

token of truth—the interpretation of reality—the author plants in his/her novel.

The Turkish *mudur* (*müdür*, sub-district governor) is trying to extract a confession from Vartan Khatisian about an Armenian “world conspiracy.” He forces him to sign a written confession so that he can send it to the Young Turk government in Constantinople and make a name for himself. Ordinary methods of torture have not worked on Vartan who refuses to sign any confession. The new method he devises is disgustingly ingenious. An Armenian cement worker is brought in, “a cement expert” who, under the *mudur*’s command and with three *saptiehs* (*zaptiye*, gendarme) watching him, mixes cement, water, and sand to make a paste. Meanwhile, as Vartan screams in pain and embarrassment, other *saptiehs* “stuff wool up his anus.... The *saptiehs* also stick wool into his penis—they have no tweezers and have to use matches sharpened with a knife” (p. 119). Then they smear the wool with the concrete paste and hang Vartan before the barred window for the concrete to dry and for passers-by to see. The little Armenian man is standing there, trembling in fear. This is worse than being hung on the gallows which happens to be an ordinary, everyday scene in the town square during that period of time. Now Vartan screams harder; with his orifices full, he cannot relieve himself. He will explode. The *mudur* reminds him that he has a very short time left to decide to sign the paper; if he does not and the concrete dries firm and hard, then that is the end of it. Depicting this utterly unimaginable atmosphere of terror, Hilsenrath remarks, “The man who set out to learn about fear never came to Anatolia” (p. 118). Indeed, as Hilsenrath attests, “there has been torture in Turkish prisons as far back as memory goes” (p. 374). And