

survivor. After the old man had revealed to Çetin that he was of Armenian descent, and after talking about his experience with his Armenian mother, he confessed with a sigh of relief, “tonight, I will be able to have a good sleep.”³¹ The soul-appealing process had just begun in the life of this old man.

In his analysis of Charlotte Delbo’s Auschwitz memoir, Lawrence Langer refers to “the abyss separating the words from the events they seek to animate.” He infers that the writer strives to narrow that abyss, whereas in oral testimonies the witnesses “plunge deeper into it even as they venture to escape.”³² Sultan, the middle-aged Armenian woman-worker interviewed in Germany by Kemal Yalçın, exclaims, “I want peace. I don’t want to be denigrated as *dönme* or *gâvur*. I don’t want to pretend Islam when I don’t believe in it. I don’t want to hide my Armenian identity, neither in Germany nor in Adıyaman. I want to be accepted as I am” (Yalçın, p. 368).

Whereas Kemal Yalçın is a catalyst for the surfacing of painful memories, Fethiye Çetin is a player caught in that shock and confusion called an obscured identity discovered. Seher/Heranoush, in telling her story to her granddaughter, transmitted the burden of memory to an innocent descendant. With that memory, a confusing, shocking, and obscure identity was passed on which challenged the recipient to confront and deal with it. In sharp contrast, Vickie Smith Foston’s discovery of her roots in Mush in Western Armenia, and of her Armenian ancestors who came to the U.S. in flight

³¹ Quoted by Altınay, “In Search of Silenced Grandparents” (2006), p. 129.

³² Langer, *Holocaust Testimonies* (1991), p. 42.