

Observably, aside from the problem of minorities, Turkish society itself is far from being uniform and in harmony. “The real civilization gap is between the Turks and *the* Turks,” as a character attests in Elif Shafak’s latest novel, *The Bastard of Istanbul*.<sup>19</sup> The Dipsomaniac Cartoonist, as Shafak names him, is a free-thinker, sort of an existentialist in Istanbul, who depicts the Turkish reality by exclaiming in despair, “God save me from my own people!” He adds,

We are stuck. We are stuck between the East and the West. Between the past and the future. On the one side, there are the secular modernists, so proud of the regime they have constructed, you cannot breathe a critical word. They’ve got the army and half of the state on their side. On the other hand there are the conventional traditionalists, so infatuated with the Ottoman past you cannot breathe a critical word. They’ve got the general public and the remaining half of the state on their side. What is left for us?<sup>20</sup>

Reports and research articles on Armenians in Turkey indicate that they are walking a fine line between keeping the memory of the Genocide alive and confronting the Turks on the issue. Talking about the Armenian Genocide is more than a taboo; it is simply dangerous, a sure warrant against the

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February 15, 2006, in Ankara. He translated the document into English and combined it with an Introduction (explaining the process of preparing the original Report), the Minority Report, and the Indictment, all in all, 92 pages. This document was published under the title “Minority Affair in Turkey” in the *Regent Journal of International Law* 5:4 (2007). The defendants were acquitted and the case was dropped: <http://www.bianet.org/bianet/yazdir/78905/>.

<sup>19</sup> Shafak, *The Bastard of Istanbul* (2007), p. 81.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.