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### The Armenian Genocide

Slowly, yet with increasing authoritativeness, the reality of the Turkish genocide perpetrated against the Armenian people has come to be accepted as established, incontrovertible historical fact. Such a process of moral pedagogy has overcome formidable obstacles, especially the well-orchestrated, shameful, as yet ongoing campaign by the Turkish Government to impose silence by promoting a variety of co-opting devices, by disseminating various falsifications of the historical record, and through cajolery and intimidation.

Let us be clear. This campaign that has been conducted by Turkish authorities is not a matter of psychological denial in which unpleasant aspects of a personal or collective past are unwittingly suppressed to avoid acknowledging a humiliating past, although such denial clearly is part of the armor of self-respect that continues to be relied upon by many well-meaning Turkish citizens to avoid confronting both their past and their government. The official campaign is far more sinister. It is a major, proactive deliberate government effort to use every possible instrument of persuasion at their disposal to keep the truth about the Armenian genocide from general acknowledgment, especially by elites in the United States and Western Europe.

In such a setting honest, courageous scholarship is a precious resource in the struggle of a victimized people to preserve the integrity of its past, and lift the events above the confusing cross-currents of propaganda and partisan historiography, but even here difficulties abound. The long arm of the Turkish state has enlisted, directly and indirectly, some prominent academic spokespersons (both Turks and non-Turks) who have outrageously muddied the waters of truth by obscuring and distorting the story of Armenian genocide in the 1915-18 period.

Dedicated Armenian scholars, above all Vahakn Dadrian and Richard Hovannisian, have in recent years published widely under respected auspices and have reconstructed the contested past on the basis of abundant and reliable documentation. At last, the balance of informed understanding and perception, despite the persistence of controversy and the heavy fog of Turkish propaganda, is moving toward unequivocal acceptance of the full horror of the Armenian experience of genocide.

Such an assessment is further confirmed by important studies by non-Armenian scholars (for instance, Robert Melson, *Revolution and Genocide; On the Origins of the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust*, University of Chicago. 1992). The extent to which all recent general studies of genocide as a political phenomenon take for granted the Dadrian/Hovannisian version of the Armenian experience is notable and encouraging. Turkish accounts are either disregarded as shoddy propaganda or dismissed as inept or disingenuous scholarship.

Despite a big and expensive effort, the Turkish cover-up has basically failed, yet so long as the Ankara Government and its academic apologists maintain the historic lie there is further work to be done. Indeed, the struggle to redeem the truth of the past is far from over, especially given Turkey's geopolitical leverage arising from its valued membership in NATO and Turkey's importance to the West as business partner and regional ally on an array of sensitive Middle Eastern issues. For this reason, it is of the utmost importance to maintain the scholarly pressure.

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5. *Indefensible Weapons; Human Rights and State Sovereignty*;
6. *A Study of Future Worlds; This Endangered Planet*;
7. Coeditor, *Crimes of War and Law in an Emerging Village: A Post-Westphalian Perspective*;
8. Editor of and contributor to the four-volume *Legal Order in a Violent World*;
9. *The Vietnam War and International Law*,

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