

settings. Besides and beyond all this, the burden of the daily struggle for survival in a new, unfamiliar world forced the survivors to suppress, in many cases without success and only in appearance, the memory of their traumatic past.

David Kherdian's father never shared with him the painful memory of his past; never told him the story of his suffering. It was only after his father's death that Kherdian began to read about the history of the Armenian massacres. In that history he found the explanation of his father's strange disposition, especially when he returned home from the coffee houses in Racine:

Years later, reading the solemn and bittersweet stories of our Armenian writer in California, who visited as a paperboy coffeehouses in Fresno, I came to understand that in these cafes were contained the suffering and shattered hopes of my orphaned people.²

The Armenian survivors living in Turkey also kept silent, but for entirely different reasons and motivations. This impermeable wall of silence persisted longer and locked up stories that had no chance to reach receptive ears and fill a small gap in the history of multiethnic Turkish society believed to be uniform and uninterrupted. It is only recently that we have become at least somewhat aware of the lifelong trauma engulfing Armenian survivors in Turkey. We are being

² Kherdian, "My Father," in *Homage to Adana* (1970), n.p. The reference to "our Armenian writer in California" is to William Saroyan.