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WWI ARMENIAN REFUGEES CENSUS DATA AS A SOURCE FOR OTTOMAN ARMENIAN POPULATION NUMBERS ON THE EVE OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE¹

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This paper aims to present and analyze data provided by censuses of the Ottoman Armenians from Van, Erzeroum and Bitlis provinces, who, fleeing the threat of massacre during WWI, found refuge in the territory of the Russian Empire, particularly in the Russian Transcaucasia. By comparing data on the Armenian refugees with information provided by other statistical sources, particularly the Armenian patriarchate and the Ottoman government, it is possible to enrich our knowledge of the numbers of Armenian population in Western Armenia and the Ottoman Empire in general on the eve of WWI and the Armenian Genocide. It is shown that the number of refugees is about 70% higher than the number of the Armenian population for the same areas before WWI mentioned in the official Ottoman statistics and corresponds approximately to the figures of the Armenian patriarchate. If account is taken that some people were already dead by the time the refugee censuses were carried out and also that the populations of some settlements within the administrative units in question were not evacuated at all but massacred, then the actual number of the Armenian population in these areas was even higher.

Key-words: Armenian question, WWI, Armenian Genocide, Armenian refugees, census, statistics, demography, Van province, Bitlis province, Erzeroum province.

Introduction

According to article 61 of the Berlin Treaty (1878), the Ottoman government undertook the obligation “to carry out, without further delay, the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by Armenians.”² Almost immediately after making this commitment, the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II and the successor Young Turk government tried to demonstrate to the great powers, the guarantors of the implementation of the Armenian reforms, that there were no “Armenian-inhabited provinces” in the Ottoman Empire and the Armenians in “the six eastern vilayets”³ or “Eastern Anatolia,” as the Ottoman authorities began to call historical Armenian territories under the Ottoman rule, were a minority. This was achieved by issuing more and more government statistical data. In its

1 The article was received on 21.12.2019 and accepted for publication on 20.09.2020.

2 The full text of article LXI is as follows: “The Sublime Porte undertakes to carry out, without further delay, the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and Kurds. It will periodically make known the steps taken to this effect to the Powers, who will superintend their application.” See: “Treaty between Great Britain, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Russia, and Turkey for the Settlement of Affairs in the East: Signed at Berlin, July 13, 1878,” *The American Journal of International Law* 2, no. 4, *Supplement: Official Documents* (1908): 422.

3 The Ottoman Empire was divided using the following administrative-territorial entities (from major to minor): vilayet (province), sanjak (district), kaza (sub-district), and nahiye (village group). In this article both Ottoman and their English equivalents are used.

turn, the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople, body responsible for internal governance of the Ottoman Armenian community (millet), opposed these claims by presenting its own estimates of the number of Ottoman Armenians and the ethnic composition of the vilayets of “Turkish Armenia.”

By comparing the Ottoman Armenian population figures provided by the Ottoman government (1914) and those issued by Armenian Patriarchate (1912) prior to WWI, it can be seen that the Armenian patriarchate statistics, compared to that of Ottoman data were about 1.57 times higher. As for the six Armenian provinces (Van, Bitlis, Erzeroum, Kharberd, Diyarbekir and Sebastia) the discrepancy between two sets of data was about 1.83 (see Table 1).

Table 1. The Ottoman Armenian population figures provided by the Ottoman government (1914) and the Armenian Patriarchate (1913-1914).

Administrative unit	1914 Ottoman government ⁴	1913-1914 Armenian Patriarchate ⁵
Six Armenian provinces	-	-
Van	67,792	197,000
Bitlis	119,132	198,000
Erzeroum	136,618	215,000
Kharberd	87,864	204,000
Diyarbekir	73,226	124,000
Sebastia	151,674	225,000
Total Six Armenian provinces	636,306	1,163,000
Other parts of the Ottoman Empire	658,545	863,700
Grand total	1,294,851	2,026,700

4 Kemal Karpat, *Ottoman population 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 188-189 (it included Armenian Catholic and Protestant population figures).

5 T'eodik, *Ull'āmlū Suphāgngh, ԺԶ. unuph, 1922* [Everybody's Almanac, 16th year, 1922] (Constantinople, 1922), 261-263. This census of the Patriarchate was elaborated with the help of the provincial dioceses and parishes to which the Armenian populations were attached, and it is presented in the form of parish by parish tables. The original documents of this census, which were kept at the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople, were deposited at the Nubarian Library in Paris in 1928. 1913-1914 census data were used in French-Armenian scholars Raymond H. Kevorkian's and Paul B. Paboudjian's detailed study of the pre-WWI Ottoman Armenian population (Raymond H. Kévorkian, Paul B. Paboudjian, *Les Arméniens dans l'Empire Ottoman à la veille du génocide* (Paris: Editions d'Art et d'Histoire ARHIS, 1992).

In general, there are two ways of checking the reliability of historical statistical information. One is to analyze the data itself, reveal its internal shortcomings, define an adjustment factor and adjust the data in accordance on that basis. In case of Ottoman statistics, this method was used by historian Justin McCarthy, who based his estimates of the population of the Anatolian provinces on Ottoman data.⁶ The second method is to compare existing statistical information with data from other sources for the approximately same period and for conclusions to be reached through such a comparison. In the case of the Ottoman Armenian population prior to the Armenian Genocide, four kinds of such sources may be identified:

1. Data provided by censuses of the Armenians who, fleeing the threat of massacre during WWI, found refuge on the territory of the Russian Empire, particularly in Russian Transcaucasia (the Caucasus);
2. Data gathered by questioning Armenian refugees about their native settlements;
3. Data contained in Armenian Genocide survivors' memoirs and testimonies concerning their native settlements;
4. Estimates of the Ottoman Armenian population made by diplomats of various states: the allies of the Ottoman Empire (Germany and Austria-Hungary) as well as those that were neutral (USA) and that were present at the places in question.

Of these four sources, the first - the data provided by censuses of the Western Armenian refugees - is more reliable and generally more trustworthy, based on the following interconnected arguments. First, Western Armenians had no reason to hide their numbers as was the case before the deportations - there is widespread evidence of such a practice in Western Armenia with the aim of avoiding taxation.⁷ On the contrary, they were interested in showing their numbers as accurately as possible in order to receive humanitarian assistance. Second, the bodies which carried out censuses also needed the most accurate number of Armenian refugees possible to organize aid. Third, the organizers adopted accurate methods of collating these censuses: in particular, they counted refugees in different refugee concentration areas simultaneously, on one specific day, to avoid double counting (registration).

The data from the first source is presented below and is compared to that of the Armenian Patriarchate and Ottoman government. Thus, by comparison of Armenian refugees' data with information provided by other statistical sources it is possible to enrich our knowledge of Armenian population numbers in Western Armenia and the Ottoman Empire in general on the eve of WWI and the Armenian Genocide.

6 Justin McCarthy, *Muslims and Minorities. The Population of Ottoman Anatolia and the End of the Empire* (New York: N.Y. University Press, 1983).

7 The Ottoman Armenians' incentive to avoid registration in order not to be taxed is widely attested to in various sources and was common knowledge for researchers that specialized in Ottoman Armenian demographic studies. For recent studies in English where this issue is touched upon see particularly: Levon Marashlian, *Politics and Demography. Armenians, Turks, and Kurds in the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge, MA-Paris-Toronto: Zoryan Institute, 1991), 48; Vahakn N. Dadrian, *Warrant for Genocide: Key Elements of the Turko-Armenian Conflict* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1999), 176; for Diyarbekir province see: Hilmar Kaiser, *The Extermination of Armenians in the Diyarbekir Region* (Istanbul: Bilgi University Press, 2014), 20-21.

The administrative units of Western Armenia should be defined at the outset. The Armenian population of those areas, being in the majority or being a considerable percentage of the total resident population, could escape massacre by finding refuge in the Caucasus in 1914-1915. Those regions were:

1. Van province;
2. Basen sub-district of the Erzeroum district of Erzeroum province;
3. Bayazet, Diadin, Karakilise, and Alashkert sub-districts of the Bayazet district of Erzeroum province;
4. Boulanykh and Manazkert sub-districts of the Mush district of Bitlis province.

The Armenian refugees from those regions were mainly enumerated during the so-called “one-day” censuses that took place in 1915-1916. The Russian government had ordered two censuses taken of refugees in Transcaucasia during this period. The first was carried out on 30 January 1915 (12 February, new style), the second one on 14 January 1916 (27 January 1916 new style). They were carried out by the Yerevan Statistical Bureau.⁸

Armenian refugee statistics should be presented and analyzed separately for each of the administrative units mentioned and compared with the data provided by the Ottoman government and the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Van Province

Most of the Armenian population of Van province managed to avoid massacres and deportations by resorting to self-defense. Turkish troops withdrew with the Russian army advance in April-May 1915. The tactical retreat of the Russian army in July 1915, however, forced the entire Armenian population of Van province to follow it to the Caucasus to avoid imminent retaliatory action by the Turkish government. Not all the Armenians of Van province, however, were able to overcome the difficulties of the journey, many perishing on the way.

The Armenian population of Van province, which found refuge in Transcaucasia, was counted during the “one-day census” carried out on 14 January 1916 (27 January 1916 new style). According to the data provided by this census, 18,586 Armenian families or about

⁸ Summary results of “One-day census” of 30 January 1915 were published in 1915 in *Однoднeвнaя пeрeпись бeжeнцeв изъ Турции, Персии и изъ мeстъ пoгрaничныxъ съ Турцией (армянь, айсорoвь, грековъ и пр.) 1914-1915г.* [One-day Census of Refugees from Turkey, Persia and from Places Adjacent to the Border of Turkey, 1914-1915] (Yerevan: Luys, 1915); Summary data of the “One-day census” of 14 January 1916 can be found in Eduard Danielyan, «Անդրկովկասում ապաստանած արևմտահայ գաղթականության թվաքանակի հարցի շուրջ (1914-1917թթ.)» [On Western Armenian Refugee Figure, who Found Refuge in Transcaucasia (1914-1917)], *Herald of the Social Sciences* 2 (2002): 116. Another primary source for Western Armenian refugee numbers by the place of origin is the report prepared by Aleksander Sharafyan, the commissioner for refugee aid of the Caucasus Armenian Charitable Society, published in *Hambavaber* weekly journal in January, 1916. See: Aleksander Sharafyan, «Համառոտ տեսություն գաղթականության ծագման, արդի կացության, Կ.Հ. Ընկերության եւ Հայկ. Կենտ. Կոմիտեի գործունեության» [A Brief Survey on the Origins of Refugees, their Present Condition, and the Activities of the Caucasus Armenian Society and the Armenian Central Commission], *Hambavaber* (Tiflis), 1916, no. 2, 45-47.

81,800 persons from Van province were registered (the number of persons per family was 4.4).⁹ Additionally, according to information collected during the “One-day census” from the Armenian refugees from Van province, at the actual time the census was held, one third of the members of the registered families had already died as a result of massacre, shortage of food and diseases after the beginning of WWI. The number of dead was about 36,500.¹⁰ Of this figure, about 20,000 had perished during the evacuation in July 1915, both on the journey and in refugee camps in Etchmiadzin, Igdır, Yerevan and other areas.¹¹

It should also be noted that about 12,000 Armenians from Van province returned to their former homes before January 1916. (Following defeats suffered at the Caucasus front, the Ottoman Army left the city of Van on 29 September 1915, thus allowing recapture of the province by the Russian troops and the subsequent return of some of the Armenians to Van.) These people were not counted during the so-called “one-day census” of January 14, 1916. In addition, the Armenians from Van vilayet who found refuge in Persian territory were not counted. These numbered approximately 10,000 individuals and, additionally, 3,500 orphans.¹² By summing up all the above-mentioned figures, we can conclude that at least 144,000 Armenians lived in Van province on the eve of the Armenian Genocide.¹³

Other sources contemporary to the events largely confirm this data. Thus, according to the *Memorandum on the Condition of Armenian Refugees*, compiled by the British Foreign Office from information furnished by Mr. Stevens, the British Consul at Batum, as of December 1915 there were 105,000 Armenian refugees from the province of Van in the Caucasus.¹⁴ The Armenian journalist Bakhshi Ishkhanian, in his series of articles about the condition of the Armenian refugees published in 1915, gives the range of numbers of Armenian refugees from Van province as being between 120,000-140,000.¹⁵

The figure of 144,000 quoted for the Armenian population of pre-genocide Van province is a conservative estimate. Researchers who have attempted to correct Van province Armenian population numbers by using Armenian refugee statistical data give even higher figures. The Armenian researcher John Kirakosyan, for example, counts the number of Armenian refugees evacuated from Van was more than 150,000 (unfortunately he does not provide any factors or mentions any sources in reaching this figure).¹⁶ Gegham

9 Danielyan, «Անդրկովկասում ապաստանած արևմտահայ գաղթականության», 116.

10 This number is obtained by calculating the percentage from the total number of both the dead and survivors.

11 Sharafyan, «Համառոտ տեսություն», 46.

12 Ibid.

13 For my detailed estimate of Van province Armenian population number see: Robert Tatoyan, «Վիճակագրական տվյալները Վանի նահանգի հայ բնակչության թվաքանակի վերաբերյալ 1878-1914 (աղբյուրների համադրության և վերլուծության փորձ)» [Statistics of the Armenian Population of Van Vilayet 1878-1914 (Attempt of Comparison and Analysis of Sources)], *The Issues of the History and Historiography of the Armenian Genocide* 7 (2003): 65-78.

14 James Bryce and Arnold Toynbee, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915-1916. Documents Presented to Viscount Grey of Falloden by Viscount Bryce*, Uncensored Edition, edited and with an introduction by Ara Sarafian (Priceton, New Jersey: Gomidas Institute, 2000), 237.

15 Bakhshi Ishkhanian, «Աղէտի եւ տառապանքի աշխարհից (Այց թիրքահայ փախստականներին) III» [From the World of Disaster and Suffering (A Visit to the Turkish Armenian Refugees) III], *Arev* (Alexandria), 5 November 1915, 1.

16 John S. Kirakosyan, *Առաջին համաշխարհային պատերազմը և արևմտահայությունը* [The First World War and the Western Armenians] (Yerevan: Hayastan, 1967), 43.

Badalyan, another Armenian scholar, took the Armenian refugee statistical data collected in July-September 1917 into account. He thus ascertained that the number of refugee families from Van was 24,127 and, fixing the number of adult members in a family as 8 or 8.8, concluded that about 210,000-212,000 Armenians lived in Van province in 1914.¹⁷

It should also be noted that the information contained in a memorandum, submitted by the Armenian National delegation to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, stated that the number of Van province Armenians who had found refuge in Russian Transcaucasia was more than 220,000.¹⁸

For comparison - according to statistical data based on settlement census returns of the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople - there were 19,222 Armenian households or 121,377 Armenians in Van province on the eve of WWI.¹⁹ The data of the Ottoman government is 65% less: about 68,000 (67,792) Armenians.²⁰

Erzeroum Province: Basen Sub-District of the Erzeroum District of Erzeroum Province

Basen sub-district had 57 Armenian-populated villages where, according to the Ottoman government data, 10,046 Armenians lived on the eve of WWI.²¹ According to the Armenian Patriarchate data the figure for the Armenian population in Basen was 16,740.²² Basen sub-district was divided in two areas - Upper Basen and Lower Basen.

Of these two areas only the population of Lower Basen was able to take refuge in the Transcaucasia at the beginning of November 1914. Basen sub-district's Armenians were registered during the so-called "one-day census" of 30 January 1915 (12 February new style).²³ According to this registration data, Armenian population from the 23 villages of Lower Basen that found refuge in Transcaucasia totaled 1,551 families or 12,914 individuals.²⁴ The comparison of refugee population data by village with corresponding statistics provided by the Armenian patriarchate of Constantinople shows that the statistics

17 Gegham Badalyan, «Արևմտահայության թվաքանակի նշգրտման ժողովրդագրական որոշ սկզբունքներ (Էրզրումի և Վանի վիլայեթների օրինակով)» [Some Principles of Adjusting the Number of Western Armenians (by the Example of Erzurum and Van Vilayets)] in *The Current State of Armenology and Development Perspectives, International Conference Proceedings* (Yerevan, 2003), 140. See also: Gegham Badalyan, «Վ. Պոլսի Հայոց պատրիարքության 1912 թ. վիճակագրության տվյալների քննությունը (Վանի սանջակի օրինակով)» [Analysis of Constantinople Armenian Patriarchate Statistical Data of 1912 (On the Example of Van Province)] in *Capitals of Armenia, Book 1, Van, Proceedings of the International Conference, Dedicated to the 2865th Anniversary of the First Record about City of Van, (October 7-9, 2010)*, ed. Harutyun Marutyan (Yerevan: Gitutyun, 2013), 157.

18 *The Armenian Question before the Peace Conference, 1919: A Memorandum Presented Officially by the Representatives of Armenia to the Peace Conference at Versailles, on February 26th, 1919* (New York: Press Bureau, The Armenian National Union of America, 1919), 21.

19 A-Do, *Մեծ դեպքերի Վասպուրականում 1914-1915 թվականներին* [The Big Events in Vaspourakan in 1914-1915], (Yerevan, 1917), 30.

20 Karpat, *Ottoman Population 1830-1914*, 188-189.

21 Ibid., 170.

22 Kevorkian, Paboudjian, *Les Arméniens dans l'Empire ottoman*, 59.

23 *Однодневная перепись*.

24 Ibid., 44-45.

for refugees are about 26% higher. In some cases, the refugee registration data is 1.5-1.7 times higher.

Table 2. Armenian population numbers for several settlements in the Basen sub-district according to the Armenian Patriarchate 1913-1914 census and 1915 refugee “one-day census” returns.

	Settlement	1913-14 Armenian Patriarchate ²⁵	1915 “one-day census” ²⁶	Difference
		Persons	persons	
1	Aruchagrak [Արուճագրակ]	1,075	1,434	33 %
2	Eghan [Եղան]	1,298	1,308	1 %
3	Egepat [Էգեպատ]	978	1,149	17 %
4	Khydyrelyagh [Խիդրըրէլլաղ]	29	35	21 %
5	Kamurdj [Կամուրջ]	810	1,076	33 %
6	Kirdabaz [Կիրդաբազ]	312	480	54 %
7	Harsnekar [Հարսնէքար]	390	446	14 %
8	Yuzveran [Զուզվերան]	608	777	28 %
9	Tchrasun [Շոռասուն]	456	815	79 %
10	Toti [Տոտի]	540	680	26 %
	Total	6,496	8,200	26%

By the end of 1915 the Armenian populations of both Upper and Lower Basen had been able to find refuge in the Caucasus. There were, according to the report made by Alexander Sharafian, 18,910 Armenians from the Basen sub-district there as at January 1916.²⁷

The Armenian researcher Gegham Badalyan, by using refugee statistical data, adding data from other sources and projecting the undercounting fixing pattern on all the settlements

25 Kevorkian, Paboudjian, *Les Armeniens dans l'Empire ottoman*, 451.

26 *Однодневная перепись*, 44-45.

27 Sharafyan, «Համառոտ տեղութիւն», 45.

in the Basen district, arrived at the conclusion that, on the eve of WWI, the Armenian population of the Basen sub-district was about 21,000 persons - a figure that was double that of the Ottoman government data and about 25% higher than that of the Constantinople Armenian Patriarchate.²⁸

Erzeroum Province: Bayazet, Diadin, Karakilisa and Alashkert Sub-Districts of the Bayazet District

Almost the entire population of the four sub-districts of the Bayazet district of Erzeroum province (these sub-districts were Bayazet, Alashkert, Diadin and Karakilisa) took refuge in the Russian Transcaucasia at the end of 1914. According to the Ottoman government data published on the eve of WWI, the Armenian population of these territories numbered 10,920.²⁹ The figure provided by the Armenian patriarchate for the same territories was about double or 24,627 persons.³⁰

The Armenian refugees from the Bayazet district were counted during the “one-day census” of 30 January 1915 (12 February 1915 new style). According to that data, 16,612 Armenians who had left those territories were registered. As can be seen, although the refugee statistics didn’t present the complete picture of the Armenian population of these areas prior to the beginning of the war - not all Armenians managed to escape the massacres and overcome the difficulties of the journey - but even though this data is incomplete, the number of Bayazet district Armenian refugees was about 52% higher than the official Ottoman figures for the total Armenian population of that administrative unit (see also Table 3).

Table 3. Armenian population numbers for the Bayazet district on the eve of the Armenian Genocide according to data from different sources.

	Administrative unit	Armenian Patriarchate 1913-1914 census	Ottoman statistics of 1914	Refugee “one-day census” of January 1915
1.	Bayazet sub-district	4,884	2,619	1,735
2.	Diadin sub-district	1,649	904	1,111
3.	Karakilise sub-district	8,180	3,195	6,034
4.	Alashkert sub-district	9,914	4,202	7,732

It is worth mentioning that in the months after the “one-day census” of 30 January 1915 (12 February 1915 new style), Bayazet district Armenian refugee data were corrected and, according to information published in spring 1915, the number of Armenian refugees from

28 Badalyan, «Արևմտահայության թվաքանակի նշգրտման», 138.

29 Karpat, *Ottoman Population 1830-1914*, 170.

30 Kevorkian, Paboudjian, *Les Arméniens dans l'Empire ottoman*, 59.

this area was 23,850 persons (or 3,245 households) including those who perished during the evacuation.³¹ This figure is close to that of the Armenian Patriarchate (24,627 individuals), and if account is taken of the fact that some people didn't take refuge in Russia and therefore were not registered during the censuses, then we can estimate the Armenian population of Bayazet district prior to WWI as about 26,000.³²

Bitlis Province: Boulanykh and Manazkert Sub-Districts of Mush District

The Armenian populations of the Boulanykh and Manazkert sub-districts of the Mush district of Bitlis province were also evacuated along with Van province Armenian population in July 1915. Boulanykh and Manazkert Armenian refugee statistical data confirms the reliability of the Armenian Patriarchate figures. According to these data, about 34,000 Armenians from Boulanykh and Manazkert found refuge in the Russian Transcaucasia in July 1915 (see Table 4).³³ 8,965 Armenian families from these and other areas of Bitlis province were registered during the Armenian refugee “one-day” census of 16 January 1916 (29 January 1916, new style). One third of the members of the registered families had perished during the evacuation as a result of diseases or food shortages.³⁴ According to Karo Sasuni, the Armenian public figure who was a member of Russian administration of portions of Bitlis vilayet occupied by Russian troops in 1916-1917, about 67,000 Armenian refugees from this province were counted in February 1916, of which 45,000 were from the Boulanykh, Manazkert and their adjacent areas, 8,400 were from the Mush valley (of which 400 were from the city of Mush itself), 1,000 were from Bitlis and Khlat sub-districts, 700 were from Varto and 12,000 were from Sasun.³⁵

According to the Ottoman government statistics provided prior to WWI, only 19,100 Armenians lived in these two sub-districts; of this figure 14,662 lived in Boulanykh and 4,438 in Manazkert.³⁶ The statistics published by the Armenian Patriarchate provided the figure of 36,984 for these areas, of which 25,053 was for Boulanykh and 11,931 for Manazkert.³⁷

31 Badalyan, «Արևմտահայության թվաքանակի ճշգրտման», 139.

32 For the estimates of Gegham Badalyan see: Gegham Badalyan, «Էրզրումի վիլայեթի որոշ կազաների հայ բնակչության թվաքանակի ճշտումն ըստ Արևելյան Հայաստանում ապաստանած արևմտահայ գաղթականների 1914-1915 թթ. կազմված վիճակագրական ցուցակների» [Quantities of the Armenian population in some of the kazas of the province of Erzeroum (1914-1915)], *The Issues Of the History And Historiography Of the Armenian Genocide* 4 (2001): 122-124. See also our survey for Bayazet Armenian population number: Robert Tatoyan, «Էրզրումի նահանգի հայ բնակչության թվաքանակը Մեծ Եղեռնի նախօրյակին (աղբյուրների համեմատական վերլուծության փորձ)» [The Number of Armenian Population of the Erzurum Province of the Ottoman Empire on the Eve of the Armenian Genocide (An Attempt at Comparative Analysis of Sources)], *Journal of Genocide Studies* 2 no. 1 (2014): 52-54.

33 Karo Sasuni, *Տանկսահայաստանը ռուսական տիրապետության տակ (1914-1918)* [Turkish Armenia under the Russian Rule] (Boston, 1927), 68, 75.

34 Danielyan, «Անդրկովկասում ապաստանած արևմտահայ գաղթականության», 116.

35 Karo Sasuni, «Մուշէն եւ Սասունէն ազատուածները» [Rescued From Mush And Sasoun], *Tchakatamart, daily newspaper* (Constantinople), 22 May 1919, no. 161, 2.

36 Karpas, *Ottoman population 1830-1914*, 174.

37 Kevorkian, Paboudjian, *Les Arméniens dans l'Empire Ottoman*, 59.

Table 4. The Armenian population of Boulanykh and Manazkert sub-districts prior to WWI.

	Administrative unit	Armenian Patriarchate 1913-1914 census	Ottoman statistics of 1914	Refugee statistical data of 1915
1	Boulanykh sub-district	25,053	14,662	-
2	Manazkert sub-district	11,931	4,438	-
	Total	36,984	19,100	34,000

Conclusion

To summarize, the number of refugees from 1) Van province, 2) Basen sub-district and Bayazet district (Bayazet sub-district, Diadin sub-district, Karakilise sub-district, Alashkert sub-district) of Erzeroum province, 3) Boulanykh and Manazkert sub-districts of Bitlis province, who were registered during the so-called “one-day censuses” carried out on 30 January 1915 (12 February 1915 new style) and 14 January, 1916 (27 January, 1916 new style) is about 70% higher than the number of the Armenian population before WWI as enumerated for the same areas in official the Ottoman statistics and corresponds approximately to the Armenian Patriarchate figures as shown in Table 5. If account is taken that some people were already deceased by the time the refugee censuses were carried out and also that the populations of some settlements within the administrative units in question were not evacuated at all but were massacred, then the actual Armenian population figures in these areas was even higher. By the most conservative estimates the actual Armenian population of these areas prior to the genocide was about 234,000. This estimate is approximately twice that of the figure provided by the Ottoman government.

Table 5. Comparative Summary Statistics.

	Administrative unit	Ottoman government, 1914	Armenian Patriarchate, 1913-1914	Armenian refugees in the Caucasus, 1915-1916	Armenian population number, 1914 (approximate estimate, based on refugee counting data)
1	Van province	67,792	121,377	120,000	150,000 ³⁸
2	Erzeroum province				
2.1	Basen sub-district of Erzeroum district	10,046	16,740	18,910	21,000
2.2	Bayazet sub-district of Bayazet district	2,619	4,884	1,735	5,000
2.3	Diadin sub-district of Bayazet district	904	1,649	1,111	2,000
2.4	Karakilise sub-district of Bayazet district	3,195	8,180	6,034	8,000
2.5	Alashkert sub-district of Bayazet district	4,202	9,914	7,732	10,000
3	Bitlis province				
3.1	Boulanykh sub-district of Mush District	19,100	36,984	34,000	38,000
3.2	Manazkert sub-district of Mush District				
	Total	107,858	199,728	189,522	234,000

The refugee registration data are incomplete and haven't covered all the areas of the Ottoman Empire, but even in their present state they show that the Ottoman government undercounted the Armenian population. Therefore, in order to determine the Armenian population figures for Western Armenia and of the Ottoman Empire in general prior to the Armenian Genocide which corresponds to reality, account should be taken of the numbers provided by the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople as a basis for calculation, settlement by settlement and comparison and adjustments should be made of those figures with data provided by refugee registration data and other available primary sources.

³⁸ Conservative estimate.