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Dr. Dundar Discusses Instruments of Power During the *Medz Yeghern*

Dr. Fuat Dundar, Manoogian Simone Foundation Post-Doctoral Fellow at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, presented a public lecture last week titled “Instruments of Power during the *Medz Yeghern* (Big Holocaust) of Ottoman Armenians: Map, Census, Telegram.”

Dr. Dundar summarized his lecture in the following way: “I tried to provide concrete examples of the use of modern instruments by the positivist CUP (Committee of Union and Progress) authorities during the *Medz Yeghern* of Ottoman Armenians during 1915-1916”.

“These instruments (telegram, census, map, and photograph),” he said, “were also characteristic of the anti-Armenian demographic operation and as well as the Turkification policy of the CUP government. Using tens of thousands of ciphered telegrams, the CUP executed its policy rapidly and secretly. The census was the main instrument before, during and after the entire operation. All steps involved were calculated and registered carefully. Not only the deportees, the converts, the orphans but even the dead were surveyed by the censuses. The third instrument, the ethnographic map, was produced to locate the Armenian villages and used to ensure the total evacuation of the Armenian regions. In other words, these maps were produced for the perfect execution of the demography policy. The last and the most important instrument was the photograph. The main reason to photograph Armenians was to persuade the 'Western world' that Armenians had rebelled and the policy of the Ottoman authorities was only deportation, not destruction of the Armenian population. These photographs were produced for the purposes of justifying government policy among the Turks as well, and that argument is still used by the Turkish government.”

The lecture was sponsored by the Armenian Studies program of the University of Michigan.

Dr. Dundar, who received his doctorate from l'École des Haute Études des Sciences Sociales in Paris, wrote a dissertation titled “L'ingénierie Ethnique du Comité Union et Progrés et la Turcisation de l'Anatolie (1913-1918).” “He has also authored two other volumes in Turkish: on CUP settlement policy of Muslims in Anatolia (Istanbul, 2001) and on the treatment of minorities in the Turkish census, (Istanbul, 2000); this volume has also been published in Greek). Dr. Dundar will be teaching a course in

the History department during the Winter 2009 on “power, Peoples, Statistics: Nationalisms in the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey.”