

had lived, Ibrahim grew up a timid man, always afraid to stand up for his rights. Now in Germany, he told Yalçın his father's story, a gruesome story that he had adopted as his own.

Ibrahim's father, Shimaver (Shmavon), was a small boy when the 1915 massacres began. In his family of six siblings, parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, he was the only one who survived the unspeakable ordeal. Finally, a Kurdish family took him in, but unable to cope with that intolerable hardship, he ran away and took refuge with an Armenian family. Shmavon was a grown-up, self-made man when he married an Armenian girl who was also a survivor of the Genocide. At the beginning of World War II, he was drafted into the army. But the Christian soldiers received discriminatory treatment in the army. Shmavon's interpretation was that the government did not trust the Christians, believing that in case of war with a Christian nation, they would betray Turkey and join the enemy. Shmavon, together with other Armenians, was put to work in labor camps which were then called *işocağı* (workplace) (p. 327). The World War I idea of the *amele taburı* was being repeated a quarter of a century later, except this time, the fate of these soldier-laborers was not death, just torture and hardship. Sarkis' experience in the Turkish army was similar to that of Ibrahim's father's story.

Subjected to constant harassment, Shmavon and his family converted to Islam and he was renamed Ali, but that did not spare them from the wealth tax (*varlık vergisi*) levied on non-Muslims in 1942. Ibrahim was born to them in 1943. Fear and apprehension were constant in the Kurdish village of Tukaris