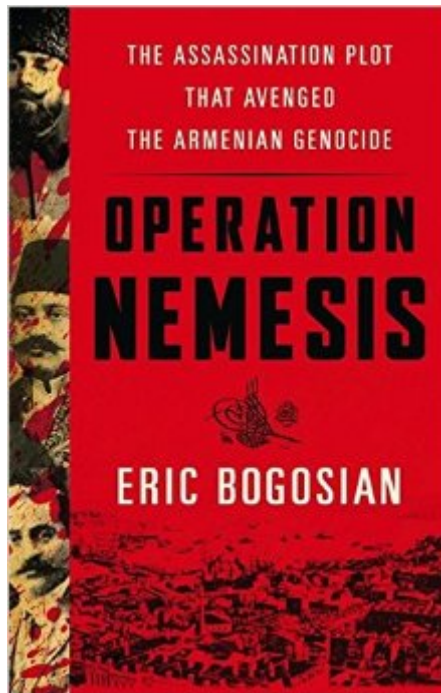


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Operation Nemesis: The Assassination Plot That Avenged The Armenian Genocide



Synopsis

A masterful account of the assassins who hunted down the perpetrators of the Armenian Genocide. In 1921, a tightly knit band of killers set out to avenge the deaths of almost one million victims of the Armenian Genocide. They were a humble bunch: an accountant, a life insurance salesman, a newspaper editor, an engineering student, and a diplomat. Together they formed one of the most effective assassination squads in history. They named their operation Nemesis, after the Greek goddess of retribution. The assassins were survivors, men defined by the massive tragedy that had devastated their people. With operatives on three continents, the Nemesis team killed six major Turkish leaders in Berlin, Constantinople, Tiflis, and Rome, only to disband and suddenly disappear. The story of this secret operation has never been fully told, until now. Eric Bogosian goes beyond simply telling the story of this cadre of Armenian assassins by setting the killings in the context of Ottoman and Armenian history, as well as showing in vivid color the era's history, rife with political fighting and massacres. Casting fresh light on one of the great crimes of the twentieth century and one of history's most remarkable acts of vengeance, Bogosian draws upon years of research and newly uncovered evidence. Operation Nemesis is the result--both a riveting read and a profound examination of evil, revenge, and the costs of violence.

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Customer Reviews

When I was a little kid back in the '50s, and we'd visit my grandparents in Watertown, Massachusetts, occasionally my Grampa -- a survivor of the Armenian Genocide -- would take me

to his "club", a gathering spot where he and his old "Mustache Pete" cronies -- fellow survivors -- would gather. I remember it as a small, dark, smoke-filled room with wood-paneled walls covered by framed sepia-toned photos of guys dressed in traditional Armenian garb. There, he and his compatriots would sit around sipping Turkish coffee and Four Roses whiskey, trading stories, jabbering mostly in Armenian, a language I didn't (and still don't) understand. But they'd take the opportunity to tell me stories about those guys in the pictures, and themselves, trying to make me understand the history of the Genocide, and the vengeance they'd taken on the Turkish pashas who'd perpetrated those crimes upon the people. I had a hard time understanding what they were telling me, because I was so young and their accents were so thick, but some of it did stick with me through the intervening decades. Needless to say, when I saw this book was available, I immediately bought it to try to learn the actual facts behind the stories I'd been told as a kid. It fulfilled my expectations in every way. Bogosian clearly did his homework. It's all there, from the backdrop leading up to the massacres during World War 1, to the acts themselves, as well as the aftermath, including the coordinated efforts to extract payback against the men responsible for trying to wipe out the Armenian minority in their country.

Even with the eyes of world recently fixed on the events of the Armenian genocide as never before, Eric Bogosian's "Operation Nemesis" is an urgently felt and vastly necessary work of historical literature. And it IS literature. Bogosian is an artist as much as he is a historian, and he has commemorated the hellish, virtually unimaginable events of 1915, and the clandestine network of ordinary Armenian men who took vengeance against the military leaders and Ottoman pashas who ordered and enacted the genocide against their people (a secret operation that has remained essentially lost to history until rather recently), with fastidious attention to detail, studious research, and all the skill and passion his vast experience as a novelist and award-winning playwright can bring to bear on the material. Bogosian's book charges forward like fate itself, absorbing you in the hell on earth that the Turks unleashed against the Ottoman Armenians as few written works have done before. The details are shocking and occasionally stomach-churning, but Bogosian's addressing of these atrocities is never exploitative and always in the service of the larger goal: contextualizing the killings carried out by men like Soghomon Tehlirian, who stood trial in Berlin and was acquitted on justification / temporary insanity grounds of the 1921 murder of Talat Pasha, the "Young Turk" interior minister whose orders set in motion a mass death machine that was the first of its kind in the twentieth century (and, all too tragically, not the last).

This is a fascinating book that was timely published the same year as the Centennial anniversary of the Armenian genocide. I know so little about the Genocide myself and I think most Americans are in the same boat. This book tells the story of a small group of Armenians after the Genocide who secretly planned and carried out assassination of key Turkish leaders who orchestrated the genocide. I was surprised that such an interesting story has received so little attention! I felt it was like a real life early twentieth century version of Jason Bourne. The story is incredible enough that after finishing the book I hunger to read more on Operation Nemesis. I think if they made a film of this story it would be a blockbuster. This book was helpful in providing the background of the Armenian genocide itself. I think it was wise that the author did that given how most readers know little much of Turkish murder of Armenians. It was emotional for me to see the account of how innocent women and children were deceptively led on a caravan to be murdered. It was very hard to go through this portion of the book. I don't even know how the Armenians are still around with the way the Turks systematically went about killing Armenians. It is nothing short of a miracle from God. Through this book I learned about a group who called itself the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) which was a group of politically radical Armenians that came about in the late 1800s. After World War one was over they were the ones who set in motion Operation Nemesis. Much of the book focused on the first mission of Operation Nemesis. Their target was Mehmed Talaat Pasha who was one of three de facto ruler of the Ottoman Empire who had escaped from the Allies and was in not so secret hiding in Germany.

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