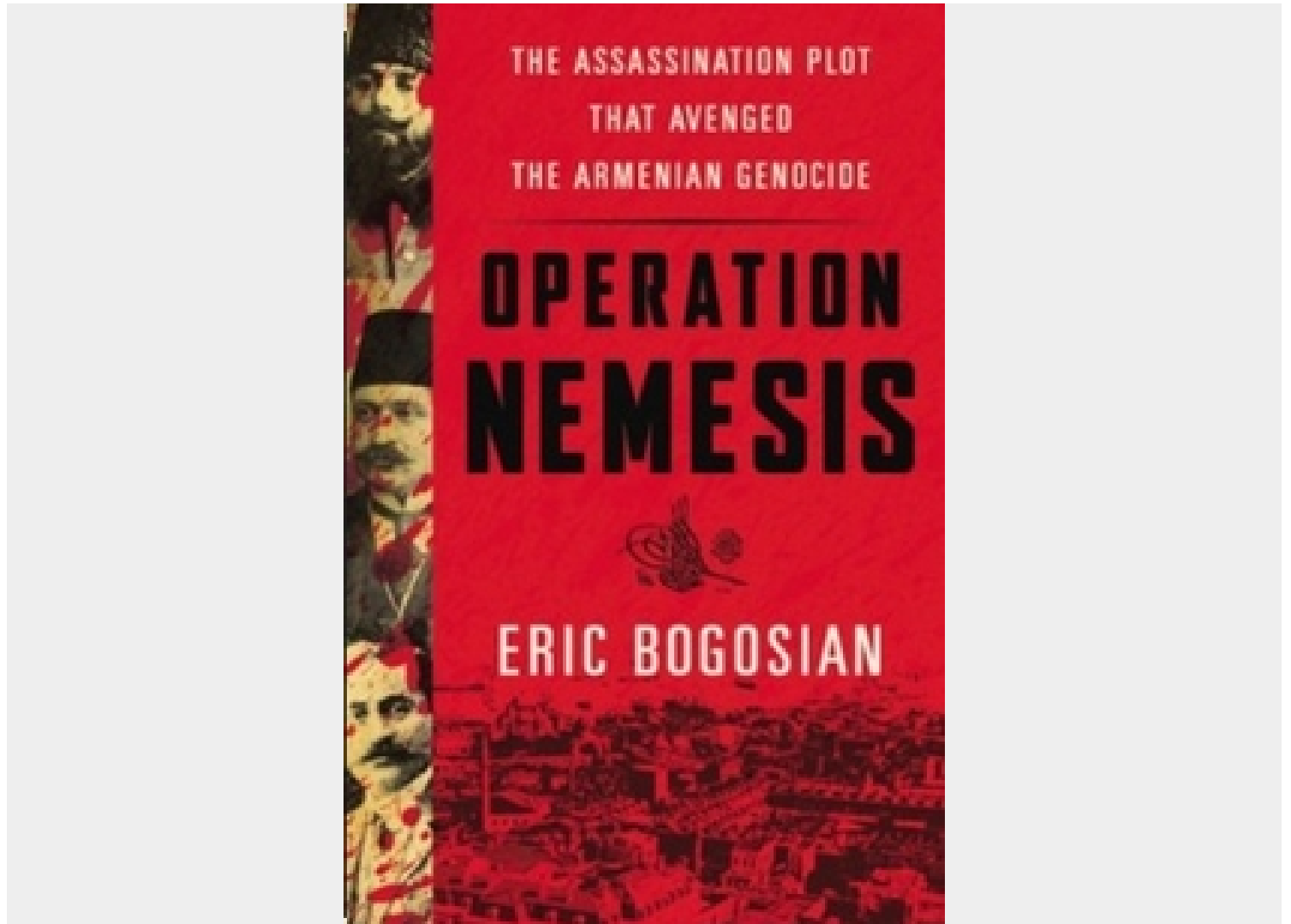


ERIC BOGOSIAN'S OPERATION OBFUSCATION

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Category: [Opinions](#)



Book review by **Lucine Kasbarian**

New Jersey, 1 June 2015

The following passages are only the introductory portion of the book review. To read it in its entirety click on [Eric Bogosian's Operation Obfuscation \(C\)](#).-Editor

Seven years after starting his research about one of the most dramatic episodes of 20th century Armenian history, actor, playwright, and novelist Eric Bogosian has written *Operation Nemesis: The Assassination Plot that Avenged the Armenian Genocide* (Little, Brown & Co.; April 21, 2015). 

Much was expected of this widely publicized book whose author is fairly well-known to the American public. Many Armenians hoped that the work would bring into focus the fact that a group of Armenian patriots executed Turkish leaders who had escaped court-ordered death sentences for planning and carrying out the Armenian Genocide.


However, while serious students of the Armenian Genocide may be merely disappointed in this book, others could be misled.

Bogosian's account of Operation Nemesis—the post-WWI Armenian execution of Talaat and other Turkish genocidists—does not start until one-third of the way into this 300-page book. Readers first learn about the events that led up to the Genocide. Much later in the book, the author provides information irrelevant to Nemesis. Even if this was ostensibly done to provide context, the title *Operation Nemesis: The Assassination Plot that Avenged the Armenian Genocide* is misleading because it gives the impression that the book is solely about Operation Nemesis.

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Moreover, "Assassination Plot" implies a sinister or unjust political motive, which is definitely not the case for the Armenians of Nemesis. Call me fastidious, but a more appropriate title for these events would be *Operation Nemesis: The Secret Plan to Execute the Guilty Perpetrators of the Armenian Genocide*.

His bibliography indicates that an incredible amount of research material was at Bogosian's disposal to produce this book. But the selectivity he exercised in the use of that material is apparent. Bogosian's choice of words, phrasing, style, tone, and reasoning—as well as certain insertions and omissions of information—will often bewilder and disorient knowledgeable readers as well as those new to this history.

In the opinion of this reviewer, the result obfuscates the significance of the Nemesis operation and the gravity and persistent dangers of Turkish ultra-nationalism. One winces reading many of the author's passages. In our opinion, this book disingenuously brings the Turkish reputation up a few notches while subtly bringing that of Armenians down at least that many. Having read both the pre-publication and published editions, we have noticed that a few of the more egregious passages have been modified or removed in the published edition.

Perhaps Bogosian is following today's so-called 'conflict resolution' paradigm. That is, in exchange for Turkish acknowledgment of the Armenian Genocide, the victim group must sacrifice truthful aspects surrounding this crime against humanity and concede that the Ottoman Turkish Empire simply found itself under siege in WWI, had an anxiety attack, and, unfortunately, struck out against 'rebellious' Armenians.

After reading Bogosian's book, one comes away thinking that the literary, educational, and political establishments of the West would be very pleased if young people, including Armenians, who read *Operation Nemesis*, conclude that Armenians are partly responsible for the Genocide, and decide that it is best to leave the past alone.

In publishing this book, an opportunity was squandered to let the world know that the Armenians got a raw deal after their attempted annihilation; that valiant Armenians stepped in only after the 1919 Turkish Military Tribunals did not follow through on their verdicts; and that a century later the legacy of a great unpunished crime against humanity begs to be resolved.

Perhaps Bogosian will consider the above issues if he publishes a second edition of this book.

