

In any event, the Turkish people are taught to deny any wrongdoing in the past and to absolutely deny the Armenian Genocide. Their national, or rather nationalist, identity is constructed around the denial of the Armenian Genocide, and this state-sponsored denial is pushing Turkish society further and further along a road with no return. The most severe punishment is reserved for those who question this denial. But this policy affecting the construct of Turkish identity, the resolve of successive governments to suppress the memory of any wrongdoing before the Republican era and to build historical memory based on the heroic war of independence, deserves a closer scrutiny.

The history of the Armenian Genocide documents the participation of the populace, Turks as well as Kurds, in the carnage. It also speaks of the *chete*, criminals released from prison to carry out the extermination of the Armenian deportees. If historical memory were alive in the Turks and Kurds today, if the memory of all the atrocities committed were transmitted, the new generation could ask questions. The proud Turk, of the generation born to the heroes of the war of independence, would see himself/herself as the grandchild of a criminal, a murderer, a rapist, a looter. In that case, perhaps absolute denial of any wrongdoing would be more beneficial.

Moreover, the Turkish people are led to believe that the Diaspora Armenian identity is constructed on hostility toward the Turks. In fact, Elif Shafak in *The Bastard of Istanbul* builds the identity of a group of Diasporan Armenians and Greeks who meet every night in cyberspace and discuss issues pertaining to their common history and culture, "'common' oftentimes meaning 'common enemy': the Turks." And she