

cured.”²⁰ In one of his sketches, he portrays one of his students who comes from a poor family and significantly calls him *anapati tsnund*,²¹ meaning born in the desert, that is, a child born to a refugee mother who had survived the hardship of the deportation route and reached Aleppo or another destination in the Syrian desert. This is as daring as Der Markaryan could be when writing in Turkey in the 1950s and 1960s. More significant, however, is the endnote provided by the publishers to explain the term in the 2006 edition of his work. The explanation is as follows:

Reference is to Armenian children born in the Syrian deserts in 1916–18, whose parents were a part of the hundreds of thousands of Armenians who were deported in accordance with a special law of the Ottoman government (*Tehcir Kanunu*). They [the parents of these children] were those few lucky ones who did not die of diseases or hunger, or were not massacred on the route to exile [*aksor*]; they reached the desert and survived in the harshest conditions.²²

The Armenian word used for deportation is exile, a term that is common in Armenian literature and oral testimonies but is by no means strong enough to denote the hardship of the deportation routes. Moreover, the process was canonized with reference to the law promulgated by the government. Thus, it was not a genocidal effort by the government, just the implementation of the law. In fact, the term *Tehcir Kanunu* is used in Turkish official historiography to justify the events of

²⁰ Idem, from a sketch titled “Enkerners” (My friends), in *ibid.*, p. 19.

²¹ Idem, from a sketch titled “Nazarete” (Nazareth), in *ibid.*, p. 151.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 294.