



Open Wounds: Armenians, Turks, and a Century of Genocide

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The assassination in Istanbul in 2007 of the author Hrant Dink, the high-profile advocate of Turkish-Armenian reconciliation, reignited the debate in Turkey on the annihilation of the Ottoman Armenians. Many Turks subsequently reawakened to their Armenian heritage, in the process reflecting on how their grandparents were forcibly Islamised and Turkified, and the suffering they endured to keep their stories secret. There was public debate about Armenian property confiscated by the Turkish state and books were published about the extermination of the minorities. The silence had been broken. After the First World War, Turkey forcibly erased the memory of the atrocities, and traces of Armenians, from their historic lands, to which the international community turned a blind eye. The price for this amnesia was, Cheterian argues, 'a century of genocide'. Turkish intellectuals acknowledge the price a society must pay collectively to forget such traumatic events, and that Turkey cannot solve its recurrent conflicts with its minorities - like the Kurds today - nor have an open and democratic society without addressing its original sin: the Armenian Genocide, on which the Republic was founded.



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