Debates around mass murders boil down to two central questions: What happened? Why and how did it happen? In the Armenian Genocide research, “what happened” question got answered at least in broad terms. Although we still do not have all the details of what was experienced at the local level, we do have a good general picture of how the genocide was launched and how it was developed as a state policy. This is however not true for the “why” and “how” questions which are mostly explained with either “Premeditated Continuum” or “Wartime Radicalization.” The debate in question is really an offshoot of several peripheral questions regarding the intentions, motives, ideologies, and motivating anxieties of the decision makers. If in fact there was a final formal decision for the genocide, we have to answer a list of questions: What stages did it pass through before it reached its final conclusion? When and how did the decision take the shape of a plan? Akçam argues that we are still very far from such a level of sophistication given that much of the debate is driven by speculation rather than documentation. In this talk, he aims to reconstruct the decision making process based on Ottoman documents.

Please note that the venue’s seating capacity is limited with 225 people. Plan to arrive early to secure a seat. The lecture will be recorded and made available online at ME/SA’s website: http://mesa.ucdavis.edu. The closest parking lot (with free parking up to three hours) is located at the corner of First and F streets. For more information, please contact Gurjit Mann, ME/SA Program Coordinator, at gkmann@ucdavis.edu.