

denial literature. The callous denial and crude distortions of history, in turn, triggered an urge to respond by presenting more documents and further evidence of the Crime. In line with these endeavors, first-generation survivors were encouraged to pen the details of their ordeal as witnesses to the crime. That was a motivation for some, who had hitherto kept silent, to write and publish their life story or tell their story in oral interviews in order to prove that they were there, that they were witnesses to and victims of the Genocide denied.

Becoming more interested in their family history, second- and third-generation survivors began to unearth memories buried in oblivion, urging their parents to tell them about their ordeal during the massacres and the deportations, and even visiting Western Armenia on pilgrimage to the towns and villages their parents or grandparents called home. The emotional journey, which allowed physical contact with the places—or the ruins of places—that they knew from stories often told in the family, resulted in increased activism and inspired literature, films, paintings, and other forms of art in response to the Calamity. In fact, this was a struggle to change the catch-phrase, “The Forgotten Genocide,” attached to the Armenian experience as barely remembered and rarely mentioned. Being a child or a grandchild of a survivor of a great calamity confers a duty, a burden, and a privilege, as the second or the third generation come to realize in adulthood. This self-realization sets them apart from others in the society at large and gives them a more serious outlook on life, a sense of the burden of the memories passed on, particularly if they