

the most westernized and educated intellectual, in order to stifle the voice that sounded different within the “monolithic” society the Sultan liked to rule.

The Young Turks took a harsher stand in their policy of Turkification of the Empire which was achieved by the extermination of the entire Armenian population, in order to stifle that voice forever. The next step was to deny the crime. The crime committed against Armenians became the precursor, if not the model, upon which the word genocide was fashioned, and the ongoing denial has been described as the final phase of the crime of genocide. Elie Wiesel, the Jewish Holocaust survivor-writer, was correct to equate this final phase, the denial of the crime, to “double killing.” It is undeniable that the Turkish-Armenian relationship has a heavy bearing on both the Turkish and the Armenian identity. As Taner Akçam, the Turkish historian and the courageous author of *A Shameful Act* (2006), puts it, Turkish identity is built on the denial of the Armenian Genocide. Or, as Sabrina Tavernise and Sebnem Arsu explain, “That identity [of a Turk] was built on a painful foundation. Beyond the Armenian genocide, in which 1.5 million Armenians in eastern Turkey were killed, there were mass deportations of Greeks and executions of Islamic leaders and Kurdish nationalists.”³⁰

As to the Armenian identity, Baron Baghdassarian, the member of the Anoush Tree whom Armanoush most esteems,

³⁰ Sabrina Tavernise and Sebnem Arsu, “Inside the Turkish Psyche: Traumatic Issues Trouble a Nation’s Sense of Identity,” *New York Times* (October 12, 2007), accessed at www.nytimes.com/2007/10/12/world/europe/12genocide.html.