

Party meetings “as her shield and protector,” because,

If she didn’t go to these meetings, it would prove that she had been an accomplice to my executed father and shared his enmity against the Leader [Stalin]. And they would take her too.... She took me along, so that, so that they would not take her temporarily—because she was very pretty—or take her for good, because she was my father’s wife.⁹

Revik Harutyunyan’s mother was arrested a week after his father was incarcerated. She was imprisoned in Yerevan for two years and denied visitation rights. Both man and wife were accused of belonging to a fictitious secret Trotskyite organization.¹⁰ Gayane Shagoyan also documents the practice of slamming the wife with the same unfounded accusation after the husband’s arrest and arresting her as well.¹¹

9 Arshak (Sergey Arshakyan), «Գնչնիհին» (The gypsy woman) (Yerevan: Vark, 1995), p. 20. This novel was written in 1977 but denied publication at the time. It was published, along with other provocative works by the same author, beginning in 1995.

10 Revik Harutyunyan’s tragic story—the confiscation of his family’s apartment after his parents’ arrest, the four-year-old Revik with his baby sister and their aunt sleeping in the street, and all the hardship they endured—is recorded in an interview conducted by Levon Abrahamyan. This and many other interviews are transcribed in «Ստալինյան բռնաճնշումները Հայաստանում, պատմություն, հիշողություն, առօրյա» (The Stalinist persecutions in Armenia: History, memory, daily life), ed. Hranush Kharatyan, Gayane Shagoyan, Harutyun Marutyan and Levon Abrahamyan (Yerevan: A “Gitutyun” Publication of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, 2015). See pp. 330–342 for Revik Harutyunyan’s interview.

11 Gayane Shagoyan, «Կինն ու տղամարդը որպես բռնաճնշումների թիրախ» (Man and woman as targets of persecution), in *ibid.*, pp. 192–195.