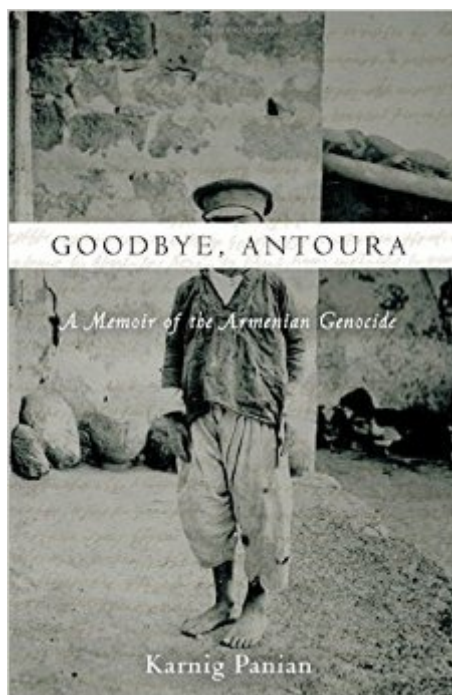


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# Goodbye, Antoura: A Memoir Of The Armenian Genocide



## Synopsis

When World War I began, Karnig Panian was only five years old, living among his fellow Armenians in the Anatolian village of Gurin. Four years later, American aid workers found him at an orphanage in Antoura, Lebanon. He was among nearly 1,000 Armenian and 400 Kurdish children who had been abandoned by the Turkish administrators, left to survive at the orphanage without adult care. This memoir offers the extraordinary story of what he endured in those years—as his people were deported from their Armenian community, as his family died in a refugee camp in the deserts of Syria, as he survived hunger and mistreatment in the orphanage. The Antoura orphanage was another project of the Armenian genocide: its administrators, some benign and some cruel, sought to transform the children into Turks by changing their Armenian names, forcing them to speak Turkish, and erasing their history. Panian's memoir is a full-throated story of loss, resistance, and survival, but told without bitterness or sentimentality. His story shows us how even young children recognize injustice and can organize against it, how they can form a sense of identity that they will fight to maintain. He paints a painfully rich and detailed picture of the lives and agency of Armenian orphans during the darkest days of World War I. Ultimately, Karnig Panian survived the Armenian genocide and the deprivations that followed. *Goodbye, Antoura* assures us of how humanity, once denied, can be again reclaimed.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a short book--about 180 pages. I'm glad it was short---it was terribly painful to read. Not because of poor writing by Panian. The author did an excellent job of telling the story of the

Armenian genocide--without dramatics. I think the fact that the book was written as the remembrance of the little boy who experienced it--is why it was so hard to read. I think this segment of the genocide--the orphans who had lost all their families and then were told to forget about them and their culture--is truly an untold story. I plan to read another book about the Armenian genocide--this one was my first--because of the response of my Turkish guides when I was in Turkey a few years ago. We actually went to far eastern Turkey near where the majority of the genocide occurred. The guides did not want to talk about it--in fact they even portrayed it as something that really had happened. 1 1/2 million people were killed. Turkey has done an outstanding job of covering up the genocide they unleashed.

This memoir is the incredible story of a 5 year old boy who was the sole survivor of his family during the slaughtering and deportation of thousands of Armenians living in Turkey in 1915. He endured the exile from his town in Turkey into the Syrian desert after his father was murdered, then witnessed family and friends dying from starvation, disease, and more mass murder at the hands of the Ottoman Turks. Then he continued to suffer hunger and mistreatment in the Antoura orphanage while undergoing "Turkification." It is a story of resistance and survival of human spirit. This book is very well written and is a fast read; I could not put it down. This book will open your eyes to the horrors of the Armenian Genocide, a historic event that our country does not recognize.

**A TRUE STORY OF SURVIVAL.** A 5 year old boy survives against all odds during the forced deportations and massacres by the Ottoman Turks of Armenian families from their homeland into the deserts of Syria. After losing every member of his family in the harsh conditions of the desert and the cruelty of the Turkish soldiers, he finds himself in a camp orphanage in Lebanon where the kids were forced to change their identity. The Antoura orphanage was another project of the Armenian genocide by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk; its administrators sought to transform the children into Turks by changing their Armenian names, forcing them to speak Turkish, and erasing their history. This is an incredible story of determination, survival and how children recognize injustice and fight back in the most imaginative ways. **A MUST READ!!!! A PAGE TURNER!!!**

Goodbye Antoura begins in a land of prosperity full of a hardworking, devout, and generous people, led by elders with great hope for the future of their clan. The elders were stewards of their land, determined to treat it well so it would continue to prosper for years to come. Although everyone in this land worked hard and lived simply, it is written as paradise with more than enough happiness to

spread around. Beginning Goodbye Antoura this way allows the reader to see how a five-year-old was able to possess such strong feelings about his Armenian identity and humanity; for five years, he was enveloped by it. Many memoirs focus on the horrors of war. While this memoir certainly spares no gruesome detail, it does have a refreshing perspective that also allows for moments of pride and joy. This is likely because it is told through the eyes of a five-year-old child, which makes this memoir particularly unique, accessible, and moving. We see a child coming to terms with his identity and humanity. This is not a book bogged down in nationalistic theory and philosophy. Instead, it is about a young boy with a remarkable story to share. It is an honor to read his story; I couldn't put it down!

The story of Karnig is the story of my Grandfather's (Ardashes) cousin. Reading it takes me back to when my Grandparents came to visit and my "dede" told me the story's of Gurin, its hot springs, and how our clan was quite sizable once before the Turks decided to slaughter us. It is especially difficult to read his memoirs when it hits so close to home. Thanks to the perseverance of Karnig, my Grandfather Ardashes and all of the Grandparents and great-parents of that generation the Panian clan has added three heirs to its thrown and perhaps one day will grow to be as sizable as it once was before in Gurin.

Why can't the Turks do as the Germans have done? Acknowledge the atrocity so the present can go on living. Modern day Germans are not responsible for the Holocaust. Modern day Turks are not responsible for the Armenian Genocide, but only when they freely acknowledge it. This is a remarkable personal account from one survivor--of what did really happen.

Sad but fascinating about the Armenian Genocide. I donated it to the public library here and dedicated it to my dear friend's father, also dear, who was affected as a small child and whose life was formed by the decade long Genocide and whose USA citizenship I stood up for long ago. Everyone should know about the Armenian Genocide. Hitler used it somewhat as a prototype for his evil final solution

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