

had married a Turk and was living in the village of Yassıçal near Amasya (pp. 53–5). Despite the obstacles, however, Yalçın was able to find her, earn her trust, and prompt her to tell the story of her parents' survival during the massacres and deportations. For the first time in their lives, Safieh's children and grandchildren heard about the horrors in her past, the hidden but not forgotten story of what happened in 1915 and how the Armenian population of Amasya was deported. Safieh's ethnic identity, a nebulous and unwanted detail in the lives of her offspring, was brought into the open. The story of past sufferings and the revelation of her Armenian ancestry, necessary elements to construct an ethnic identity, were now transmitted to them.

Yalçın was the first Turk to seek out these survivors and hear their story, the first Turk to speak to them about their past. But there were very few survivors still alive to tell him their horrifying stories of looting and murder, stories unlike what he had read in his history books (p. 141). He questioned why he had never heard about Armenian churches being destroyed—the Church in Zara and the one in Sivas in 1940 (p. 176), and many, many others before and after them.³¹ Despite

were given a new name to replace their Armenian one. A part of their identity was thus stolen from them at the outset. In the present work, when speaking of these individuals, such as Safieh/Zaruhi, the two names are cited together, first the Muslim and then the Armenian, with a slash in between.

³¹ The Turkish destruction of Armenian churches and monasteries and other cultural monuments throughout Turkey has been the focus of attention of many scholars. Research and publications on this topic, generally labeled Cultural Genocide, indeed show these government-sponsored, deliberate acts to be a definite phase of the