

Margosyan sketched the aftereffects of the traumatic past without direct reference to the source of the trauma. His multitudes of characters knew how to keep silent about the past. They were agents of the present, always in a struggle to maintain the status quo as much as possible, in fear of a repetition of what they had been able to leave behind, at least physically. They were cautious not to emphasize their racial and religious differences, their identity, because the Turkey in which they lived did not offer the setting for that identity, because, as Fatma Müge Göçek has indicated, “the history of minorities in Turkey has been discussed until recently within a nationalistic paradigm.”³⁴

The silence, chosen as a defensive tool by Armenian survivors in Turkey in order to avoid dire consequences, undoubtedly caused psychological suffering that intensified over time and often times erupted in a compulsive urge to drop the lifelong burden, to attain tranquility of soul and conscience.

Seher/Heranoush chose not to speak, not to disclose her identity. How did she deal with the secret of her life? How did her secret affect her behavior? What compelled her to share that secret with a chosen one in her family? Fethiye Çetin narrates the story of her grandmother and the story of the Armenian massacres that her grandmother confided in her.

Heranoush vividly recalled the massacre by the river, women drowning themselves so as not to fall into Turkish hands, children dying of starvation, and mothers giving up their children to “benevolent” Turks to save them from certain

³⁴ Göçek, “Silences in the Turkish Republican Past” (n.d.).