

The Richard Hovannisian Chair of Modern
Armenian History at UCLA
[Established by the Armenian Education Foundation]

**Total Destruction by Despoliation:
The role of local and provincial elites in the
annihilation and deportation of Aintab Armenians,
1915-1918**

**Umit Kurt,
Clark University**

**Friday, May 15, 2015
6:00-7:30 pm
Haines A25**

(Self-pay Parking is available in Lots 2 & 3, which are
walking distance to lecture hall)

The 1915 Armenian Genocide can be seen as the pinnacle of a process of decline and destruction extending from 1895 to 1922. As many scholars have noted, the Genocide consisted of a series of strategies that ran the gamut from the mass executions of elites and categorical deportations of masses to forced assimilation, destruction of material culture, and collective dispossession. The state-orchestrated plunder of Armenian property immediately impoverished its victims while simultaneously acting as a condition for and a consequence of the Genocide. Drawing upon primary sources from Ottoman, Armenian, and European archives and memoirs, Umit Kurt's talk explores the role of local notables and provincial elites in the process of genocide and deportation directed at Aintab Armenians. It argues that as a result of their participation in the genocide, these local actors prospered and were able to transform themselves into the new wealthy social stratum through the acquisition of Armenians' property and wealth. Through an intense focus on local events in Aintab, Kurt's talk emphasizes how the Union and Progress Party's (CUP) genocide and deportation decree had a certain social basis through the practice of effective power, control and support mechanism(s) at local levels. Kurt argues, therefore, that a detailed scrutiny of local dynamics in Aintab is a reminder to historians of how investigations into local histories of the Armenian genocide, when properly conducted, can shed important light on larger processes and trends evident in the Armenian genocide.

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