

BOOK REVIEW 2

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RELOCATION SINCE 1915: TURKISH-ARMENIAN RELATIONS (1915'TEN GÜNÜMÜZE TEHCİR: TÜRK ERMENİ İLİŞKİLERİ)

Berna Türkdoğan

İstanbul, IQ Kültür-Sanat Yayıncılık, 2006, 448 Pages

Despite intensive efforts of disturbing Turkish position in international platforms by keeping the Armenian question in the agenda of the international community, insufficiency of Turkish efforts remains a visible fact. Although Turkey currently seems to back at this academic race, with increasing studies on the Armenian question, new facts and documents have been emerging.

In the book entitled 'Relocation Since 1915: Turkish-Armenian Relations' written by Berna Türkdoğan, the author argues that the Armenian genocide allegations can only be falsified with a determined and consistent effort following the light of these facts and documents. Within this framework, the book starts with the necessity of examining genocide allegations through the responsibility of the historian and mainly focuses on the reasons of the Armenian relocation.

In the first chapter, the author examines the position of Armenians in the Ottoman social order, where and how they had been living under the Ottoman tolerance. What is more, she analyzes the first separatist Armenian movements and the implications of the intervention of Great Powers to Ottoman administrative and legal system on Turkish-Armenian relations. She also informs the reader on the population statistics regarding the Armenian population by relying on Russian, Armenian, Ottoman and Western sources and comments on the developments leading the Ottoman Empire to take the decision of relocation in a historical perspective.

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In the second chapter, implementation of the law on relocation and resettlement, which had been adopted on May 27, 1915, is examined. Within this framework, the author explains the implications of Armenian rebellions and other separatist activities on this decision. At this point, she refers to the reports written at that time on Armenian atrocities, revolts and collaboration with the enemies of the Ottoman armies. By analyzing these laws and regulations thoroughly, the author concludes that they were targeting not a nation as a whole, but those who had been threatening the territorial integrity of the Empire. What is more, she also provides the reader with some archival documents on the punishment of those who had been misbehaving the Armenians during the relocation and those who had been mis-implementing the orders coming from the central government. She examines the attitude of Great Powers as well as the United States by relying on the American and Russian archival documents.

In the third chapter of the book, the reader is provided with information on the regions of relocation, the number of relocated Armenians, the domestic and foreign aids allocated for them as well the conceptualization of the term 'relocation' and its usage. What is more, this chapter includes other experiences of deportations and the conceptualization of this alternative term of 'deportation'. The situation of Armenian as well as other relocated populations of the Empire is analyzed in a holistic way in this chapter.

Fourth chapter is devoted to the discussions on the Armenian question in Lausanne Peace Conference, the attempts and targets of Armenians in the Conference as well as the negotiations in the subcommittee on minority issues. It also analyses the discussions in the Turkish Grand National Assembly at that time and comments on the articles of Lausanne Treaty on minorities. The fifth chapter on the other hand focuses on the evolution of Armenian question since World War II.

In the sixth chapter, the author mainly examines the emergence and development of Armenian terror between 1965 and 1985, its targets, the collaboration of Armenian and Greek terrorists, the establishment of Armenian terrorist organization called ASALA and its relationship with another terrorist organization, PKK. She also focuses on the current legal aspect of the issue and the reorientation of the methods used by Armenians from terror to diplomacy.

The last chapter of the book examines the developments from 1985 to April 24, 2005. Within this framework, she analyzes the implications of Armenian

question on Turkish-Armenian relations, its connection with the Karabagh question as well as the situation in Azerbaijan and Turkish-European Union relations. She also focuses on the resolutions recognizing the genocide allegations in various parliaments, their inclusion in the educational curricula in some countries and the activities of the Armenian lobby. The author tries to find a solution for the Armenian issue including development of Turkish lobbying activities as well as the works of historians. She argues that a consistent strategy is needed and such a strategy should be a constant and stable one which does not solely rely on giving concessions.

All in all, the book is about a very long period and prepared in reference to archival materials from related countries' archives. It also utilizes the archives of Turkish Grand National Assembly, Prime Ministry Ottoman and Republican Archives Department as well as military archives. Thus, it can be said that the book is based on a strong scientific and analytical framework. It also consists of a deep historical and methodological analysis. As a result, it is evident that this book by Dr. Berna Türkdoğan will have a significant place in the literature because of its holistic approach to the concept of relocation as well as its historical dimension.