

from the Turkish persecutions and massacres of 1894–96, was shocking, but the truth she discovered did not threaten or challenge her identity. She could comfortably add a hyphen and live with an Armenian-American identity. In fact, her journey into the past served as the raw material from which she created her masterpiece, *Victoria's Secret*. In Çetin's case, however, the discovery was painful. She struggled to digest her grandmother's memories that were now hers.

I could hardly restrain myself from running out in the streets and crying out loud. If it weren't my own grandmother telling me all this, I would not believe it. What I heard was contrary to what I knew. My knowledge of things was being turned upside down. Confronted with the things I heard, my values were being crushed into pieces. My brain was hurting, bursting with the horrifying chaos within. I was scared. All the things accumulated within me seemed to want to wash everything and everyone away.... The exhilarating poems about the "glorious past" that I had recited with such excitement, were being crushed against the eyes of terrified children, the heads of children drowned in water, the river flowing blood for days. (Çetin, pp. 62–3)

These images were enough to leave Çetin astounded for years, until the birth of her masterpiece memoir-novel and a transformed self-perception as not totally Armenian, or Kurd, or Turk, or American, but as a *melez* (hybrid). But Fethiye has courage. She knows that "admitting Armenian ancestry means losing your social status," as she acknowledged in a television interview.³³ Not many can find the courage to come forward and own the secret identity they have tried to bury for

³³ "Turkey's Hidden Armenians," broadcast on *France 24 Reports* (April 27, 2007).