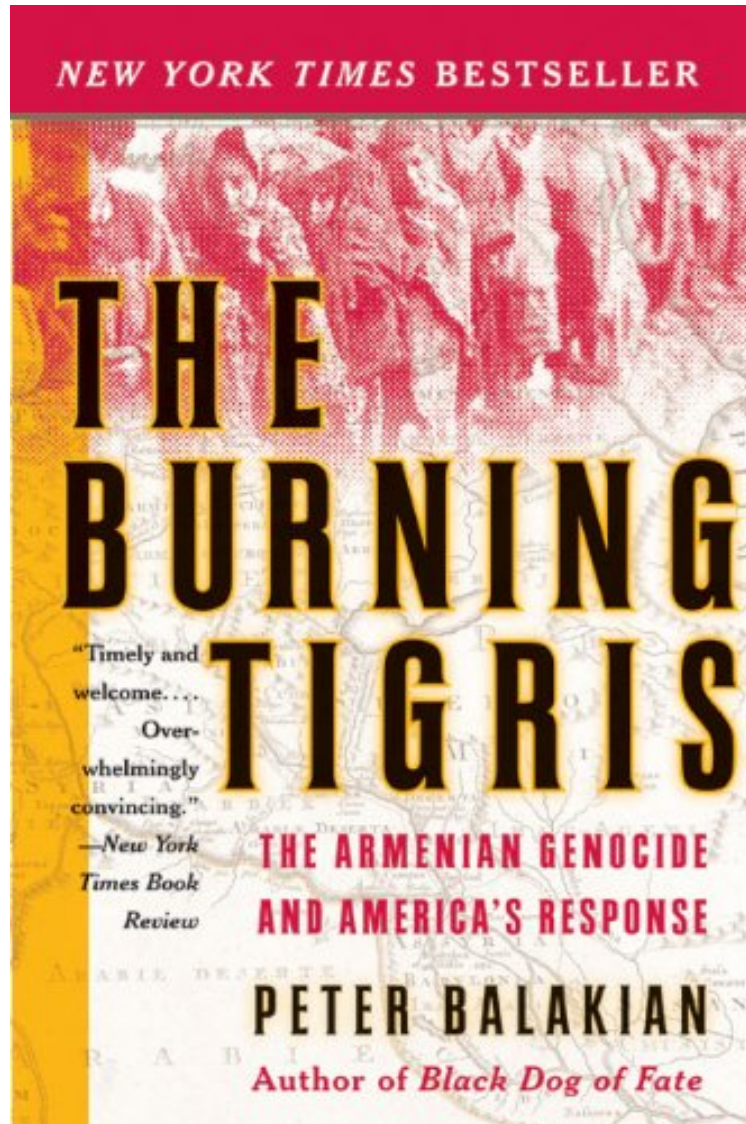


(Download pdf) The Burning Tigris: The Armenian Genocide and America's Response

# The Burning Tigris: The Armenian Genocide and America's Response

Von Peter Balakian

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**Von Peter Balakian : The Burning Tigris: The Armenian Genocide and America's Response** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Burning Tigris: The Armenian Genocide and America's Response:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen4 von 4 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Raising a Red Flag on a Hidden and Submerged AtrocityVon Grady HarpWe live in fragile times: while we look to other

countries and shudder at the famine, mass deaths, suicide bombings, the ever bubbling curse of AIDS, we also sit and watch highschool killing sprees, 911, serial rapists and killers on the television nightly news and on the front pages of the following morning's papers. We cannot avoid being aware of atrocities that surround our tiny planet. One particular atrocity of the past is retold in frequent books, movies, musical elegies, paintings, poems, and theater - that incredible crime against humanity being the Holocaust of Hitler's Nazi Germany. But how many of us are aware of the magnitude of the Turkish Genocide of the Armenians that took place in 1915? Or of the massacre of Armenians in the 1890's that became an American focus for humanitarian concerns, advancing Clara Barton and the Red Cross into action with all the backing of the press and religious support that was readily mustered? The time has come to set the record straight on this submerged tragedy in hopes that bringing attention to this omission from American history books will alert the people of the world (and especially America) just how powerful our government's preoccupation with OIL and the countries that supply truly is. Peter Balakian has written the definitive book *THE BURNING TIGRIS: THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE AND AMERICA'S RESPONSE - A History of International Human Rights and Forgotten Heroes* and I would urge everyone to read this enormously well researched, documented, and readable volume. Balakian starts his history with the early 1890's and traces the ever-increasing degradation of Armenians in Turkey by the Ottoman Empire. The strangest aspect of this ongoing murder of innocents is that for many years it was a cause celebre in the USA. The Women's Rights Movement led by such luminaries as Grace Kimball, Clara Barton, Julia Ward Howe, and Alice Stone Blackwell gave of their time, money and personal commitment to send relief to the Armenians and to keep the tragedy before the public eye. Great thinkers and writers of the day like William M. Ramsey wrote " Turkish massacre...does not mean that thousands are killed in a few days by the sword, the torture, or the fire. It does not mean merely that everything [the Armenians] possess is stolen, their houses and shops looted and often burned, every article worth a halfpenny taken, the corpses stripped. It does not mean merely that the survivors are left penniless - without food, sometimes literally stark naked...Sometimes, when the Turks have been specially merciful, they have offered their victims an escape from death by accepting Mohammedanism." Yet this massacre was only a prelude to the Genocide that occurred in 1915. The real horror of this history is the absolute drive of the Turks toward annihilation of the Armenians in 1914 - 1915. This genocide was a mirror image of the Nazi Final Solution for Jews in WW II complete with ghettos, mass murders, camps, slaughter of all men below age 50, then mass slaughter of the women and children. A particularly heinous note is that the Turks identified, isolated and then exterminated most of the great philosophers, teachers, artists, writers, and thinkers - leaving few to transmit the horror of the genocide to the future generations. But despite the initial care and concern of the USA in sending aid to the Armenians and accepting thousands into the country here, the actual events of treaty signing, accords, agreements, and political stands at the close of WW I and WW II focused on the need to pacify Turkey in order to keep the flow of OIL almighty flowing. The embarrassment of this lack of courage to punish violations of Human Rights is now felt acutely as we are left to view our country's errors in Vietnam, the Middle East, our own 'ethnic cleansing' of the American Indians and our history of supporting slavery of the African Americans. Where in 1915 the New York Times wrote daily about the Armenian atrocities, equating the words 'Armenia' with 'atrocities', 'massacre', 'deportation', 'outrage', 'race extermination', when it came time in 1918 for President Wilson to revitalize the need to bring justice to the Armenian human rights violations by declaring war on the Ottoman Empire he elected to ignore history and make the table of negotiation safe for Turkey. Balakian is careful to footnote and give direct evidence for every statement he makes, harsh though they may be to read. In his Epilogue he quotes Judith Herman: "Criminal behavior is always defined by the perpetrator's compulsion to 'promote forgetting' ". For this reader the might and power of this book is summarized by this quotation. Balakian is careful to concede that men like Presidents Carter and Clinton have made public statements in support of keeping the Armenian Genocide by the Turks in the public eye. It has not been enough. With this book perhaps we as a nation will read and hear about one of the greatest tragedies of history - and one of the most ignored. Highly Recommended for students, for historians, and for everyone who believes in Human Rights.

**Kurzbeschreibung**  
*A History of International Human Rights and Forgotten Heroes*  
In this national bestseller, the critically acclaimed author Peter Balakian brings us a riveting narrative of the massacres of the Armenians in the 1890s and of the Armenian Genocide in 1915 at the hands of the Ottoman Turks. Using rarely seen archival documents and remarkable first-person accounts, Balakian presents the chilling history of how the Turkish government implemented the first modern genocide behind the cover of World War I. And in the telling, he resurrects an extraordinary lost chapter of American history. Awarded the Raphael Lemkin Prize for the best scholarly book on genocide by the Institute for Genocide Studies at John Jay College of Criminal Justice/CUNY Graduate Center. From Publishers Weekly  
Now faded from memory in the shadow of the Holocaust, the Turkish slaughter of more than a million Armenians in 1915-1916 was a virtual template for the 20th-century horrors that followed, and much of what Balakian describes so powerfully is now chillingly familiar: inhuman brutality; mass deportations of helpless civilians (often in overcrowded railroad boxcars); headlines screaming of "systematic race extermination"; activists and

intellectuals calling for intervention; and, most devastatingly, the lack of political will in the West to intervene to stop the slaughter. Balakian exposes the roots of the genocide in the "total war" atmosphere of WWI, which combusted with the pan-Turkish nationalism of the Young Turk government, inflamed Muslim rage against "infidel" Armenian Christians, and a long-simmering Ottoman hatred of the Armenians dating to Sultan Abdul Hamid II and his slaughters in the 1890s. Balakian, who wrote so movingly of the impact of the genocide on his own family in *Black Dog of Fate*, also underscores how well known the Armenian destruction was in America through detailed reports by U.S. consuls throughout Turkey and steady newspaper reporting, and how great the response was in providing humanitarian assistance to refugees and survivors. In a horrifying account, city by city, region by region, Balakian quotes firsthand testimony about the decimation of the Armenian population and their towns and culture. Yet he retains the measured tone of a historian throughout; if anything, he lets Woodrow Wilson off too easily for not declaring war on Turkey. But readers will come away sadly convinced that Armenians' brave but doomed stand in Van should be as celebrated as the Warsaw ghetto uprising, and the corpse-strewn Lake Gaeljak as well known as Babi Yar. 16 pages of bw photos and maps not seen by PW. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist

Culminating in the organized murder of more than one million Armenians in 1915, the Armenian genocide was both a systematized continuation of violence begun in the nineteenth century and a chilling premonition of larger and more systematic European genocide to come. A detailed account of the "hidden holocaust" sewn together from archival research and the testimony of survivors, this selection also documents another tragedy: America's response to the crisis. In the 1890s, led by William Jennings Bryan and Theodore Roosevelt, among notable others, American Protestants felt a sympathy for the plight of their fellow Christians that was both heartfelt and fashionable. It was, argues Balakian, an inaugural moment for the American defense of international human rights. Yet political concerns kept Woodrow Wilson from declaring war on Turkey, and by the late twentieth century, moral clarity sadly erodes in the face of cold war necessity and oil-driven foreign policy. Even today, Turkey denies that a genocide ever took place. In this important book, Balakian proves adept at presenting both human horror and political tragedy. Brendan Driscoll

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