

## BOOK REVIEW

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### **THE GENOCIDE OF TRUTH CONTINUES, BUT FACTS TELL THE REAL STORY**

*(GERÇEĞİN SOYKIRIMI DEVAM EDİYOR, AMA OLAYLAR GERÇEK HİKAYEYİ ANLATIYOR)*

Author: Şükrü Server AYA

İstanbul, Derin Publications, 2010, 533 Pages.

Şükrü Server Aya's latest book entitled "The Genocide of Truth Continues, But Facts Tell the Real Story" has been published in 2010 by Derin Publications. Composed of 533 pages, this book entails numerous documents, maps and pictures related to the issue.

In our opinion, the specialty of the book is that it discusses the Armenian Question by addressing some unfamiliar events and publications and puts forth the inaccuracy of some beliefs and issues established within the public opinion of especially Western countries. We will continue our article by shortly discussing some chapters of Aya's book we find particularly interesting.

Şükrü Servar Aya has started his first chapter of the book with a book review. Aya, examining Hratch Dasnabedian's book "History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation Dashnaktsutium 1890-1924", has conveyed an elaborate review of the book to his readers by using the maps and some of the documents in it.

The Pastermadjian Brothers is mentioned in the second chapter of the book. First of all, Aya has explained the activities of Garekin Pastermadjian who had cooperated with foreign powers against the Ottomans and was one of the coordinators of the raid executed on the Ottoman Bank in 1896. While explaining the countries Garekin has travelled to after the raid and the activities he has conducted abroad, Aya has indicated that Garekin has returned to the

Empire in 1908 and 1912 and has been elected deputy to the National Assembly from Erzurum. Actually, these points indicated by Aya are very significant. An individual returning and being elected as deputy of Erzurum after escaping abroad following leading the raid on the Ottoman Bank clearly displays the political weakness of the administrators of that period.

On the other hand, Aya has also referred to Garekin Pastermadjian's brother Vahan Pastermadjian on which there is very few information. Aya, points out that Vahan had graduated from Harbiye Military College in 1914, had fought against the Russians in the Ottoman army and was wounded in the leg during a battle, which explains that Vahan Pastermadjian is rarely mentioned by the Armenians.

In the third chapter, the author makes a comparison of several documents. The first document he addresses is the "Near East Relief Report" No. 192, approved by the US Joint Congressional/Senate Committee on April 22<sup>nd</sup> 1922. The second document is the "Memorandum" signed by A. Aharonian and Boghos Nubar, presented to the Paris Conference as the official demand of the Armenian Republic at the end of World War I.

The fourth chapter deals with the relations between the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) and the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP). Within this framework, the chapter entails an interview conducted with Dikran Kaligian in the Armenian Weekly journal. Aya describes the relations between the ARF and the CUP by providing examples. However, he indicates that these relations have ended with the elections in 1912 and underlines as the breaking point of these relations the following:

*"The lack of progress in land reform and improved conditions for Armenians, and the ascendancy of reactionary elements within and without the CUP, had brought ARF-CUP cooperation almost to the breaking point".*

The fifth chapter concentrates on the innocent Turkish Armenians in armed revolt. The author provides two articles which were published in the New York Times newspaper in 1918 and 1920. Evaluating these articles, Aya has reached the following conclusion:

*"These experts from the newspaper should firmly prove that Armenians were no "innocent people who have been moved out of their houses for extermination", but they had regular large armies involved in many battles against their own home country the Ottoman Empire, where that had*

*become the upper class but were misled by Imperial Forces into promises of freedom and large lands, to fight and serve their major plan of carving up the Ottoman Empire and share it piece by piece”.*

The sixth chapter deals with the Report of the public meeting to express sympathy for the Armenian cause held at the Central Hall in Westminster on June 19, 1919. Some speeches were delivered by very reputable names, such as Ex-PM Viscount Gladstone. One of Gladstone’s statements in this report clearly displays how the Armenians were taken advantage of and that the promises made to them were not fulfilled. Gladstone expresses the following:

*“We owe a great deal to Armenia, not so much for what Armenians have done for us, but for what we have not done for them which we ought to have done”.*

One can clearly understand that the promises made to the Armenians have not been fulfilled. However, despite all these, instead of the great states which have regarded them as instruments and have utilized them to their own advantage, the Armenians have accused and continue to accuse the Ottomans who have approached them with tolerance, have guaranteed their rights and have given high-status positions within bureaucracy.

The seventh chapter examines the U.S. Senate Resolution, “Report of the Near East Relief, 31 Dec. 1921”. The report is dated 22.04.1922, but evaluates the 1921 year-end status. It was signed by James Bartoni as chairman. The author draws attention to some of the points mentioned in the report. Some of these points are significant.

*The report states that;*

*-300.000 Armenians returned to Cilicia after British-French occupation, but that they evacuated the region in late 1921.*

*-500.000 people have emigrated from Anatolia to the Caucasus region*

*-As the end of 1921, 200.000 to 300.000 refugees are alive in Syria and it’s envired and is in need of housing.*

Throughout the report, there is not a word of Turkish atrocities or refusal of cooperation or attacks on relief goods protected by famished soldiers or Turks. The figures given in the report clearly shows how the numbers of Armenians losing their lives during their relocation have been played with for propaganda purposes.

The eighth chapter briefly explains the independent Republic of Armenia in 1918-1920 and provides some data on the Armenian army and population in that period, whereas the ninth chapter deals with the Report of Captain Emory H. Niles and Arthur Sutherland "On trip of investigation through Eastern Turkish Vilayets", which has not been referred to frequently within the research of the Armenian Question. In the report, Niles and Sutherland states that the damage in the region of Van has been made by Armenians and that Armenian groups have murdered Muslim civilians, especially after the Russian army retreated in 1917.

The tenth chapter addresses General James G. Harbord's "Report of the American Military Mission to Armenia". The main reason for General Harbord being appointed by Wilson was to examine the issue of the "Mandate for Armenia". However, the history, the present situation of the Armenian people and the political situation and suggestions for measures have also been researched by Harbord. Aya has referred to some crucial points mentioned in the report and through his own interpretations, has attempted for new viewpoints to be taken into consideration by researchers.

The eleventh chapter is consecrated to an evaluation of the Armenian losses experienced during the First World War, which have always been brought to the agenda with great distortions by Armenians. Impartial research on the Ottoman Armenian population before and after 1915 shows that the number of Armenian losses asserted as 1.5 million is 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of this number at the most. Moreover, it is necessary to indicate that this number does not represent those who have been murdered, but stands for the Armenians who have died due to different reasons. The issue of Armenian losses is distorted, brought forth the most by Armenians, and has been displayed by the author with examples of documents and reports published in foreign countries.

While expressing in the twelfth chapter that genocide fanfare is nothing but a hunt for cash, Aya has also indicated that it is quite depressing to see that most of the world public opinion still fails to notice this. The thirteenth chapter focuses on a book review again. This book, written by Samuel A. Weems and published in 2002, is entitled "Secrets of a Christian Terrorist State Armenia".

In section 14/1 of this book, Aya has drawn attention to the book and articles written by Armenian historians. He states that forged documents is continued to be used by scholars and provides as examples the books entitled the Blue Book, The Wellington House, and The Great Game of Genocide. Moreover, by presenting quite a number of forged photographs created through photomontage for propaganda purposes, Aya displays how people are tried to be manipulated. On the other hand, in chapter 14/2, the Holocaust Museum is mentioned and the

Armenians within the Nazi army. On the other hand, the thousands of Jews whose lives have been saved with the assistance of Turkey during the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War are dealt with. Relating to this issue, Aya draws attention to three points:

*-The Museum was totally unaware of the Armenian Legion in the Nazi army stationed in Holland and their probable role in sending Jews to death camps. The 'devoted' historians apparently were not aware that there were 22.000 Armenian Legion soldiers (4.800 of them SS) in the Nazi army under command of General (Butcher) Dro Drastamat Kanajian, who had fought against Turks, then, escaped to Europe and later became Hitler's counsel because he knew Russians and their tactics.*

*-The fanatically 'dedicated historians' of the museum did not investigate which Jews in Europe escaped under daring conditions with the guidance of Turkish diplomats. Was such a large operation of Turkish diplomats, involving as many as 15.000 Jews sent in special train caravans via Turkey to Palestine not known or was it overlooked?*

*-The parody of these distortions, is that the Museum declared 'Armenians as victims of an unproven genocide' when (partly) 22.000 of them were certainly involved in the death of thousands of Holocaust victims.*

Chapter fifteen once again addresses a book review. The book entitled "Ambassador Morgenthau's Story" has been reviewed in detail and attention has been drawn to the reality distorted for propaganda purposes. Chapter sixteen briefly puts forth that the US was not neutral on the issue of the Armenian Question and that the Americans supported Armenians. Furthermore, it also focuses on the discussions taking place during the Paris Peace Conference. While chapter seventeen also often refers to "Ambassador Morgenthau's Story", it deals with the Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission's dated September 24, 1916.

The role of great powers within the Armenian Question is a subject matter which has been addressed and examined from various angles by many scholars and academicians. The influence of countries such as the US, Russia and England on the Armenian Question is worthy of separately being a thesis subject. Within this framework, in chapters 18 and 19, Aya attempts to convey the British Great War and its role in the Armenian Question, based on a book review. This book, written by Akaby Nassinian and published in 1984 in London, is entitled "Britain and the Armenian Question, 1915-1923".

The twentieth chapter again focuses on a book review and responds to the

Armenian genocide allegations. Gaston Gaillard's book entitled "The Turks and Europe" deals with Turkish-Armenian relations during the First World War. Gaillard not only expresses that the conditions of Armenians living in Turkey is no worse than the conditions of Armenians living in other countries, but also indicates that Armenians exaggerate their population. Chapter 21 conveys some points of Edward J. Erickson's book entitled "The Armenians and Ottoman Military Policy, 1915". Predominantly, the book is about the condition of the Ottoman army and the Armenian threat.

Şükrü Server Aya concludes his book with the examination of Robert F. Zeidner's book entitled "The Tricolor Over The Taurus". This book elaborates the French occupation of Cilicia, vicinity, and the incidents during the period 1918-1922.

In conclusion, Şükrü Server Aya's book brings into light events and documents not known quite well, puts forth some biases and therefore, acts as a valuable source for those wanting to research the Armenian Question.

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 Rıza Çolak, Representative of the Iraqi Turkmen Front in Talafar: "There is no such thing as Sunni-Shiite conflict in Talafar. We are all brothers and sisters."

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 Baodad Amreuev, Kazakh



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