

abstract contemplations of human traits and attributes as favorite themes. With a unique perception of the world and humankind, Turkish-Armenian writers and poets sang the love, hope, dreams and yearnings, the pain and suffering of mankind, and the struggle for equality and justice.<sup>8</sup> They successfully overcame their own emotions and replaced the “I” with the “collective I.” They replaced personal struggle with the collective one. Zahrad (Zareh Yaldejian)<sup>9</sup> was one

---

<sup>8</sup> Onnik Fchjian’s poem, “Vacharorde” (The vendor) best epitomizes this trait in Istanbul Armenian poetry:

I sell oil; I sell honey,  
 Forgiving spirit,  
 Sincerity  
 Loving hearts I sell...  
 My baskets are filled with  
 Happiness, brotherhood  
 And I sell; I sell...  
 Vendor!  
 hatred,  
 lies and deceit I want from you.  
 Unfortunately, Madame, there are none.  
 They are all gone.

The poem is quoted in Haddejian, *Hushatetr - 15* (1999), p. 188. Haddejian cites this poem as the author’s important and impressive first step by which he became known in Istanbul literary circles. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations in the present work are my own.

<sup>9</sup> Born in 1924 in Istanbul, Zahrad is a product of the post-WWII Turkish-Armenian cultural and especially literary revival. His poetry encapsulates the postwar period’s invigorated cultural and religious activities, the booming of Armenian schools, churches, print press, art exhibitions, and cultural events in the atmosphere of socioeconomic recovery and relative political respite which ended with the revolution and military coup of May 27, 1960, the