BOOK LAUNCH-UNDERSTANDING THE TURKISH-ARMENIAN CONTROVERSY OVER 1915

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1915 Olaylarını Anlamak: Türkler ve Ermeniler
Mustafa Serdar Palabıyık
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Understanding the Turkish-Armenian Controversy over 1915
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The Deputy Chair of the Department of International Relations at TOBB University of Economics & Techonology, Assist. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Serdar Palabıyıks research focuses on Turkish-Armenian relations, diplomatic history of the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Foreign Policy. He published several articles on these subjects in Turkish and international academic journals. Dr. Palabıyıks book titled Understanding the Turkish-Armenian Controversy over 1915 was simultaneously published in Turkish under the title 1915 Olaylarını Anlamak: Türkler ve Ermeniler.

Understanding the Turkish-Armenian Controversy over 1915 sets the framework of the Turkish-Armenian controversy based on 1915 by tracing this controversy through two major tracks. In the first track, he reviews decisive moments in the historical formation of this century-old dispute. In the second and perhaps the more important track, Dr. Palabıyık examines the concept of genocide, which forms the basis of the Turkish-Armenian controversy. The book acknowledges several wrong doings and tragedies the Armenian community underwent, but claims that 1915 events could not be characterized as genocide.

A significant contribution in sections regarding the first track is that Dr. Palabıyık provides

the reader with arguments and counter-arguments forwarded in the context of the debates over the 1915 events. This enables him to present the general terms of the debates and to provide a general framework of the controversy for the people who might want to perform comprehensive research.

In the second track, Dr. Palabıyık emphasizes a basic fact that is ignored by many authors, that is, genocide is a legal term defined by the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. In other words, contrary to many Turkish and international scholars and intellectuals, instead of discussing whether there was a genocide or not through study of the 1915 events Dr. Palabıyık starts off with the fact that genocide is a legal term and suggests addressing and resolving this controversy within a legal framework. Thus, going beyond the hegemonic narrative that shapes the debates on genocide which both Armenian and Turkish intellectuals have difficulties to break through, he points at the foundations of a healthier ground on which discussions could be carried out.

Overall, Understanding the Turkish-Armenian Controversy over 1915 is a study that examines legal, political and sociological facts that also provides the basis of the resolution of the Turkish-Armenian controversy. It conveys the subject in a simple and objective manner. Understanding the Turkish-Armenian Controversy over 1915 is a work that provides guidance for future studies.

About the Author :

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