



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

*Taner Akcam*

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**A landmark assessment of Turkish culpability in the Armenian genocide, the first history of its kind by a Turkish historian**

In 1915, under the cover of a world war, some one million Armenians were killed through starvation, forced marches, forced exile, and mass acts of slaughter. Although Armenians and world opinion have held the Ottoman powers responsible, Turkey has consistently rejected any claim of intentional genocide.

Now, in a pioneering work of excavation, Turkish historian Taner Akçam has made extensive and unprecedented use of Ottoman and other sources to produce a scrupulous charge sheet against the Turkish authorities. The first scholar of any nationality to have mined the significant evidence—in Turkish military and court records, parliamentary minutes, letters, and eyewitness accounts—Akçam follows the chain of events leading up to the killing and then reconstructs its systematic orchestration by coordinated departments of the Ottoman state, the ruling political parties, and the military. He also probes the crucial question of how Turkey succeeded in evading responsibility, pointing to competing international interests in the region, the priorities of Turkish nationalists, and the international community's inadequate attempts to bring the perpetrators to justice.

As Turkey lobbies to enter the European Union, Akçam's work becomes ever more important and relevant. Beyond its timeliness, *A Shameful Act* is sure to take its lasting place as a classic and necessary work on the subject.

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