

The study of literature directly or indirectly dealing with the plight of Istanbul Armenians could have been revealing and enlightening both from the standpoint of the lasting impact of historical memory on their identity, and from that of their life experience as a minority in a totalitarian society. However, artistic literature in response to this ongoing trauma was scant and obscure, if not nonexistent. Indeed, the world knew very little about the predicament of the post-Genocide Istanbul Armenian community and the discrimination and prejudice against it. Reports and supplications sent from the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul during the past decades to international organizations, imploring them to intervene with the Turkish government, provided glimpses into the life of the Istanbul Armenian community.⁷

Armenians who have migrated from Armenia (former Soviet Armenia) in search of work. Mesrob II Mutafyan stated in an interview that there are 70,000 Armenians currently living in Istanbul and in 23 other cities throughout Turkey. He also stated that almost none of the scant Armenian communities outside of Istanbul have a church. It is difficult for the clergy, he noted, to travel to these places to conduct religious services, although, he said, the Turkish gendarmerie has promised them protection. One wonders why the Armenian clergy should need protection to visit their flock. See, the interview by Yonca Poyraz Doğan, *Today's Zaman* (March 17, 2007), posted to the armworkshop listserv (armworkshop@umich.edu) by Khachig Mouradian on September 16, 2007.

⁷ Obstacles against Armenian organizations and institutions continue to this day. The churches, the schools, the orphanages, and the hospital, all in dire need of repair, are left to dilapidate and fall in ruins, because the government, with all manner of excuses and pretexts, refuses to issue permission to do any construction, even with private funding. Armenian parents have to prove that they are Armenian in order to be able to send their children to Armenian