

families were subjected to constant harassment until they too left the village (p. 229).

Zakarya is a leftist by political orientation, but he blames himself for having joined the Turkish left and forgetting his Armenian values and heritage. Government intolerance and persecution had driven him toward the communist ideology and his equally persecuted Turkish brothers. When he was growing up, searching for his Armenian identity and learning about his heritage was taboo, a forbidden domain. Then, when he was old enough to make choices, he neglected his Armenianness and gravitated toward internationalism (p. 240).

Zakarya has a surprise in store for the reader. Halfway through his story, with the heavy emphasis he puts on his Armenianness, he reveals his wife's identity. She is a Turk. They were comrades in a leftist party where nationality did not matter. In fact, if one of them made compromises regarding national identity and heritage, it was the wife, who wholeheartedly adopted Armenian traditions and raised two Armenian sons. Nonetheless, the Armenian Church refrained from baptizing their sons, and so the family they formed with this odd union was not, unsurprisingly, accepted by either side (p. 258).

Zakarya admits that he and his generation are "unable to forget the sufferings of the past, the deportations of 1915, the wealth tax (*varlık vergisi*) of 1942, the 1955 pogroms against non-Muslims, and the 1960s escalation of the Turkification campaign" (p. 241). His life experience tells him that "violence and fear hinder clear thinking; prohibitions and taboos make you blind and weaken your [historical] memory" (p. 240).