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Collective Memory Passed On

Genocide survivors in Turkey, whether they converted to Islam or held on to their faith, did keep silent about their past. But even under this imposed silence, the memory was transmitted to the next generation. Arpiar Der Markaryan's experience could have been recorded as a valuable eyewitness account of the Armenian massacres of 1894-96 and those of 1915. But he refrained from putting that experience down in writing. Of course, even his brief allusions to those events were daring deeds in the repressive Turkish climate. It is significant that decades after his death, in a volume containing his complete works, along with obituaries and remembrances by friends and loved ones, his daughter, Anelka Karmirian, admits how for a long time – until she was an adolescent – she was kept in the dark about her father's past: