrating speech, a response from Senator James Bryce to a letter sent to him a few weeks earlier was read, and donations were collected.<sup>39</sup> The Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a letter to Britain

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<sup>36</sup> For example in the archives, see: BOA. *HR. SYS.* Dos. 2794, No. 31; *HR. SYS.* 2743, 2795, 2796, 2798; *ZB.* Dos. 407, No. 37, 78; *A. MKT. MHM.* Dos. 545, No. 20.

<sup>37</sup> *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler*, Volume 7, Document No. 102.

<sup>38</sup> *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler*, Volume 7, Document No. 104.

<sup>39</sup> BOA. *HR. SYS.* Dos. 2735, No. 9.

and the United States that such Armenian activities be prohibited but were informed that the press could not be censored in a democratic environment.<sup>40</sup> So the meetings continued. On August 2, 1890, the Armenians convened in New York in the Eastern Star Hall under leadership of an Armenian named “Gabril.” Claiming that Armenians were being oppressed in their homeland and 400 had been killed in Erzurum, Gabril proposed sending a petition to the President of the United States asking that the American ambassador in Istanbul be instructed to provide aid to the Armenians.<sup>41</sup>

In the context of these developments, on November 5, 1893, Minister of Foreign Affairs Sait Pasha instructed Ambassador Mavroyeni Bey to begin surveillance of the Armenian activities.<sup>42</sup> In the archives, the resulting correspondence regarding private detective agencies commissioned by the Ottoman government begins in 1894. In addition, Mavroyeni Bey started receiving intelligence from an Armenian businessman named Bogigian and on the recommendation of Bogigian, from another Armenian named Khachadourian.<sup>43</sup>

Despite Mavroyeni Bey’s earlier assurances reported that Armenian activities would not affect US public opinion, the influence of Armenians had grown at an alarming rate within five years. In a letter dated November 28, 1894, the ambassador reported to Sait Pasha that the Governor of Massachusetts had attended a meeting of many Armenians and Americans and that there was no provision in US law to prevent a governor from doing so. That same year a report of New York Consul Ismail Hakki Bey described six Armenian organizations active in that important American city. The first was the New York branch of the “Social Democrat Hunchakian Party” headquartered in Athens, Greece, whose badge was a small bell and chains of bondage broken with two cross-like keys. The chairman was Muradyan(?), deputy chairman Mezikyan(?), and the members were Kontuni, Çalyan(?), Asaduryan, Ivadyan and Varçinyan(?). Varçinyan travelled from city to city to promote uprising. The organization met each Saturday afternoon, on the

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<sup>40</sup> **Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler**, Volume 16, Document No. 105.

<sup>41</sup> BOA. *Y. A. HUS*. Dos. 238, No. 53.

<sup>42</sup> **Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler**, Volume 16, Document No. 18; For detailed information on this matter see Bilal N. Şimşir, “Washington’da Osmanlı Elçisi Alexandre Mavroyeni Bey ve Ermeni Gailisi,” **Ermeni Araştırmaları**, No. 4 (December 2001-January 2002); Bilal N. Şimşir, **Ermeni Meselesi 1774–2005**, 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue, Bilgi Yay., Ankara 2005.

<sup>43</sup> Şimşir, **Ermeni Meselesi 1774–2005**, 103–105, 107.

Sixth Street. The leader of the second, the forty member underground organization Tumankaran (?), was Diyunyan, a dark, tall, thirty-two-year-old Armenian immigrant who, having taken US citizenship and adopted America as his homeland, made acting against the Ottoman Empire his life's work. Both of these organizations feverishly worked to support Hunchakian newspapers published in Liverpool and Athens, and to stockpile arms and ammunition.<sup>44</sup>

The consul's information on the other four groups was less detailed. "Haykagayutyun(?)" had been formed by Dr. Boyacıyan of the First Volunteer Corps. Kabl Ermenan(?), an underground revolutionary organization, led by Tavsancıyan, a prominent merchant. "Hrimyan," also known as the Armenian Cross, was one of the most troublesome organizations in New York, and its members were among the most malicious elements. A thirty-five-year-old man named Ogranyan had been sent to Liverpool on a special assignment, was a reporter for the American newspaper "*Hayk*" and originally from Ortaköy, Istanbul. Ogranyan was a close friend of Dr. Kaprılyan, the publisher of *Hayk*, who had formed a sixth organization that was named for him. His anti-government ideology was evident in *Hayk*.<sup>45</sup> In addition to that of the consul, the government received another report in 1894 that stated the Hunchak organization had formed two new groups in New York, Kirimyan and Hacıgıryan "Ehlisalip."<sup>46</sup>

On March 16, 1894, the Washington embassy wrote that it had a bill from the Boston Detective Agency (Pinkerton) totaling \$ 61.35 and that satisfactory service was expected from the detective agency upon payment of an adequate sum. A man named "Buzcuyan" in Boston had informed the embassy that a certain Armenian could provide information on the Hunchakian organization, but since the information provided by that Armenian proved to be inadequate, it would be beneficial to commission Pinkerton's services for one or two months longer.<sup>47</sup> As a result, by May 28, the embassy had eighteen reports from the detective agency to forward to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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<sup>44</sup> **Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler**, Volume 23, Document No. 98.

<sup>45</sup> BOA. *HR. SYS.* Dos. 279, No. 5.

<sup>46</sup> Recep Karacakaya, **Kaynakçalı Ermeni Meselesi Kronolojisi (1878–1923)**, General Directorate of State Archives Ottoman Archives Office Publication, Istanbul, 2001, s. 20, 22.

<sup>47</sup> BOA. *HR. SYS.* Dos. 2830, No. 11.

In the first, the detective stated that a man known as “Karabetyan” contacted Hunchakian committees, acted like an important person and communicated with Athenian Armenians rather than Ottoman Armenians. His Athens contact was a man named “Brinyard”.

The second concerned Miss Alice Stone Blackwell, an Armenian sympathizer who provided aid to the Armenians who took US citizenship. According to Miss Blackwell, even though the American missionaries were aware of the ill conditions regarding Armenians they made no open statements on the matter so as not to attract the attention of the Ottoman government. “The Armenian Sympathizers Society,” moreover, declared that their activities were not in parallel with the Hunchakians; rather, their objective was to impress the European and American public in favor of Armenians.

After reporting that there were two Armenian restaurants in Boston and that in one he had heard a political conversation between Armenians who were hoping that Britain would provide them aid, the detective recounted his interview with “Priest Harlis,” a member of the Armenian Sympathizers Society. The priest told him that the Armenian Sympathizers Society had decided to defend Armenians who took US citizenship against the Ottoman government and that the oppression of Armenians on Ottoman soil justified the activities of the Armenians. A fifth report revealed that some Americans were making monetary donations to Armenians but that the detective did not believe the money collected would be used for any serious activity.

The remaining thirteen reports stem from the surveillance of “Karabetyan” and of his friend, the separatist priest “Çitciyan” who lived across the street from him. The detective rented a room adjacent to Çitciyan’s room and even “infiltrated” Çitciyan’s room but could not find anything substantial. Although he could hear the conversations in the next room, including those between the priest and his wife, the detective did not understand Armenian. At one point, he copied a piece of Armenian writing on a half-torn envelope he found in Çitciyan’s room. Later, he again infiltrated Çitciyan’s room while the priest and Karabetyan were away to meet with some Armenians. There he found the bag in which Çitciyan kept his documents but could not read any as all were in Armenian. He thought some had been sent to a newspaper in Athens and saw some pages from a newspaper named *Timovanis Kulumis(?)* in Çitciyan’s room. Like Karabetyan, who received a large amount of mail, Çitciyan spent a lot of time on mail correspondence.

After the ambassador lamented that if only the detective knew Armenian, these eighteen reports would provide valuable intelligence on the Armenian separatist movement in America, the Boston consul general proposed a scheme to obtain Çitciyan's papers, but it was deemed too risky. If anyone fluent in Armenian were to be seen entering the room together with the detective, the whole operation could be compromised. The Ottoman ambassador also asked the Pinkerton agency to provide names and descriptions of the Armenian separatists living in Worcester, Massachusetts, and to determine whether some Armenians from Lowell, Massachusetts, were traveling to Russia in order to cross the Ottoman border from there.<sup>48</sup> The report on Worcester appears in appendix 4.

To address the lack of Armenian-speaking American detectives, the Ottoman government and the Pinkerton agency considered two plans. In one, a detective would rent a shop in Worcester and try to attract Armenian customers. He would employ Armenians and spend time with Armenians to learn their manner and actions over the course of a couple of months. Besides the \$ 28 fee of the detective agency, expenses would include shop rental, retail stock and the daily expenses of the agent. According to the second, less costly plan, a detective would find a job in a factory where Armenians worked and try to earn their trust. Either plan would cost more than the eight dollars per day allowed in the embassy's budget, but there was no realistic alternative. Using an attorney, named Carroll, a newspaper reporter named McCarthy or an Armenian called Tophaneliyan as an informer was rejected by the ambassador on the grounds that none of them was trustworthy.<sup>49</sup>

Meanwhile, Armenian organizations were biding their time. Among the subversive activities against the Ottoman Empire that they undertook or contemplated were recruiting official institutions or NGOs to their cause; organizing meetings and inviting important figures to attend them; sending letters to influential people; and resorting to threats, blackmail, intimidation, and even murder. But they began with those designed to turn sympathizers into active supporters. For example, despite their own poverty, Armenians donated money to hospitals and educational institutions in Providence Rhode

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<sup>48</sup> BOA. *HR. SYS.* Dos. 2855, No. 35;. The document includes report summaries in Ottoman Turkish.

<sup>49</sup> BOA. *HR. SYS.* Dos. 2855, No. 42.

Island, and food to an orphanage in Worcester.<sup>50</sup> Utilizing all kinds of propaganda, the Armenians also sought the support of other countries. In 1895, for instance, Herant B. Kiretchjian, Secretary of Phil-Armenic Association of America, sent separate letters to the Russian Czar and Queen of England requesting their interest in atrocities against Armenians.<sup>51</sup>

### Numbers of Immigrant Armenians Immigrating to the United States

The Washington embassy regularly updated the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on official data pertaining to Ottoman immigration. Thus, on April 18, 1890, it reported that the total of all immigration in 1889 was 444,427 and 1,190 of the immigrants came from the Ottoman Empire. A breakdown of their origins by region, also from US data, followed.<sup>52</sup>

<u>Region</u>	<u>Number</u>
Ottoman Europe	252
Arabia	216
“Armenian-Inhabited Provinces” (American terminology)	96
Anatolia	593
<u>Egypt</u>	<u>33</u>
Total	1,190

#### Further Data Regarding Immigrants from “Armenian-Inhabited Provinces”

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Under the age of 15	13	1	14
Between ages of 15 and 40	68	7	75
<u>Over the age of 40</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>7</u>
Total	86	10	96

On May 4, 1891, the embassy reported that in 1890 of 455,302 immigrants, and 2,167 migrated from the Ottoman Empire.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Paul R. Dauphinais, “Étre a l’ouvrage ou être maitresse de maison: French-Canadian Women and Work in Late Nineteenth-Century Massachusetts,” in **Women of the Commonwealth: Work, Family and Social Change in Nineteenth-Century Massachusetts**, ed. Susan L. Porter, University of Massachusetts Press, Boston, 1996, s. 76.

<sup>51</sup> BOA. *HR. SYS.* Dos. 2739, No. 22.

<sup>52</sup> BOA. *HR. SYS.* Dos. 71, No. 8.

<sup>53</sup> BOA. *HR. SYS.* Dos. 71, No. 37.

<u>Region</u>	<u>Number</u>
Ottoman Europe	206
Arabia	226
“Armenian-Inhabited Provinces”	598
Asia	1,126
<u>Egypt</u>	<u>11</u>
Total	2,167

The embassy report of March 29, 1892, stated that in 1891, of the 560,319 immigrants 3,297 came from Ottoman Empire.

<u>Region</u>	<u>Number</u>
Ottoman Europe	265 (165)*
Arabia	352
“Armenian-Inhabited Provinces”	812
Anatolia	1,828 (2,488)*
<u>Egypt</u>	<u>40</u>
Total	3,297 (3,957)*

Functionaries in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, however, made summation errors in recording the regional data. Ethnically, most of the immigrants were those from the province of Damascus, and the number of Turkish Greeks was too small to be even cited in American records. Muslims numbered only 20-30 people.<sup>54</sup>

The report dated April 3, 1893, regarding the year 1892 noted that of 683,084 immigrants, 6,333 were from Ottoman Empire.

<u>Region</u>	<u>Number</u>
Ottoman Europe	227
Arabia	191
“Armenian-Inhabited Provinces”	2,726 (2,728)*
Asia	3,172
<u>Egypt</u>	<u>17</u>
Total	6,333 (6,335)*

Again, in 1893 the Foreign Ministry made summation errors (The sum is in the parentheses). In addition, the American distinction between Anatolia and “Armenian-inhabited provinces” continued to observe the number of

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<sup>54</sup> BOA. HR. SYS. Dos. 71, No. 70; Y. A. HUS. Dos. 260, No. 93.



Armenian immigrants coming from other regions.<sup>55</sup> On the other hand, the Armenians themselves were trying to influence American officials in order to bolster their claims regarding immigration, and most Armenian researchers have shared the same ideology.<sup>56</sup>

Armenian-American author Robert Mirak<sup>57</sup> and Armenian researcher Knarik Avakian indicate that between 1899 and 1914, a total of 51,950 Ottoman Armenians migrated to the United States, generally as single men and for a temporary period.<sup>58</sup> In parallel with these findings, a study of American immigration registers conducted by the Turkish History Institution coincide that the number of Ottoman Armenians migrating to the United States between 1899 and 1914 was 51,950.<sup>59</sup> Consequently, this figure, being as the result of studies conducted by both sides, can be accepted as the reference number.

### Conclusion

The conditions impelling nineteenth-century migration were among the cruelest of all the intercontinental migrations in the history of the world, and those who suffered the most during this flow were the citizens of multinational states. As this situation, in turn, became an important influence on international relations, migration from the Ottoman Empire to the United States proved to be a key example of that trend.

First, the issue of citizenship raised significant problems between the United States and the Ottoman Empire. Although they remained unsolved for quite a long time, the efforts to address them served as valuable experiences in the further relations and eventual socio-cultural and political rapprochement between the two countries. For the Ottoman Empire, the emigration of the Armenians matured its idea of “citizenship,” which consequently was defined on legal grounds.

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<sup>55</sup> BOA. *HR. SYS.* Dos. 72, No. 42.

<sup>56</sup> BOA. *Y. A. HUS.* Dos. 260, No. 93.

<sup>57</sup> Mirak, **Torn Between Two Lands**, s. 71.

<sup>58</sup> Knarik Avakian, “The History of the Armenian Community of the United States of America : from the Beginning to 1924,” <http://www.geocities.com/lira777/summary.html>. Access date: 17 November 2004.

<sup>59</sup> Hikmet Özdemir et al., **Ermeniler: Sürgün ve Göç**, TTK yay., Ankara 2004, s. 165.

In addition, the activities of its citizens and its expatriates forced the Ottoman Empire to take and apply precautions before other states did. Chief among them were efforts to monitor Armenian immigrants within the borders of the United States, but, under the present circumstances, it is difficult to claim that those precautions had any substantial impact.

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**APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: The Ottoman-US Citizenship Agreement of August 11, 1874

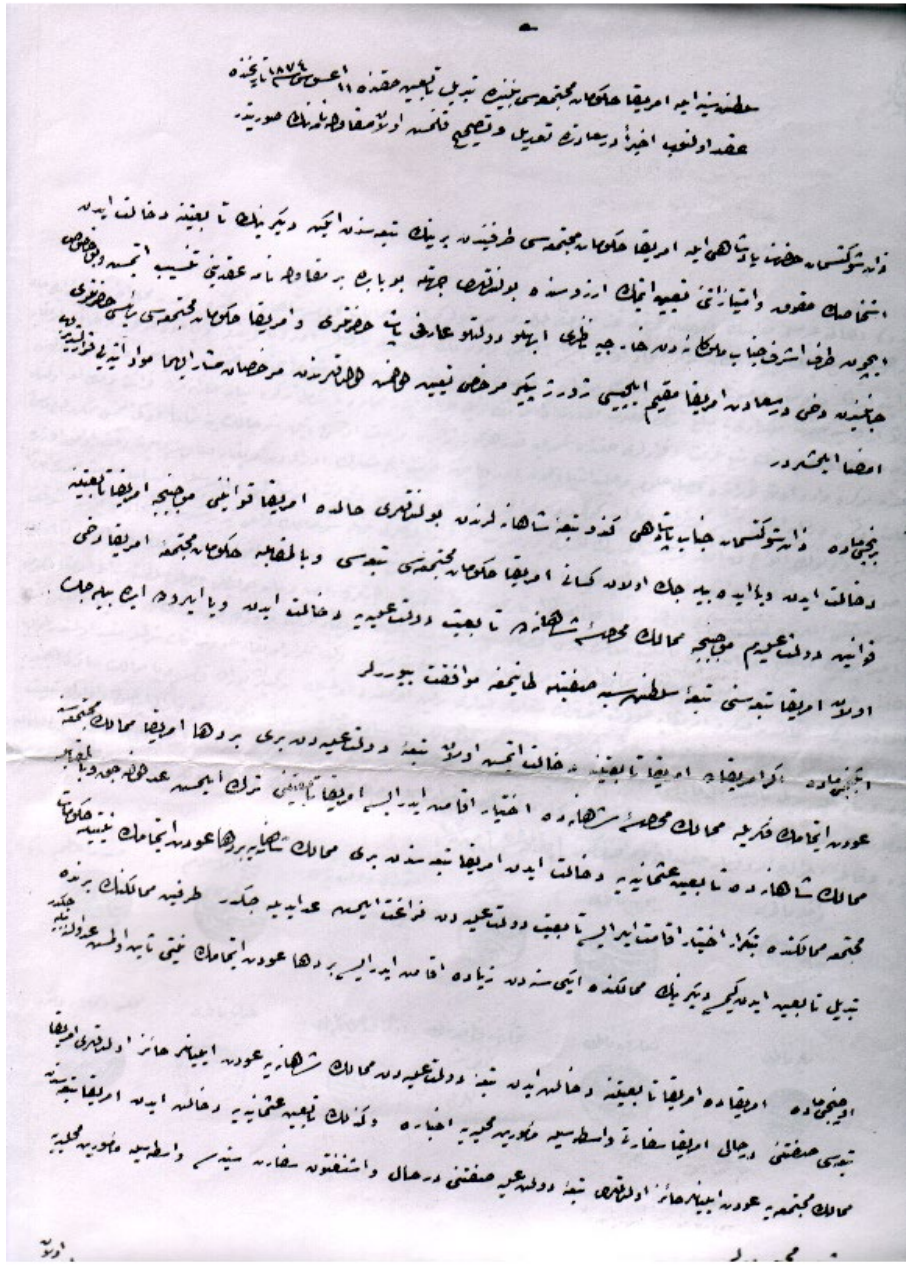
Appendix 2 : A Letter of the US Embassy in Istanbul to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tevfik Pasha of the Sublime Porte

Appendix 3: List of (Armenian) Families Requesting Official Permission to Emigrate from the Ottoman Empire to the United States of America, September 22, 1903

Appendix 4: Report of the Pinkerton Detective Agency to the Ottoman Consul General in Boston on Armenian Separatists in Worcester, Massachusetts, January 31, 1895

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: The Ottoman-US Citizenship Agreement of August 11, 1874



Appendix 2: A Letter of the US Embassy in Istanbul to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tevfik Pasha of the Sublime Porte

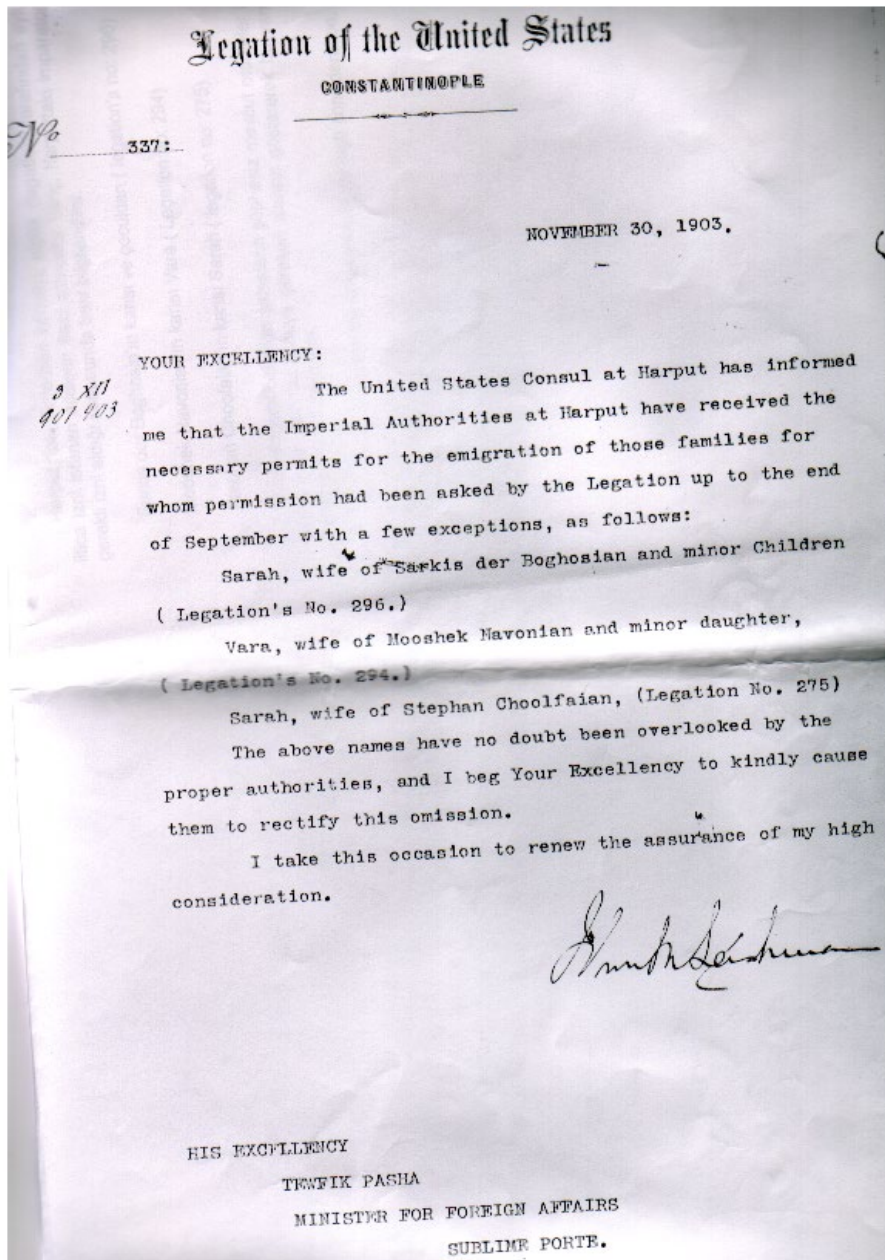
Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Ba...

LISTE DES FAMILLES DONT LA PERMISSION A ETE DEMANDEE  
PAR LA LEGATION AU GOUVERNEMENT IMPERIAL D'EMIGRER AUX  
ETATS UNIS D'AMERIQUE - - -SEPTEMBRE 22, 1903.

8 X  
899703

Madame Varter Nahigian et trois enfants de Hussanigm Harpout,		
Madame Avedis Dagdigian	Kasirig,	"
" Eprem K. Avakian	Morenik,	"
" Hovannes Garoian et son enfant mineur Toros, Perchenje		"
" Mardiros Zoornagian et son enfant Hosha, Charsanjak		"
" Maryan Simonian et son fils d'Agin Caza Cushna,		"
" Elizabeth Arabyan et son fils		Harpout
" Bedros Antaramian et son fils,	de Peri	"
" Stephan Choolfaian,	Peri	"
" Garabed Kushdoain et deux enfants	Peri	"
" Sarkis Vartanian et ses deux enfants	Peri	"
" Sarkis Minosian et ses trois enfants		Harpout
" Avedis Hagopian,	Pazmashan	"
" Bedros Bagdigian et six enfants		Harpout
" Khatoun Paytonjian		Harpout
" Nishan Tatosian	Peri	"
Mlle Annageul Bojosian		Harpout,
Madame Manog Goorigian et ses deux enfants	Soosocry,	"
" Minas S. Kondazian et son fils,		Harpout
<del>Monsieur Hovanes G. Mardigian</del>		<del>Harpout</del>
Madame Mooshek Navoian et sa fille,	Kayloo,	"
" Kevork Chirkinian et son fils,	Arabkir	"
" Etar Moshcian et ses deux enfants	Kayloo,	"
" Kevork Mooshoian	Kayloo	"
" Katoon Topoozian,	Mezré	"
" Ermo S. Ermoyan		Harpout
" Avedis Kricorian et ses trois enfants		Harpout
" Astoor Kinosian,		Harpout
" Manoog Kasparian,		Harpout

**Appendix 3:** List of (Armenian) Families Requesting Official Permission to Emigrate from the Ottoman Empire to the United States of America, September 22, 1903





Appendix 4: Report of the Pinkerton Detective Agency to the Ottoman Consul General in Boston on Armenian Separatists in Worcester, Massachusetts, January 31, 1895

PINKERTON AİSİVİ DAİRE BAŞKANLIĞI

*Pinkerton's National Detective Agency*  
FOUNDED BY ALLAN PINKERTON 1850.

*Wm. A. Pinkerton, New York* ) PRINCIPALS. *Geo. D. Bangs, Genl. Supt.*  
*Wm. A. Pinkerton, Chicago* ) *New York*

D. ROBERTSON, Asst. Genl. Supt. Middle Division, Chicago.  
JAS. McPARLAND, Asst. Genl. Supt. Western Division, Denver.

ATTENDANT FOR THE AGENCY:  
CLARENCE A. SEWARD,  
New York

CONNECTED BY TELEPHONE.

**OFFICES.**  
BOSTON. 10 & 12 FEDERAL STREET.  
JOHN COBURN BLDG.  
NEW YORK. 88 EXCHANGE PLACE.  
PHILADELPHIA. 441 CHESTNUT STREET.  
CHICAGO. 201 FIFTH AVENUE.  
ST. PAUL. GERMAN BANK BUILDING.  
KANSAS CITY. 632 MAIN STREET.  
DENVER. OPERA HOUSE BLOCK.  
PORTLAND, ORE. HANCOCK BLOCK.

Boston, Mass., Jan. 31st, 1895.

J. A. Isaigi, Esq.,  
Turkish Consul, #53 State St., Boston, Mass.,

Dear Sir:-

My operative, "H.P.R.," further reports as follows:

Monday, Jan. 28th, 1895.

"I left Worcester this morning on the 9.32 A.M. train, and arrived in Boston at 10.45 A.M. at which time I reported at the Agency.

The following report contains descriptions of the leading Armenians in Worcester.

Maghakia Deroonian--Priest--55 years old; 5 ft. 6 in.; tall; stout; dark eyes; long, black beard; wears a long, black gown and black skull cap; can speak very little English.

K. G. Kamelian--Preach<sup>er</sup> of Congregational Church--55 years old--5 ft. 8 in.--medium build--fair hair turning gray--dark eyes--gray mustache--gray suit and wears a soft felt hat.

M. S. Nahigian--Importer and Broker--place of business #47-1/2 Hanover St., Worcester--50 years of age--5 ft. 8 in.--Stout build--dark complexion--dark hair--dark eyes--black beard--dark clothes--gold rimmed eye glasses--black felt hat.

M. Tophanelian--Professor--#51 Friend St., Worcester--draftsman--60 yrs. 5 ft. 8 in.--dark complexion--Gray hair--dark eyes--close clipped, gray beard gray clothing--speaks English better than any of his companions.

Vartogogian--Preacher--residence, New York--60 yrs. old--5 ft. 8 in.--medium build--complexion fair--gray hair--gray eyes--close clipped, gray beard and mustache--clothing black--when talking he is always rubbing his hands together.

Armen Kunoony--#11 Fountain St., Worcester--Armenian interpreter--23 yrs. old--5 ft. 6 in.--stout--dark complexion--brown hair--dark eyes--beard just beginning to grow--clothes gray.

