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Conspiracy, International Police Cooperation and the Fight against Anarchism in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1878–1908

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Security implications had a long-term impact that created routinised and ordinary forms of violence, which not only affected the provinces but also transformed the state centre in the late Ottoman Empire. This chapter is an introduction that explores how perceptions of security developed with routinised practices of discourse and administration, and how these perceptions were tied into politics. In doing so, the chapter draws on political science, specifically the model of securitisation. According to securitisation theory, by placing a topic in the area of security by a ‘speech act’ – that follows a specific grammatical and rhetorical structure – an actor moves the topic from politics into an area of security concern, which also creates the grounds for legitimating extraordinary means against the constructed threat.¹ However, the speech act is not sufficient in analysing how security operates, and security discourses have to be analysed in the context of the security practices and the conditions of these practices.² While different types of political violence were

¹ According to the securitisation theory the players (mostly politicians), use linguistic representations to prepare the audience to take action in the direction of the player and could position a particular issue to an existential threat. Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998); Matt McDonald, ‘Securitization and the Construction of Security’, *European Journal of International Relations* 14(4) (2008): 563–87.

² Didier Bigo, ‘Globalized (In)Security: The Field and the Ban-Opticon’, in Didier Bigo and

one of the main characteristics of the Hamidian era and was mainly discussed with regard to Armenians, Bulgarians and anarchism, this chapter will mostly focus on the ways in which the Ottoman bureaucracy securitised them, with a special focus on the Armenian question. This case study will discuss how the Ottoman government framed political problems as a ‘security’ issue with reference to anarchism; to do so, daily bureaucratic discourse (specifically regarding Armenians), administrative regulations and their practices will be examined with the Ottoman involvement in anti-anarchist inter-imperial police cooperation. While the changes in security definitions, concepts and new methods of policing triggered structural changes in state apparatus in the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire was also part of this process in the European context.

It is evident that after Congress of Vienna (1815), several inter-imperial coalitions emerged between European powers in some specific areas such as anti-smuggling, anti-piracy and anti-anarchism, or to fight uprisings in colonies and nationalism in imperial settings.³ The Vienna System and these imperial coalitions then not only created systematic structures such as permanent diplomatic representation, international police cooperation (which led to Interpol) and an international legal framework against specific security problems, but also left its mark on the mentality of state elites, and thus on security perceptions and norms. Controlling geographical mobility and cross-border activities of political groups, refugees and migrants were also part of the new security regimes, which also dealt with cross-border political crime.⁴ Acting transnationally the political opposition, revolutionaries and

Anastassia Tsoukala (eds), *Terror, Insecurity and Liberty: Illiberal Practices of Liberal Regimes after 9/11* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008), 10–48. For a detailed discussion on history of security, see Eckart Conze, *Geschichte der Sicherheit: Entwicklung-Themen-Perspektiven* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017).

³ Beatrice De Graaf, Ido de Haan and Brian Vick (eds), *Securing Europe after Napoleon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019); Karl Härter, ‘The Transnationalisation of Criminal Law in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century: Political Crime, Police Cooperation, Security Regimes and Normative Orders – an Introduction’, in Karl Härter, Tina Hannappel and Conrad Tyrlicher (eds), *The Transnationalisation of Criminal Law in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century: Political Crime, Police Cooperation, Security Regimes and Normative Orders* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2019), 1–20.

⁴ Tina Hannappel, ‘Extradition and Expulsion as Instruments of Transnational Security

other dissident groups had cross-border effects, and, furthermore, starting with the French revolution European governments identified and labelled these groups as security threats referring to transnational or international conspiracies.⁵ Accordingly, this approach influenced the security regimes which operated in an international setting and functioned with actors like diplomats, intelligence agents, military personnel, police and even civilians that enabled the creation of an international security network as well as international conferences. As part of this process, routinised bureaucratic decisions and acts created the normalisation of internal security measures. The Ottoman Empire was also part of the new security regimes and was interested in international law mostly to ensure the ‘survival of the empire’, even before the Treaty of Paris (1856).⁶ This chapter paves the way for discussing the dynamic relationship between the security politics of Ottoman government during the Hamidian era and the larger international context of security. While the conflict between the international context of empire and imperialism was undeniable, this study focuses on how they also interacted in shaping a security regime.

Threat Perceptions and the Ottoman Government

After the Ottoman–Russian War, a new era that began with the Berlin Treaty (1878) came to deeply dominate the security perceptions and practices of the Ottoman Empire, especially in two frontier regions: Macedonia and six provinces in the Ottoman East. In line with the Berlin Treaty, in the wake of the loss of eastern European territory, the Ottoman Empire was forced to enact administrative and security reforms under Great Power surveillance in

Regimes against Anarchism in the Late Nineteenth Century’, in Karl Härter, Tina Hannappel and Conrad Tyrlicher (eds), *The Transnationalisation of Criminal Law in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century: Political Crime, Police Cooperation, Security Regimes and Normative Orders* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2019), 65–98.

⁵ Karl Härter, ‘Security and Transnational Policing of Political Subversion and International Crime in the German Confederation after 1815’, in Beatrice De Graaf, Ido de Haan and Brian Vick (eds), *Securing Europe after Napoleon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 193–213.

⁶ See Mustafa Serdar Palabıyık, ‘The Emergence of the Idea of “International Law” in the Ottoman Empire before the Treaty of Paris (1856)’, *Middle Eastern Studies* 50(2) (2014): 233–51.

Macedonia to improve living conditions for the Christian population,⁷ as well as in six provinces of Eastern Anatolia to protect the Armenian population from the exactions and attacks of Kurdish and Circassian tribes.⁸

During the 1890s, the threat perception of Ottoman political elites was strongly influenced by the Armenian and the Macedonian questions, either of which could be used as a pretext for foreign intervention according to the Ottoman Government. As new diplomatic interventions in Ottoman domestic policies occurred, the fear of losing territory, which had come to reshape the threat perception, became greater for Ottoman state elites. In the 1890s, the Ottoman state elites' security policies focused on the Macedonian and Armenian questions, while 'anarchism', which state elites identified as the propaganda of the deed, came to be largely associated with these two questions in Ottoman diplomacy.

The Hamidian era was marked with both state oppression and political violence, which was evident with popular uprisings, guerrilla warfare,

⁷ For Macedonian question, see Fikret Adanır, *Die Makedonische Frage. Ihre Entstehung und Entwicklung bis 1908* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1979); İpek K. Yosmaoğlu, *Blood Ties: Religion, Violence, and the Politics of Nationhood in Ottoman Macedonia, 1878–1908* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014).

⁸ For detailed analyses and different perspectives on the Armenian question, see Robert Farrer Zeidner, 'Britain and the Launching of the Armenian Question', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 7(4) (1976): 465–83; Stephen Duguid, 'The Politics of Unity: Hamidian Policy in Eastern Anatolia', *Middle Eastern Studies* 9(2) (1973): 139–55; Stephan H. Astourian, 'The Silence of the Land: Agrarian Relations, Ethnicity, and Power', in Ronald G. Suny, Fatma Müge Göçek, and Norman M. Naimark (eds), *A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 55–81; Janet Klein, *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011); Jelle Verheij, 'Diyarbekir and the Armenian Crisis of 1895', in Jelle Verheij and Joost Jongerden (eds), *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbekir, 1870–1915* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 85–142; Owen Miller, 'Sasun 1894: Mountains, Missionaries and Massacres at the End of the Ottoman Empire', PhD thesis, Columbia University, 2015; Robert Melson, 'A Theoretical Inquiry into the Armenian Massacres of 1894–1896', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 24(3) (1982): 481–509; Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Der verpasste Friede. Mission, Ethnie und Staat in den Ostprovinzen der Türkei 1839–1938* (Zürich: Chronos, 2000); Selim Deringil, 'The "Armenian Question is Finally Closed": Mass Conversions of Armenians in Anatolia during the Hamidian Massacres of 1895–1897', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51(2) (2009): 344–71; Ruben Safrastyan, *Ottoman Empire: the Genesis of the Program of Genocide, 1876–1920*, trans. Svetlana Mardanyan (Yerevan: Zangak, 2011).

ethno-religious conflicts and the acts of propaganda by deed. In the 1890s, the violence became more intense, and in addition ordinary state violence accelerated and improved its organisational capacity, which changed the level of penetration of violence into daily life.⁹ Violent acts, which were deployed as a strategy of resistance by the revolutionary circles, also became a form of political communication and were performed to claim an alternative political legitimacy.¹⁰

Different revolutionary groups with different ideological backgrounds began to organise as secret societies in the nineteenth century¹¹; the members of revolutionary circles could reach guns, dynamite or the ingredients for explosives more easily in line with the Ottoman Empire's integration in the world economy.¹² Furthermore, the relation between secret societies explores the ties between nationalist, socialist and anarchist groups in the Ottoman Empire, and also their transnational networks with Persian, Russian and European revolutionary circles.¹³ There were some anarchist

⁹ This does not mean that violence is a natural outcome of high-level politics, but rather is a process that also played an important role in building boundaries, belongings and ethno-religious consciousness, as well as a constitutive part of the state formation. Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 21; Keith Brown, *Loyal unto Death: Trust and Terror in Revolutionary Macedonia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013); Yosmaoğlu, *Blood Ties*, 217.

¹⁰ Nelida Fuccaro, 'Urban Life and Questions of Violence', in Nelida Fuccaro (ed.), *Violence and the City in the Modern Middle East* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016), 13; Rasmus Christian Elling, 'The Semantics of Violence and Space', in Nelida Fuccaro (ed.), *Violence and the City in the Modern Middle East* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016), 24; Varak Ketsemanian, 'The Hunchakian Revolutionary Party and the Assassination Attempts against Patriarch Khoren Ashekian and Maksudzade Simon Bey in 1894', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 50(4) (2018): 735–55.

¹¹ The revolutionary secret societies date back to the early nineteenth century with Greek revolutionaries. See Douglas Dakin, *The Greek Struggle for Independence, 1821–1833* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).

¹² Ramazan Hakkı Öztan, 'Tools of Revolution: Global Military Surplus, Arms Dealers, and Smugglers in the Late Ottoman Balkans, 1878–1908', *Past & Present* 237(1) (2017): 167–95.

¹³ Duncan M. Perry, *The Politics of Terror: The Macedonian Liberation Movements 1893–1903*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1988); M. Şükrü Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902–1908* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001). For a connected revolutions approach in the case of Armenian revolutionaries, see Hourii Berberian, *Roving Revolutionaries, Armenians and the Connected Revolutions in the Russian, Iranian, and Ottoman Worlds* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019).

groups and individuals in the empire, however, most of them did not get very involved in propaganda by deed style political violence.¹⁴ Nonetheless, the ideology and the discussions on propaganda by deed were also spreading with mobile groups and individuals as well as with the printed media.¹⁵ Thus, some revolutionary and nationalist organisations deployed violent propaganda techniques borrowed from anarchist organisations and ideologies. The demonstrations, bombings and assassination attempts were also significant acts that reveal the context for the emergence of new political actors who challenged the status quo.

This is the same period that Macedonian and Armenian revolutionary groups, who were active in the Ottoman Empire, were already established inside and outside the Ottoman Empire.¹⁶ These organisations introduced socialism into the Macedonian and Armenian questions; furthermore, their political programmes were mostly in line with a political agenda that aimed to reach political freedoms through revolutionary action. However, the

¹⁴ The Italian presence in the Ottoman anarchist scene is strikingly visible in the Ottoman security reports. Most of these people were exiles, workers or had family ties with Levantine community in the empire. Although there were Jewish and Greek anarchists in the empire, Hamidian bureaucracy was not alerted by their very existence. Axel Çorlu, 'Anarchists and Anarchism in the Ottoman Empire, 1850–1917', in Selim Karahasanoğlu and Deniz C. Demir (eds), *History from Below: A Tribute in Memory of Donald Quataert* (Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2016), 551–83; Avraam Benaroya, 'A Note on the Socialist Federation of Saloniki', *Jewish Social Studies* 11(1) (1949): 69–72; James Sotiros, *The Greek-Speaking Anarchist and Revolutionary Movement (1830–1940): Writings for a History* (n.p.: No Gods-No Masters, 2004).

¹⁵ Toygun Altıntaş, 'The Ottoman War on "Anarchism" and Revolutionary Violence', in Houssine Alloul, Edhem Eldem and Henk de Smaele (eds), *To Kill a Sultan* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 99–128. For a detailed analysis of leftist radicalism spanning four continents and linking Beirut, Cairo and Alexandria, see Ilham Khoury-Makdisi, *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860–1914* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2013).

¹⁶ One of the Armenian revolutionary organisations, Armenakan, was established in Van in the 1880s; the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization in 1893 in Thessaloniki; and the External Macedonian Organization in 1895. However, the Social Democrat Hunchakian Party, founded outside the empire in Geneva in 1887, and the Dashnaksutyun (Dashnak) in Tiflis in 1890, were composed of well-educated revolutionaries from the Armenian population of the Russian Empire. The Committee of Union and Progress was also founded as a secret society in 1889 and had a complicated relationship and network with other revolutionary groups in the Ottoman Empire. Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*.

political actors involved in these organisations were not only revolutionaries by definition, the actors were more diverse in their ideological tendencies, personal interests, and they had complex positions in transgressive politics that also makes it easier to define them as rogues.¹⁷ By the early 1890s, the situation had grown increasingly tense, both in Istanbul and the eastern provinces, and Hamidian massacres of Armenians in 1894–1897 generated a new level of violence. The Hunchakian Party and Dashnaksutyun sought to use violence as a revolutionary method and as a strategy of resistance to change the status quo for the Armenian poor during the 1890s.¹⁸ The Hunchaks recruited members from among the Armenian seasonal workers who came to Istanbul from the provinces, and the first armed Hunchakian groups emerged in the provinces in the early 1890s. Although the guerrilla warfare was continuing in the Balkans, the Serres Revolutionary District of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) decided to practise the methods of propaganda by deed, to weaken the Ottoman government and to attract international attention to the Macedonian question.

Various actions in the Ottoman Empire were inspired by the Russian revolutionary organisation, *Narodnaya Volia*.¹⁹ Such instances which attracted international attention included the occupation of the Ottoman Bank,²⁰

¹⁷ For a detailed discussion, see in this volume, Alp Yenen and Ramazan Hakkı Öztan, 'Age of Rogues: Transgressive Politics at the Frontiers of the Ottoman Empire', Chapter 1.

¹⁸ Regarding the fact that the Ottoman government postponed and never implemented the promised reforms in the eastern provinces, the Armenian peasantry needed protection against Kurdish warlords and later on Hamidian cavalry. The Ottoman government tried to organise Kurds into light cavalry units which were actively involved in the Hamidian massacres of Armenians in 1894–1897. The local villagers' need for protection was then solved with their support of the local bandits to protect them from the attacks of the Kurdish landlords. Later on these bandits turned out to be the roots of the *fedayi* movement. *Fedayi* were the bands that were emerged in second half of the 1880s and were ethnically segmented collectives, who aimed at protecting the Armenian villagers, then revolutionise with the effect of revolutionary parties mostly their time in the Ottoman prisons. For the *fedayi* movement, see Miller, 'Sasun 1894', 45 and 113.

¹⁹ Manoug Joseph Somakian, *Empires in Conflict: Armenia and the Great Powers, 1895–1920* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1995), 16.

²⁰ Edhem Eldem, '26 Ağustos 1896 "Banka Vak'ası" ve "Ermeni Olayları"', *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar* 1(5) (2007): 114–15.

the attempted assassination of Armenian Patriarch Ashikian on 25 March 1894,²¹ the Kumkapı Demonstration,²² the Thessaloniki assassinations²³ and the assassination attempt on Abdülhamid II.²⁴ There were also several railway bombings, targeted killings of high-level civil servants and police officers which did not receive international interest. These actions emerged amid popular demands for justice and a constitution that would grant greater scope for public involvement and national autonomy, and also deeply affected the threat perception of the Ottoman government.

Anti-anarchism, Surveillance and International Cooperation in Policing

Considering international dynamics, the extant threat perceptions and the resultant security policies can be analysed on two transitional levels: one *administrative* and the other *discursive*. The administrative level can be examined by investigating anti-anarchist policies and policing techniques that emerged with the establishment of modern police institutions. In response to domestic and international developments, these policies resulted in the formation of an ‘administrative network’, whose scope was widened by data-gathering – using documents for identifying, registering and classifying personal identity to the utilisation of photographs and the *portrait parlé*

²¹ See Hüseyin Nazım Paşa, *Ermeni Olayları Tarihi*, vol. 1 (Ankara: T. C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı, 1994), 13–21; Hüseyin Nazım Paşa, *Hatıralarım: Ermeni Olaylarının İçyüzü* (İstanbul: Selis Kitaplar, 2007). Başkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi (Prime Ministry’s Ottoman Archives, hereafter BOA), BEO, 381/28512, 13 Mart 1310 (25 March 1894); BOA, BEO, 382/28612, 13 Mart 1310 (25 March 1894); BOA, Y.A.HUS., 292/82, 14 Mart 1310 (26 March 1894).

²² Louis Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement: The Development of Armenian Political Parties through the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), 119.

²³ Mark Mazower, *Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews, 1430–1950* (London: HarperCollins, 2004); Meropi Anastasiadou, *Salonique 1830–1912: Une Ville Ottomane à l’âge des Réformes* (Leiden: Brill, 1997); Orhan Türker, ‘Selanik’te 28–29 Nisan 1903 Olayları’, *Tarih ve Toplum* 31(182) (1999): 27–30; Misha Glenny, *Balkans 1804–1999: Nationalism, War and the Great Powers* (London: Granta, 1999), 202.

²⁴ İlkey Yılmaz, ‘Propaganda by the Deed and Hotel Registration in the Late Ottoman Empire’, *Journal of Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 4(1) (2017): 137–56; Houssine Alloul, Edhem Eldem and Henk de Smaele (eds), *To Kill a Sultan* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

as criminal investigation methods. Other security reforms during the era, including the foundation of a new police institution and reforms within the gendarmerie,²⁵ can be understood as aspects of the foundation of a modern state apparatus. While this process was part of the standardisation of information relating to personal identity, the classification and codification of this information with new filing techniques created a detailed mechanism for the security apparatus in the long term.

The effects of anti-anarchist policies and regulations in Europe are evident from the Ottoman administrative and security reforms in the late nineteenth century. In particular, the Rome Conference in 1898 and the protocol of St Petersburg in 1904 can be considered important components of the security strategies and techniques of the Ottoman Empire. These two developments not only affected Ottoman policing techniques and strategies, but also provide us with insights into the Ottoman politics of legitimising threat perceptions using diplomatic tools in the international arena.²⁶

As police institutions began to employ new techniques during the 1850s, state elites, ministers and high-level civil servants attempted to standardise different policing practices.²⁷ While new concepts of threat and security emerged in international relations after the Congress of Vienna in 1815, new tactics on borders, the fight against revolutionaries and imperial interventions were also developed in the inter-imperial setting. This process continued with new techniques in state surveillance on criminal activities; however, these new techniques were mostly experimental in the beginning.²⁸ While the Ottoman Empire was involved in new systems of criminal justice and surveillance, it also benefitted from the new security implications in the context of

²⁵ Nair Özbek, 'Policing the Countryside: Gendarmes of the Late-Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Empire (1876–1908)', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40(1) (2008): 47–67.

²⁶ All kinds of opposition could easily be labelled as 'anarchism', including the Young Turks by the Ottoman government; see Françoise Georgeon, *Abdülhamid II. Le Sultan Calife (1876–1909)* (Paris: Fayard, 2003), 380–3.

²⁷ Mathieu Deflem, *Policing World Society: Historical Foundations of International Police Cooperation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 12–34.

²⁸ Jens Jäger, 'Photography: A Means of Surveillance? Judicial Photography, 1850 to 1900', *Crime, Histoire & Sociétés/Crime, History & Societies* 5(1) (2001): 27–51; İlkay Yılmaz, 'The Ottoman State, Police Photographs and Anthropometry', *Photoresearcher: European Society for History of Photography* 31 (2019): 90–100.

geopolitics, while at the same time suffering from them as part of the imperial interventions by the Great Powers.

During the 1880s, the police institutions of various states began to form formal alliances to develop more effective mechanisms to fight against the violent methods of propaganda by deed and to ensure border security.²⁹ Incidents such as bombings, explosions and assassinations were usually associated with the anarchist movement.³⁰ This tendency of the police and other state institutions to identify anyone who used violence as a method of propaganda by deed with anarchism meant that the ideology became pejoratively linked with terror attacks.³¹ One of the major steps towards standardisation and the creation of an international police alliance was the Anti-Anarchist Conference in Rome three months after the assassination of Empress Elizabeth of Austria-Hungary.³²

The Ottomans decided to send representatives to the conference due to the empire's understanding of 'humanity' and 'benevolence'. Internal Ottoman correspondence relating to the conference invitation indicates that there were some anarchists – mostly workers – in the Ottoman Empire, but that they did not seek involvement in criminal activities against the empire since the state had surprisingly taken no action against them.³³ In actuality, the Ottoman government had begun employing the term 'anarchist' in diplomatic correspondence relating to Armenians and Bulgarians long before

²⁹ Mathieu Deflem, 'Wild Beasts without Nationality: The Uncertain Origins of Interpol, 1889–1910', in Philip Reichel (ed.), *Handbook of Transnational Crime and Justice* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2005), 276; Richard Bach Jensen, 'The International Campaign against Anarchist Terrorism, 1880–1930s', *Terrorism and Political Violence* 21(1) (2009): 92; Richard Bach Jensen, *The Battle against Anarchist Terrorism: An International History (1878–1934)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

³⁰ Richard Bach Jensen, 'The International Anti-Anarchist Conference of 1898 and the Origins of Interpol', *Journal of Contemporary History* 16(2) (1981): 323–47.

³¹ Propaganda by deed was one of the key issues at the Anarchist Congress in 1881, and the use of such violence created an atmosphere of fear and suspicion that resulted in the imposition of repressive policing measures. For example, the surveillance and policies of repression against labour organisations and secret societies that increased in the aftermath of the Paris Commune in 1871 were implemented, at least in part, because of the wave of attacks against high-level civil servants and members of dynasties in the 1880s.

³² Jensen, 'The International Anti-Anarchist Conference', 323–47.

³³ BOA, İ.HUS 69/66, 24 C. Ahir 1316, 10 October 1898.

the conference, not only because this provided a legitimate reason for the empire's security policies in the international arena, but also because Police Minister Hüseyin Nazım Paşa had started associating revolutionary movements with anarchism in the 1890s.³⁴ On the other hand, the conference was also perceived as an opportunity to roll back some of the purview of the capitulations and to monitor not only the actions of foreigners, but also the products and publications they were delivering to the Ottoman Empire.³⁵ The conference was also important for the government in terms of fostering international cooperation to limit the production and export of explosives.³⁶ After considering the possible ramifications of the conference, the Ottoman Empire accepted the invitation and dispatched a delegation to Rome under Consul Mustafa Reşit Efendi, which included representatives of the legal adviser of the Bab-ı Ali, Hakkı Bey and the clerk of foreign affairs, Nuri Bey.³⁷ Nuri Bey represented the Ottomans on the administrative committee, while Hakkı Bey was placed on the judicial committee.³⁸ They subsequently reported back to the Ottoman government regarding various policing techniques employed by different states, including better record-keeping methods for storing intelligence on individuals and creating an effective administrative network for investigations.

The main topics of the conference were the identification of anarchists and their activities; the creation of new policing procedures, practices and techniques to prevent anarchist actions and publications; and the drafting of extradition procedures. An 'anarchist act' was defined as 'having as its aim the destruction through violent means of all social organisation', while an anarchist was simply one who committed such an act.³⁹ This definition of an

³⁴ Hüseyin Nazım Paşa's report and memoirs are two important sources for understanding the Ottoman government's perspective on these incidents. His report was mainly on the Armenian question during the 1890s and was prepared in 1907. His memoir was also mainly about the Armenian question and was first published in 1924. Hüseyin Nazım Paşa, *Ermeni Olayları Tarihi*, vols 1–2; Hüseyin Nazım Paşa, *Hatıralarım*.

³⁵ BOA, İ.HR 24/1316.B.3, 18 November 1898.

³⁶ BOA, İ.HR 24/ 1316.B.3, 18 November 1898.

³⁷ BOA, İ.HUS 49/13 Şaban 1316, 27 December 1898. B.O.A.-İ.HR 24/1316.B.3, 18 November 1898.

³⁸ BOA, Y.PRK.EŞA. 31/136, 6 Kanun-u Sani 1899.

³⁹ Jensen, 'The International Anti-Anarchist Conference', 327; Adil Baktıaya, '19. Yüzyıl

anarchist act conceptualised anarchism as a criminal act rather than a political phenomenon that could easily be managed with the administrative measures and practices of police institutions.⁴⁰

The representatives of the police departments of the participating states agreed to adopt the same control and surveillance methods as France, Germany and Russia. This required the preparation of key information for each deported anarchist in a standard format, including a photograph, a certificate of identity, information about appearance based on a *portrait parlé*, and information about the individual's arrival, departure and intended destination. This was then to be distributed among police forces in other states. The central police departments of all states would share such documented information about anarchists internationally. The *portrait parlé* was accepted as an international criminal identification method in line with an Ottoman proposal, which had also been discussed at a previous commission meeting without the Ottoman Empire, at which the French representative conducted a briefing on the system.⁴¹ To expand the usage of the *portrait parlé*, every state was required to send a police officer to France for training in the method.⁴² The Ottoman Empire declared that a police officer would be appointed to learn the technique and would practise the *portrait parlé* in the empire.⁴³ After the conference, a French expert on the method came to the Ottoman Empire to teach new biometric criminal identification techniques,⁴⁴ even though archival documents indicate that the Ottoman state had already been interested in the technique, imported the tools and arranged to invite a French expert before the conference.⁴⁵ Because the Ottoman police did not have the

Sonunda Anarşist Terör, "Toplumun Anarşistlerden Korunması Konferansı (1898)" ve Osmanlı Devleti', *Bilgi ve Bellek* 4(8) (2007): 65–6; BOA, Y.A.RES., 101/31, 12 S 1317 (22 June 1899) and 'Hariciye Nezareti'ne 3 Kanunusani 1899 tarihinde Roma Sefaret-i Seniyesi'nden varid olan 2 numarolu mahremane tahriratın tecümesi suretidir', in BOA, Y.PRK.EŞA., 31/136, 20 Ş 1316, 3 January 1899.

⁴⁰ Deflem, 'Wild Beasts', 279.

⁴¹ BOA, Y.PRK.EŞA, 31/136, 6 Kanun-u Sani 1899.

⁴² BOA, Y.PRK.EŞA, 31/136, 20 Ş 1316, 3 January 1899.

⁴³ BOA, Y.PRK.HR, 27/31, 10 May 1899.

⁴⁴ BOA, İ.HUS, 8, 27.R.1318, 23 August 1900, and BOA, ZB, 45/27, 24 August 1898. Baktıaya, '19. Yüzyıl Sonunda Anarşist Terör', 71.

⁴⁵ BOA, ZB, 45/27, 24 August 1898.

knowledge to use the *portrait parlé* method with imported tools, authorities moved to prepare a regulation on the description of how to use the tools. According to a further note in the same document, a new regulation was prepared concerning the issue.⁴⁶

During discussions of extradition procedures for anarchists, the Ottoman Empire supported a German proposal that anarchists be deported, irrespective of their crimes, within the scope of extradition agreements. Ottoman representatives supported the German and Russian delegations' proposals and objections on eliminating restrictions on the extradition agreements. Ottoman and Russian delegates presented the Russian proposal as a joint suggestion advocating the extension of extradition procedures to include political crimes.⁴⁷

Ottoman delegates supported the extradition procedures for perpetrators of assassination attempts against monarchs and dynastic families, and even submitted a proposal to extend the scope of the article so that actions leading to extradition should not be limited to these groups, but would also apply to any initiative, alliance, provocation, encouragement or proposition that could be tied to an assassination plan. But after this proposal was rejected, the Ottoman Empire sent a note to the Italian government emphasising that the Ottoman government insisted on the regulation and that the Ottomans would defend the same position in further meetings regarding international cooperation.⁴⁸

After the conference, the Ottoman Empire drafted an anti-anarchist bill that was passed in the House of Representatives (*Meclis-i Vükela*) but rejected by the Prime Minister's Office (*Grand Vizierate*), primarily because, in contrast to the widespread 'trouble of anarchism' in the United States and Europe, only Armenians and a few Bulgarians were implicated in anarchism in the Ottoman Empire. The Prime Ministry, therefore, decided that the penal code was adequate and capable of dealing with such crimes. This meant that the Ottoman Empire would define such crimes as 'crimes against the state', which were already enshrined in the penal code, without specifically

⁴⁶ BOA, İ.HUS, 8, 1318.R.27, 23 August 1900, and BOA, ZB, 45/27, 24 August 1898.

⁴⁷ BOA, Y.PRK.HR, 27/31, 10 May 1899.

⁴⁸ BOA, İ.HR, 18/1317 Ra 29, 6 August 1899.

defining anarchist acts themselves.⁴⁹ Consequently, the Ottoman Empire, while using international cooperation to fight against anarchism, sought to avoid de-politicising it by declaring it a political crime.

Although the Ottomans refrained from enshrining the internationally accepted definition of anarchist actions in its laws, attending the conference was important for the empire, as it entailed participation in international police cooperation and was a possible first step towards the standardisation and global integration of police institutions. The Ottoman Empire's delegates to the Rome Conference also gathered information about the police departments and policing methods of various states, while the empire itself found an opportunity to obtain international support to legitimise its policing methods against anarchist actions, mainly defined as crimes against the state. In addition to these measures, collaboration in sharing information about anarchists also began between the empire and Belgium.

The Ottoman police force was organised based on the French model.⁵⁰ In 1884, the Parisian police officers, Inspector Bonin and Inspector Lefoulon, a specialist in anti-anarchist policing techniques, were invited to Istanbul to share their expertise on policing techniques and investigation methods for ordinary criminal activities and political opposition. The two prominent inspectors were hired to reorganise the Ottoman police in accordance with the institutionalisation of the police in France.⁵¹ Lefoulon was also responsible for dealing with anarchists from foreign countries. For example, in 1896, he was appointed to track down Armenian anarchists in Marseille and Geneva.⁵² As

⁴⁹ BOA, Y.A.RES, 116/23, 6 S 1320, 15 May 1902.

⁵⁰ For a detailed discussion on Ottoman police, public order and urban transformation, see Noémi Lévy-Aksu, *Ordre et désordres dans l'Istanbul ottomane (1879–1909): de l'État au quartier* (Paris, Karthala: 2013); Nurçin İleri, 'A Nocturnal History of Fin de Siecle Istanbul', PhD thesis, Binghampton University, 2015.

⁵¹ Roger Deal, 'Celestin Bonnin and the Creation of a Modern Ottoman Police Force', in Marinos Sariyannis (ed.), *New Trends in Ottoman Studies: Papers Presented at the 20th CIEPO symposium* (Rethymno: Department of History and Archaeology, University of Crete and Institute for Mediterranean Studies of the Foundation for Research and Technology, 2014), 166–75.

⁵² Noémi Levy, 'Polislikle İlgili Bilgilerin Dolaşım Tarzları: Osmanlı Polisi için Fransız Modeli mi?', in Noémi Levy, Nadir Özbek, Alexandre Toumarkine (eds), *Jandarma ve Polis Osmanlı Tarihçiliğine Çapraz Bakışlar*, trans. Deniz Öztürk and Burak Onaran (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2009), 154–6.

a result of the inspectors' influence, the Ottomans developed anti-anarchist policing techniques that were very similar to the French model.

On 14 March 1904, Russia, Romania, Serbia, Bulgaria, Austria-Hungary, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Spain, Portugal and the Ottoman Empire signed a further protocol in St Petersburg on expanding the practical details on expulsion, the structure of police institutions and international police collaboration – all topics which had received the attention of the administrative committee at the Rome Conference. The Ottoman government stated that the extradition procedures that acted as a catalyst for the St Petersburg protocol would not affect the agreement between Russia and the Ottoman Empire regarding Armenian migrants.⁵³ The Ottoman government ratified the protocol on 9 April 1904.⁵⁴

Fesad, Vagrant and Anarchist

On the administrative level, the Ottoman Empire practised traditional and modern policing techniques side-by-side. The Ottoman bureaucracy started to deploy the concept of 'vagrant' in parallel to concepts such as 'anarchist' and '*fesad*',⁵⁵ which had acquired a pejorative connotation in an era of guerilla warfare in the provinces, railway bombings, assassination attempts and ethnic conflicts. This, ultimately, was the terrain of the *discursive* level of the security policies.

The discursive strategies that the state was constituting as conceptualisations of threat had historical continuity. One of the significant concepts in these historical vocabularies was *fesad*, which can be translated as 'evildoer', 'seditious', 'conspirator' or 'villain'.⁵⁶ *Fesad* referred to the disturbance of order and public peace, which Islamic thought discusses in terms of natural

⁵³ BOA, İ.HUS, 115/89, 24 M 1322, 10 April 1904; BOA, Y.A.HUS, 469/36, 8 M 1322, 25 March 1904.

⁵⁴ BOA, İ.HR, 388/14, 5 S 1322, 21 April 1904.

⁵⁵ *Fesad* does not have a clear translation in English. It can be translated as evildoer, seditious, villain or conspirator. Instead of choosing one of the English words, the original version of the word will be used in this chapter.

⁵⁶ For use of *fesad* as nationalist sedition between 1840 and 1860, see Anna Vakali, 'Tanzimat in the Province: Nationalist Sedition (*Fesat*), Banditry (*Eşkiya*) and Local Councils in the Ottoman Southern Balkans (1840s to 1860s)', PhD thesis, University of Basel, 2017.

balance. The decline of order was commonly interpreted in a framework that related to the disobedience to God, which caused destruction of land and society. This destruction was caused by infringing legal or moral rules, contravening the religious way of living in daily life, or destroying the political order that was constituted as God's order. The scope of the concept was very extensive and can be associated with petty crimes, robbery, assault, rape, banditry, murder, mutiny and rebellion against the political order.⁵⁷ *Fesad* was the term used in state correspondence to refer to people who contravened the law, who rebelled against the state or who tried to change the political order.⁵⁸ *Fesad* was also an important concept in the Ottoman Panel Code (*Ceza Kanunname-i Hümayün*, 1858).⁵⁹ Although the concept can be traced in the articles under the section on crimes against the state, in the correspondence from a high level to the lower ranks of the bureaucracy, the administrative language used *fesad* to refer to every act or person that could potentially violate the social order. Thus, the use of the term in state documents was applied

⁵⁷ İlhan Kutluer, 'Fesad', *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 12 (İstanbul: Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 1995), 421.

⁵⁸ Mustafa Akdağ, *Türk Halkının Dirlik ve Düzenlik Kavgası* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1975), 163–78; Engin Deniz Akarlı, 'Maslahah from "Common Good" to "Raison d'Etat" in the Experience of Istanbul Artisans, 1730–1840', in Kaan Durukan, Robert W. Zens and Akile Zorlu-Durukan (eds), *Hoca, 'Allame, Puits de Science: Essays in Honor of Kemal H. Karpat* (İstanbul: ISIS Press, 2010).

⁵⁹ In the Ottoman legal system before the Panel Code of 1858, the defendant or suspect was classified in one of three categories. The first category was modest persons (*kendi halinde kimseler*), who were known for their honesty and had not been convicted of any crime. As these persons had no criminal records, the authorities acted towards them on the presumption of their innocence. The second category was suspected persons (*mazanne or müttehem*) who had criminal records. If they faced any accusations, they could not benefit from the presumption of innocence; the burden of proof was on their shoulders and they could be arrested immediately. The third category was people of unknown circumstances (*meçhul'ül ahval*) who had no guarantors from the local community or had no proof that they earned their livelihoods by legal means. They could be arrested until the authorities obtained sufficient information on them. People of unknown circumstances were generally associated with *fesad*, without investigation of the person's reason for leaving their residence. Ahmet Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri: Kanuni Sultan Süleyman Devri Kanunnameleri: I. Kısım Merkezi ve Umumi Kanunnameler*, vol. 4 (İstanbul: Fey Vakfı, 1992), 157; Mehmet Akman, *Osmanlı Devletinde Ceza Yargılaması* (İstanbul: Eren Yay, 2004), 51–52; Betül Başaran, *Selim III, Social Control and Policing in Istanbul at the End of the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 161–7.

to some groups as a label, like ‘vagrant’, and had an extensive and arbitrary area of discursive practice. The extent and arbitrariness of its usage made it one of the components of security discourse used when defining facts, events or persons in the context of political fear, threat and danger.

The Ottoman political centre used a surety system to control its settlement policy, public order, security and tax system. If someone left their residence for an ‘acceptable reason’, the person was obliged to find a guarantor to ensure that they would continue to fulfil their duties and pay their taxes.⁶⁰ Ultimately, the Ottoman Empire’s guarantor system was designed as a social control system to prevent the disruption of public peace. The authorities generally perceived migrants and seasonal workers without guarantors to be highly suspect and potential criminals, as the labels ‘suspect’ (*ahvali mechul*, *mazanne* or *mütehhem*) or *fesad* prove. Thus, the authorities regularly checked seasonal workers staying in bachelor rooms or inns, deporting those migrants who had no guarantors from the city.⁶¹ The Ottoman Empire in the Hamidian era (1876–1908) employed the surety system in combination with modern surveillance techniques. Identity cards, international and internal passports, and hotel registration systems must be understood within this framework.⁶²

One significant aspect of policing was anti-vagrancy regulations.⁶³ Vagrancy and other public order offences did not constitute crimes in and of themselves. Instead, what constituted an offence was the involvement of a

⁶⁰ Ahmet Saydam, ‘Kamu Hizmeti Yaptırma ve Suçu Önleme Yöntemi Olarak Osmanlılarda Kefalet Usulü’, *Tarih ve Toplum* 28(164) (1997): 5.

⁶¹ See Başaran, *Selim III, Social Control and Policing*. Numerous imperial decrees regarding the surety system were issued during the upheavals. The specific ethnic or religious origin of the rebels was the most significant factor affecting their perception as a threat. This pattern can be observed with the Albanians in the Patrona Halil Rebellion and with Muslim students during the Celali Rebellion, which caused Ottoman authorities to issue special orders regarding these groups.

⁶² For a detailed discussion, see İlkay Yılmaz, *Serseri, Anarşist ve Fesadın Peşinde, II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Güvenlik Politikaları Ekseninde Pasaport, Mürür Tezkeresi ve Otel Kayıtları* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2014).

⁶³ The Ottoman regulations on vagrancy can be detected during times of rebellion or simple political events of the opposition in different historical periods. See Akdağ, *Türk Halkının Dirlik ve Düzenlik Kavgası*; Başaran, *Selim III, Social Control and Policing*.

certain kind of person, rather than any specific action or lack thereof.⁶⁴ The definition itself widened the scope of police intervention in daily life. The Vagrancy Act described vagrants as those who lacked legitimate work and either possessed no affiliation or registered residence or were deemed to be travelling without specific departure and arrival dates; they were identified as vagrants (*serseri*) and people of unknown circumstances (*meçhul'ül ahval*).⁶⁵ According to the Internal Passport Regulation of September 1887, every person travelling in the Ottoman Empire was required to carry an internal passport specifying his or her departure and arrival dates.⁶⁶ As far as the police were concerned, travelling without an internal passport was a criminal act, so labelling somebody a vagrant or suspicious person was the natural result of their travelling without an internal passport.⁶⁷ Laws against public order crimes and the Vagrancy Act can also be seen as instruments to control the population. However, in the Hamidian era, this manner of control was related not only to public order issues, but also to perceptions of threats to security. Given the local upheavals and guerrilla warfare occurring in the provinces, the railway bombings, and the assassination attempts in the city centre, the state elites' use of the concept interwove with other pejorative categories, such as 'anarchist'. In their internal correspondence, Ottoman state elites applied this discourse to anarchists, vagrants and seasonal workers. This link raises the issue of the filing and classification processes of the modern state and the flexibility of the concepts used in this process. These discursive strategies also restricted the extent of legitimate public spheres and marginalised certain identities, making it easier to side-line the poor, especially those who were politically mobilised, on a discursive level.

This process featured a discriminative discourse in administrative mechanisms that frequently used the terms '*fesad*', 'anarchist' and 'vagrant',

⁶⁴ Ferdan Ergut, 'Policing the Poor in the Late Ottoman Empire', *Middle Eastern Studies* 38(2) (2002): 150; R. Quinney, *The Social Reality of Crime* (Boston, MA: Little Brown, 1970).

⁶⁵ *Serseri ve Mazanna-i Su* olan Eşhas Hakkında Nizamname, 3 Sefer 1308, 6 September 1306, 18 September 1890, *Düstur*, 1. Tertip 6, 748.

⁶⁶ *Düstur*, 1. Tertip, vol. 5:223, 861–5.

⁶⁷ See İlkay Yılmaz, 'Governing the Armenian Question through Passports in the Late Ottoman Empire (1876–1908)', *Journal of Historical Sociology* 32(4) (2019): 388–403.

especially for lower-class Armenians, Bulgarians and foreigners. This further marginalised, and even criminalised, them. The new usages of ‘vagrant’ and ‘*fesad*’ created a discursive link to ‘anarchism’ and ‘anarchist’ in their pejorative meanings.⁶⁸ These all served as crucial discursive tropes for the security discourse of the state, which claimed to be keeping the country unified against its ‘internal and external enemies’. This discourse is also important due to its effects on administrative activities. By using these terms, the state also constructed and widened a sphere of security, meaning that the other issues faced by Armenians and Macedonians were narrowly perceived in terms of threats and defence, to the exclusion of their socio-economic aspects. Therefore, the modernisation of security techniques and anti-anarchist regulations can also be analysed in terms of the discursive strategies.

Although there were some incidents of propaganda by deed, the conspiracy theories of the era also served to legitimise rebuilding and internationalising police institutions.⁶⁹ This discursive link exposes the ambiguity and arbitrariness of the classification of administrative information and the issues surrounding its administrative filing. By limiting the public sphere, such discursive strategies targeted and marginalised certain identities, ultimately resulting in the criminalisation of the poor – especially the politicised poor. During the Hamidian period, the use of ‘anarchist’, ‘vagrant’ and ‘*fesad*’ in correspondence to refer to Armenians, Bulgarians and (mostly foreign) seasonal workers, served not only to marginalise these groups, but also criminalise them, as these labels were also legal concepts. This labelling process addresses the discursive level of Ottoman security policies. This kind of marginality was not based on exclusion by society, but by state rationality, which also shaped the relationship between public order and security, and shaped the compo-

⁶⁸ The Armenian community wrote a report and a petition demanding the elimination of the widespread use of the terms *fesad* and *şaki* (bandit, rebel) to refer to Armenians in daily bureaucratic correspondence and in newspapers. Later, the Ottoman government issued an *irade* (decree) ordering the removal of the cause of complaint, but even in daily correspondence, the term *fesad* continued to be used to refer to the Armenians. BOA, DH.TMIK.M., 26/ 57, 15 Ş 1314, 18 January 1897; and BOA, DH.TMIK.M., 26/88, 20 Ş 1314, 24 January 1897. See, Yılmaz, *Serseri, Anarşist ve Fesadın Peşinde*.

⁶⁹ Karl Harter, ‘Security and Cross-Border Political Crime: The Formation of Transnational Security Regimes in 18th and 19th Century Europe’, *Historical Social Research*, SI ‘Security and Conspiracy in History, 16th to 21st Century’ 38(1) (2013): 96–106.

sition of administrative practices by extending the limits of administrative discretion. As a result, the political, social or economic aspects of problematic questions became invisible, while these questions, which were framed as security issues, paved the way for securitisation; anti-anarchism and the regulations referring to it were also critical aspects of this. Even if there were attacks of propaganda by deed, the extension of police discretion and police activity were legitimised by the state's indulgence in conspiracy theories.

Threat Elements, Anti-anarchism and the Ottoman Empire

The anti-anarchist policies of European states were also practised in the Ottoman Empire, to the degree that its infrastructure permitted such action and was mostly directed against Bulgarians, Italians and, specifically, Armenian seasonal workers. This was especially after the 1890s when the Ottoman government's Armenian policy became harsher and Armenian revolutionaries started to use the propaganda of deed. Striving to deploy the latest policing techniques, the Ottoman Empire took extensive measures against Armenian revolutionaries and implemented new practices against seasonal workers from the Armenian community. This tendency suggests that state elites viewed lower-class Armenians as a potential threat. New policing measures, however, targeted not only the Armenian poor but also foreign workers with new security investigations and practices in different regions of the empire. The security rationale thereby maintained class distinctions with discursive links in a fashion similar to what was also occurring in Prussia, France, Austria-Hungary and other states.

Exploring the correspondence in the Police Ministry and the memoir and report on the Armenian question of Hüseyin Nazım Paşa, the police minister (*Zaptıye Nazırı*) and head of the security apparatus, reveals how the higher and lower ranks of the Ottoman bureaucracy perceived the Armenian question at the intersection of the administrative and discursive levels in 1890s.⁷⁰ In the report, which was written amid the anti-anarchist policies while conspiracy theories were being peddled in Europe, the expressions referring to Armenian revolutionary organisations display an overriding tenor of anti-anarchism.

⁷⁰ Hüseyin Nazım Paşa, *Ermeni Olayları Tarihi*; Hüseyin Nazım Paşa, *Hatıralarım*.

In his report, Hüseyin Nazım Paşa identified the Armenian movement as ‘*Ermeni fesadı nâmı verilen şekavetler*’ (‘banditry called Armenian conspiracy’).⁷¹ According to the police minister, Ottoman Armenians had encountered no difficulties living on Ottoman soil, in contrast to the claims of Armenian revolutionaries. However, the revolutionary organisation had two goals that used these claims as legitimising tools; the first was to set off political upheaval in the places inhabited by Armenians to establish an independent government through revolution. The second and longer-term goal was developed from anarchist ideas and featured multiple components, including the establishment of equality between rich and poor by sharing public and private property, self-government, and the abolishment of the state, religion, marriage, and other such trappings of the state and tradition. Hüseyin Nazım Paşa viewed the second goal through the prism of anarchism and emphasised that no European state practised any of these proposed goals. Thus, state elites characterised the Armenian revolutionary movement as a threat that could shake the foundations of society by seeking to create a new order. According to different sections of the report, the threat relating to the second goal concerned not merely the Ottoman Empire, but also overlapped with the goal of European nihilists and anarchists to unite and destroy monarchic governments. The report identified actions such as assassinations, threats and other destruction as *fesad*, while also linking them to anarchist ideas. Considering the allegations of a joint conspiracy among Armenian revolutionaries, European anarchists and Russian nihilists to collaborate against the Ottoman Empire – something that naturally must be prevented, according to the report – the importance of the relationship between violent political actions and anarchism was paramount for Hüseyin Nazım Paşa.

For Ottoman state elites, the fear of anarchism and its political consequences raised the spectre of an international anarchist network organised against the empire. But the elites also realised that tying this conspiracy to the Armenian revolutionary movement could be useful, as it could legitimise its measures against Armenians on the international stage while also ensuring that sympathy for Armenian revolutionaries would fall sharply in Europe.

⁷¹ For the response of the Armenian Patriarch, see BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 26/ 57, 15 Ş 1314, 18 January 1897; and BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 26/88, 20 Ş 1314, 24 January 1897.

The document's reports of incidents, some of which were linked to anarchism on the basis of the demonstrations and flyers of the Hunchakian Party, were ultimately all tied to *raison d'état*.

Another significant narrative in the report was the distrust of poor Armenians. Armenian peasants were depicted as 'naive' and 'ingenuous' people who, as passive subjects, were easily deceived by revolutionary organisations – although the report also emphasised that propaganda by the groups would foster popular support for an independent Armenia among the Armenian poor. According to Hüseyin Nazım Paşa, the Armenian poor, working as porters, day labourers, firemen and the like, ignored the police's punitive measures and continued to support revolutionary ideas, making them threat elements. Without discussing the socio-political causes of the Armenian question, the main tendency of the report was to securitise the Armenian question by associating it with anarchism.

The anti-anarchist policies affected Armenian seasonal workers the most. The police administration argued that Armenian organisations were rousing public opinion for an independent Armenia, a dream supported by Armenian seasonal workers in Istanbul. The state elites categorised the Armenian poor as a potential threat.⁷² This approach also allowed the Ottoman bureaucrats to perceive Armenian seasonal workers as the ones who transferred the Armenian question from the provinces to the capital city. During the Bab-ı Ali demonstration, the police ordered the Beyoğlu governor to arrest Armenian seasonal workers who came from other provinces and 'loafed about the streets like vagrants'.⁷³ Another document reports how Armenians associated with '*fesad*' were arrested, while others who were known to be associated with '*fesad*' were not, but sent back to their home towns due to lack of evidence. After the Bab-ı Ali demonstration, the sultan ordered that 'poor and unemployed Armenians in Istanbul should be returned to their homelands and the entry of the vagabonds coming from the countryside to Istanbul should be

⁷² Zabtiye Nezâreti'nden Makâm-ı Sadâret-Penâhiye 16 Haziran Sene 1311 Târihiyle Yazılan Tezkirenin Sûretidir, Hüseyin Nazım Paşa, *Ermeni Olayları Tarihi*, vol. 1, 64–7.

⁷³ '17 Haziran Sene 1311 Târih ve İki Yüz Yirmi Üç Numara ile Beyoğlu Mutasarrıflığı'na Yazılan Müzekkirenin Sûretidir', in Hüseyin Nazım Paşa, *Ermeni Olayları Tarihi*, vol. 1, 74.

prevented'.⁷⁴ In addition, seasonal workers living in bachelor rooms and hostels were expelled from the city and returned to their home towns.⁷⁵ The most frequently applied measure against seasonal workers deemed to be 'dangerous' or 'suspicious' was deportation. When workers without jobs or regular pay left the city, their travel document stated that it had been prepared only on the condition that they did not return to Istanbul.⁷⁶

The state not only expelled vagrants and mischievous or suspicious people, but also kept records on them,⁷⁷ especially seasonal workers. Armenian porters, bricklayers, boatmen and others were all recorded in a special register.⁷⁸ In order to investigate 'vagrant Armenians', a special commission was formed under the Ministry of Interior Affairs before being transferred to the Police Ministry.⁷⁹

After the Thessaloniki bombings by a Bulgarian anarchist group, state elites received intelligence that a further series of bombings had been planned for Istanbul.⁸⁰ Accordingly, an order was sent to the Bulgarian Exarchate to identify suspicious Bulgarians residing in the city.⁸¹ Extra security measures were also implemented due to information about a plan by Bulgarians to assassinate the Russian consul.⁸² The measures included police patrols in Galata and Beyoğlu, identity checks, and tax registrations of tenants, shopkeepers and artisans in order to obtain intelligence about suspicious and foreign individuals.⁸³ To prevent any attack on the Ottoman Bank in Istanbul,

⁷⁴ BOA, İ.HUS, 85, 19 R 1313, quoted in Vahdettin Engin, *Sultan Abdülhamid ve İstanbul'u* (Istanbul: Simurg, 2001), 60.

⁷⁵ 'Dâhiliye Nezâret-i Celîlesi'ne Vârid Olan 30 Haziran Sene 1312 Târih ve İki Yüz Seksen Numara ile Yazılan Tezkire Sûretidir', in Hüseyin Nazım Paşa, *Ermeni Olayları Tarihi*, vol. 2, 282–4 and 'Dâhiliye Nezâret-i Celîlesi'ne Yazılan 23 Mayıs Sene 1312 Târihli Tezkire Sûretidir', in Hüseyin Nazım Paşa, *ibid.*, vol. 2, 244–5.

⁷⁶ BOA, BEO, 2249/168648, 19 L 1321, 7 January 1904.

⁷⁷ The documents include lists of the Armenians who were sent to their home towns by the police. BOA, Y.PRK.ZB, 18/34, 25 Ra 1314, 3 September 1896.

⁷⁸ BOA, ZB, 30/26, 21 May 1316, 3 June 1900.

⁷⁹ BOA, İ.ZB, 1/1314-B-1, 01 B 1314, 6 December 1896.

⁸⁰ BOA, Y.A.HUS, 448/64, 20 S 1321, 18 May 1903.

⁸¹ BOA, Y.A.HUS, 448/77, 21 S 1321, 19 May 1903.

⁸² BOA, Y.A.HUS, 448/99, 23 S 1321, 21 May 1905; and BOA, Y.A.HUS, 448/135, 27 S 1321, 25 May 1903.

⁸³ BOA, Y.A.HUS, 448/111, 24 S 1321, 22 May 1903.

all streets and locations around the bank were checked, while the police and municipality collaborated to record on a map the names of all those working or living in the area. In addition, those working in the bank had to find a guarantor, while anyone entering the bank was also obliged to register with the police.⁸⁴

The authorities attempted to prevent 'anarchists' from entering Ottoman territory by subjecting people arriving to various procedures.⁸⁵ The security practices imposed on Armenians were also applied to other foreign lower-class groups, particularly Italians. Like many European states, including Russia, the Ottoman Empire tried to prevent anarchists from entering, as noted in various documents in the Ottoman archives that are directly concerned with foreign anarchists. All foreign travellers had to carry a passport with a visa, an internal passport, and another document issued by their consulate that contained details of the holder's identity, residence, purpose of travel and duration of visit. Police checks also became a routine part of procedures aimed at foreigners. Regulations prohibited visitors to Ottoman territory from involvement in politics, while 'revolutionaries like anarchists' had to be stopped.⁸⁶ If any socialists or anarchists managed to enter, they were to be deported after their photograph was taken and their identity details were recorded in special registers.⁸⁷ For example, one Greek citizen, Rano son of Rusi, was expelled on suspicion of being a socialist from France, having already been rejected by Russia and Romania before coming to Istanbul. According to the official report, he was unemployed and involved in politics, and 'he was even expelled from a republican country like France'.⁸⁸ Another practice was to gain intelligence about anarchists before their arrival and send photographs to other departments in order to prevent their arrival.⁸⁹

After an Italian anarchist assassinated France's president in Lyon on 25

⁸⁴ BOA, A.MKT.MHM., 731/4, 3 S 1321, 1 May 1903.

⁸⁵ BOA, A.MKT.MHM, 541/ 20, 18 R 1315, 15 September 1897.

⁸⁶ BOA, DH.MKT, 2131/14, 24 C 1316, 9 November 1898; and BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 71/46, 3 S 1317, 11 June 1899.

⁸⁷ BOA, DH.MKT, 2068/45, 27 M 1312, 30 July 1894.

⁸⁸ BOA, DH.MKT, 267/30, 29 M 1312, 1 August 1894; and BOA, DH.MKT, 2068/45, 27 M 1312, 30 July 1894.

⁸⁹ BOA, Y.PRK.ZB, 29/26, 03 Ca 1319, 18 August 1901.

June 1894, French state elites began to view all Italians as potential anarchists and criminals, resulting in the deportation of many, although some managed to escape from France. In the meantime, Ottoman state elites urgently banned Italians from entering,⁹⁰ including those who had been deported from other countries.⁹¹ Italian ferry companies were warned not to permit anarchists to travel to Ottoman ports.⁹² Other measures included an order to deport Italian anarchists after taking their photographs,⁹³ the arrest and deportation to Italy of three Italian anarchists,⁹⁴ and the refusal to issue visas to Italian workers in order to avoid difficulties with their deportation.⁹⁵ Other policies that can be analysed as anti-anarchist included the investigation of thirty Italian workers without visas who had arrived in Istanbul on the ferry Taormina,⁹⁶ as well as the refusal to grant visas to other Italian workers and miners.⁹⁷ The stricter procedures for Italians were also evident in the case of Italian Rayak-Hama railway workers.⁹⁸ These Italians had asked to travel from Romania to Beirut to work on railway construction. However, before they could be issued visas, an investigation took place with the cooperation of the Italian consulate.⁹⁹ In 1902, after King Leopold II of Belgium was targeted in an assassination attempt by the Italian anarchist Gennaro Rubino, controls on Italians became even tougher.

Despite all the measures, some Italian anarchists in the Ottoman Empire managed to stay in the Ottoman territories, even with the strict procedures, passport regime and the incriminating information regarding them.¹⁰⁰ Although the Ottoman government did conduct surveillance and engage in

⁹⁰ BOA, İ.HUS, 25/1311 Z-102, 22 Z 1311, 26 June 1894.

⁹¹ BOA, MV, 96/59, 23 B 1316, 8 December 1898.

⁹² BOA, Y.A.HUS, 524/25, 04 B 1326, 2 August 1908.

⁹³ BOA, Y.PRK.ZB, 32/43, 26 M 1320, 5 May 1902.

⁹⁴ BOA, Y.PRK.ŞH, 12/2, 16 M 1320, 25 April 1902.

⁹⁵ BOA, Y.PRK.ZB, 25/107, 16 R 1318, 12 August 1900.

⁹⁶ BOA, DH.MKT, 1770/25 29 S 1308, 14 October 1890; BOA, HR.TO, 345/48, 18 September 1890.

⁹⁷ BOA, DH.MKT, 2512/109, 12 R 1319, 29 July 1901.

⁹⁸ BOA, BEO, 1696/127178, 13 R 1319, 30 July 1901.

⁹⁹ BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 119/13, 15 Za 1319, 24 February 1902.

¹⁰⁰ Makdisi, *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism*, 227–37; Çorlu, 'Anarchists and Anarchism in the Ottoman Empire'.

record-keeping on Italian anarchists since their relations and networking with other Ottoman political groups were known, the main factor was that the state lacked the infrastructural capacity necessary to exert control throughout the Ottoman Empire's extensive territory.

The Italian government also informed the Ottoman Empire about Italians heading to Istanbul without visas and asked the Ottoman Empire to intercept them.¹⁰¹ After the assassination of Empress Elizabeth, Italy sought to demonstrate that the Italian state did not support anarchism and was open to international collaboration. In another case, the consulates of Russia, France, Germany and Austria-Hungary collaborated to investigate the identities of anarchists going to Istanbul,¹⁰² and such joint anti-anarchist policies continued with the signing of the 1904 St Petersburg Protocol.¹⁰³

Conclusion

As an administrative body, the Ottoman Empire began to use modern techniques against political threats or actions disrupting public order in the late nineteenth century. This process occurred as an aspect of the larger internationalisation of police departments in Europe and against the backdrop of Ottoman cooperation with other countries against anarchists. The Ottoman state was actively using international police cooperation and new techniques for identifying criminals, especially during the investigations of violent acts.¹⁰⁴ However, the Ottoman state elites focused on both political threats and actions against public order, resulting primarily in the marginalisation of specific groups in the empire. Although administrative regulations and the bureaucracy are central to the infrastructural power of the modern state,¹⁰⁵ policing practices in the Ottoman Empire show us that the daily practices of state security can also make such regulations the basis for a political threat. The

¹⁰¹ BOA, HR.TO, 345/ 48, 18 September 1898.

¹⁰² BOA, Y.PRK.HR, 30/54, 11 M 1319, 30 April 1901.

¹⁰³ BOA, İ.HUS, 115/89, 24 M 1322, 10 April 1904.

¹⁰⁴ For an example, see Raşit Gündoğdu and Ömer Faruk Yılmaz (eds), *Sultan İkinci Abdülhamid Han'a Yapılan Suikastın Tahkikat Raporu* (Istanbul: Çamlıca Basım Yayın, 2007).

¹⁰⁵ Michael Mann, 'The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms and Results', *European Journal of Sociology* 25(2) (1984): 185–213.

politics of fear and the process of identifying these threats can also be discussed as political tools that were employed for the state elites' political strategies.

The history of security opens a space for wide-ranging discussion on policing reforms and how state elites defined threat elements.¹⁰⁶ Naturally, conspiracies and deeds were also useful in legitimising¹⁰⁷ the new policing techniques and directly affected the administrative process, especially for Armenians, Italians and Bulgarians. In the Ottoman case, the internationalisation of the Armenian question must be considered in the context of internal security measures, as must the process of labelling social groups that state elites inevitably associated with revolutionary or nationalist organisations. While trying to analyse the security implementations, another significant point is how the Police Minister Hüseyin Nazım Paşa regularly referred to concepts of 'conscience', 'justice' and 'truth' in explaining the position of the Ottoman government in his report. While he constantly referred to these concepts as discursive tools to point out the 'propaganda of Armenian revolutionary (*fesad*) organisations which were [in] contrast [to] the truth (*muhelif-i hakikat*)', this very narrative, based on a security mentality, created 'the provocation thesis'.¹⁰⁸ This kind of securitisation paved the way for an impunity regime towards the Armenian community, and unpunished crimes against humanity in the long term, from Ottoman to post-Ottoman Turkey.

¹⁰⁶ Cornel Zwierlein and Beatrice de Graaf, 'Security and Conspiracy in Modern History', *Historical Social Research* 38(1) (2013): 7–45; Cornel Zwierlein and Beatrice de Graaf, 'Historicizing Security – Entering the Conspiracy Dispositive', *Historical Social Research* 38(1) (2013): 46–65.

¹⁰⁷ Legitimation in terms of acceptance of the system's norms and values. David Easton, *A Systems Analysis of Political Life* (New York: John Wiley, 1965); S. M. Lipset, 'Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy', *American Political Science Review* 53(1) (1959): 69–105.

¹⁰⁸ The Ottoman bureaucrats developed a narrative on 'sedition' that blamed Armenian radicals by inciting the 'naive' and 'poor' Armenian peasants and workers to commit violence against the state with the aim of attracting the attention of foreign countries. State elites have also used the provocation thesis as one of the main discursive strategies for the genocide denial during the republican era.