

eyewitness how they were driven out of their house and forced to walk the death march in the spring of 1915 while Mintzuri himself was in Constantinople on a short visit to take care of a medical problem. That short visit saved his life and lasted a lifetime. He never got the chance to return to his home.

“Driven out of their house” is how he describes the beginning of the disastrous trek of his family and the entire population of Armdan. Was it not a death march or an intentionally planned deportation? Obviously, those are not the words he uses:

My grandpa Melkon was 88, my mother Nanik, 55, my children, Nourhan 6, Maranik 4, Anahit, 2 years old, and Khacho, 9 months, my wife Voghedan was 29. How did they walk? My grandpa couldn’t walk the distance to Dzvadzegh village.¹¹

Mintzuri’s style was typical of Turkish-Armenian writings, replete with simple but profound images. In the words of Rupen Mashoyan, one of his admirers, he reconciled art and reality in such a natural way that you didn’t realize he was writing literature or talking about it.¹² He encouraged the

¹¹ Hagop Mintzuri, *Giughe k’apri im mejs* (2005), p. 57. This book was first published in 1998. It is a collection of short stories previously published in four separate volumes, the first of which appeared in 1958. But even before that, Mintzuri was widely published in the Istanbul, Soviet-Armenian, and Diasporan Armenian papers, and the Armenian reader was introduced to scenes of Armenian life in Istanbul and to pre-1915 Armenian village life that Mintzuri so caringly painted.

¹² See Mashoyan, *Yev aysbes abretsank* (1998), p. 85.