

admonishments and warnings about the imminent danger to his life, despite knowing that he was being closely followed by the secret police, Yalçın continued toward Erzerum, Aşkale, Kars, and Ani. He was searching for the traces of erstwhile Armenian life and culture in the Ottoman Empire. He was searching for the sparks of historical memory buried in the ruins of the edifices of Armenian culture and those deep-seated in the minds of the survivors and the generations born to them.

The truth was revealed, bit by bit, through conversations he managed to have with old Armenians. Yalçın searched for an answer, and in the voice of Kirkor Ceyhan, a 73-year-old Armenian living in Bonn with his German wife, he asked himself, "How many churches are left today in Asia Minor? I don't know. If you are killing Armenians and Greeks, why are you destroying their churches?... Aren't these churches the wealth of Asia Minor?" Kirkor then speculated, "Is the government worried about something? By saying 'there are no Armenians in Asia Minor,' is the intention to say 'there never were Armenians in Asia Minor?... Can you erase Armenian history and the crime committed simply by saying there are no Armenians?" (Yalçın, p. 176). But the negation of any Armenian presence ever in Anatolia was not the simple reason

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continuing Armenian Genocide. For the earliest international statement of this problem, presented to the Jury in the Session on the Armenians at the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal (Paris, April 13-16, 1984), see Kouyoumjian, "The Destruction of Armenian Historical Monuments" (1985), pp. 173-85. For general information, see [www.virtualani.org](http://www.virtualani.org), the website devoted to historical Armenian architecture.