



A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility

By Taner Akçam

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"The definitive account of the organized destruction of the Ottoman Armenians . . . No future discussion of the history will be able to ignore this brilliant book."?Orhan Pamuk

Beginning in 1915, under the cover of a world war, some one million Armenians were killed through starvation, forced marches, and mass acts of slaughter. Although Armenians and the judgment of history have long held the Ottoman powers responsible for genocide, modern Turkey has rejected any such claim.

Now, in a pioneering work of excavation, Turkish historian Taner Akçam has made unprecedented use of Ottoman and other sources?military and court records, parliamentary minutes, letters, and eyewitness reports?to produce a scrupulous account of Ottoman culpability. Tracing the causes of the mass destruction, Akçam reconstructs its planning and implementation by the departments of state, the military, and the ruling political parties, and he probes the multiple failures to bring the perpetrators to justice.

As the topic of the Armenian genocide provokes ever-greater passion and controversy around the world, Akçam's work has only become more important and relevant. Beyond its timeliness, however, *A Shameful Act* is sure to take its lasting place as a classic and necessary work on the subject.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. The story of the Ottoman Empire's slaughter of one million Armenians in 1915—a genocide still officially denied by the 83-year-old modern Turkish state—has been dominated by two historiographical traditions. One pictures an embattled empire, increasingly truncated by rapacious Western powers and internal nationalist movements. The other details the attempted eradication of an entire people, amid persecutions of other minorities. Part of historian Akçam's task in this clear, well-researched work is to reconcile these mutually exclusive narratives. He roots his history in an unsparing analysis of Turkish responsibility for one of the most notorious atrocities of a singularly violent century, in internal and international rivalries, and an exclusionary system of religious (Muslim) and ethnic (Turkish) superiority. With novel use of key Ottoman, European and American sources, he reveals that the mass killing of Armenians was no byproduct of WWI, as long claimed in Turkey, but a deliberate, centralized program of state-sponsored extermination. As Turkey now petitions to join the European Union, and ethnic cleansing and collective punishment continues to threaten entire populations around the globe, this groundbreaking and lucid account by a prominent Turkish scholar speaks forcefully to all. (Oct.)

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From Booklist

Akcam has attracted considerable attention for being one of the first Turkish intellectuals to devote his career to studying the systematic slaughter of one million Armenians during World War I. For this reason, he has been harshly criticized by those who would deny the existence of an Armenian genocide. Akcam's earlier work, *From Empire to Republic* (2004), contextualized the genocide within a climate of Turkish nationalism and attempted to provide the basis for a Turkish national conversation about trauma and culpability. Although essentially similar to that book in its analysis of Turkish culpability, his latest study is considerably broader in historical scope. He seeks to harmonize the conventional narrative of the collapsing Ottoman Empire with victims' perspectives of Turkish dominance over minorities. He does this by showing a state--rent by internal power struggles and terrified of being partitioned--that pursues genocide as a way of avoiding catastrophic collapse. Clearly a companion to Peter Balakian's *Burning Tigris* (2003) and other accounts of the genocide, this book also deserves to be read in concert with recent works analyzing the politics of genocide and national shame in Germany. *Brendan Driscoll*

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Review

"Akçam is unsparing in his evidence... Of profound importance to history--and certain to stir up nests of hornets." -- --*Kirkus Reviews* (starred review)

"Impressive achievement... Shines fresh light on exactly why and how the Ottoman Empire deported and slaughtered the Armenians." -- --*The New York Times Book Review*

"Magnificently researched... No scholar has mined and synthesized the Ottoman Empire's internal documents and memoirs with Akçam's assiduous skill." -- --*Philadelphia Inquirer*

"Moving... Tries to grapple both with the enormity of the crime and with the logic of its repression." -- --*The New Yorker*

"The definitive account... No future discussion of the history will be able to ignore this brilliant book." -- --
Orhan Pamuk

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Mark Armstrong:

A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility can be one of your starter books that are good idea. We recommend that straight away because this book has good vocabulary that can increase your knowledge in terminology, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nonetheless delivering the information. The author giving his/her effort to put every word into satisfaction arrangement in writing A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility nevertheless doesn't forget the main stage, giving the reader the hottest along with based confirm resource data that maybe you can be one among it. This great information can certainly drawn you into fresh stage of crucial pondering.

Josue Denson:

Reading a book for being new life style in this season; every people loves to examine a book. When you read a book you can get a lot of benefit. When you read guides, you can improve your knowledge, simply because book has a lot of information onto it. The information that you will get depend on what kinds of book that you have read. If you wish to get information about your examine, you can read education books, but if you want to entertain yourself look for a fiction books, this kind of us novel, comics, along with soon. The A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility will give you a new experience in looking at a book.

Gary Simms:

With this era which is the greater man or who has ability to do something more are more special than other. Do you want to become among it? It is just simple method to have that. What you must do is just spending your time not much but quite enough to possess a look at some books. On the list of books in the top collection in your reading list will be A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility. This book which can be qualified as The Hungry Hillsides can get you closer in turning into precious person. By looking way up and review this book you can get many advantages.

Clyde Okane:

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of Turkish Responsibility can to be your new friend when you're really feel alone and confuse in doing what must you're doing of their time.

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