

allowed into their world to see how the past shaped their identity and that of the generations born to them.

These survivors kept silent about their ancestry, about their traumatic past, about their deep resentment of present conditions and the difficulty of adjusting to them. Their silence was a psychological imposition from within, out of the fear and shame of disclosing their inner world, and from without, dictated by an unfriendly and sometimes hostile environment. In fact, the silence coming from within, a sort of self-censorship, bolstered the Turkish government's official stand to continue its unbridled suppression of the history and the societal memory of the Armenian Genocide. Earlier in this book the trend of the "collective I" was discussed. It was shown how Istanbul Armenian writers and poets resonated the pain and suffering of all human beings, portrayed humanity caught in the cruel grip of injustice, and sang the history of other nations, but how, from the nationalistic vantage point, these poems could be interpreted as allusions to the plight of the Armenian nation. Khrakhuni's poem titled "History," about the foundation of Rome and the twin brothers breast-fed by a she-wolf, is one example. In this poem, the allegory of wolf and lamb presented a subtle allusion to the history of the Turkish-Armenian relationship. Another example is a poem by Varteres Karagözian<sup>3</sup> titled

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<sup>3</sup> Varteres Karagözian was born in the Armenian village of Zara in Sebastia (Sivas) in 1938. He belonged to the Armenian remnants dispersed in the interior of Turkey who were discovered and brought to Istanbul during the 1950s campaign to save the Armenian survivors and provide them with an Armenian education. This was an initiative of the patriarchate of Istanbul undertaken during the