

Parting is always difficult. There's a great sadness that I cannot ignore. And leaving Clark, a place where I've spent 14 productive, meaningful, and mostly happy years, is, for me, especially hard. As many of you know, in my life I have seen my share of uprooting and turbulence, and the truth is that I have never remained in any one place for as long as I have lived here. In all the places that I have lived, I lived with the anxiety of not knowing "where I will be tomorrow". Before coming to Clark, every spring was a nightmare for me filled with uncertainty about my future. In a sense, Clark is where I "grew up" in security and stability; it is also where I have done my most important work.

Indeed, it has been a decade-and-a-half filled with ups and downs, with sweet and bitter memories. But if not for the help and support of my colleagues—and I will mention Mary Jane Rein, first and foremost among them—I could not have done any of this. For the support that you—*all* of you--have given me over the years, please know that my gratitude is beyond words.

Again, many of you know that my life has been marked by persecution, including torture, imprisonment, escape, and, once outside of Turkey, by periodic hate campaigns. That said, there is another true side of the story: I am also one of the luckiest persons on earth. I have managed to do everything that I wanted—albeit, in some cases only after years of delay, and I have been surrounded by wonderful people who have helped me to do so. In 1976, I was on my way to realizing my dream of becoming an academic by receiving my doctorate. My arrest and imprisonment in Turkey put this dream on hold for quite some time, but by 1996 I was able to complete my PhD in Germany.

In 1994, for the first time since escaping from prison, I returned to Turkey. I hoped to establish a documentation and research center on the late 19th and early 20th Century Ottoman History, something that I had long dreamt of doing. A newly established university in Turkey accepted my proposal for such an institution, and another dream seemed to be on the verge of realization. Unfortunately, the Turkish government intervened and threatened the university from going ahead with the plan. Once again, my dream was crushed—or merely delayed. Only time would tell....

Now, after only 28 years, the dream is finally being realized. But more important than any personal fulfillment that I might derive from this is the fact that the Promise Armenian Genocide Research Program is the first of its kind in North America, by

which I mean the first research program devoted entirely to the Armenian Genocide. The honor of being its very first director is, at the same time, a source of pride and very humbling. My joy is tempered by a heavy sense of responsibility. The institution that I long dreamed of has finally been established, and I am fortunate enough to lead it in its initial stages.

On the one hand, it seems unfair that I am taking all that I have received at Clark and utilizing it at another academic institution. But although I am physically taking leave from Clark University, the connections that I have built here will follow me to Los Angeles and the emotional, academic, and intellectual bonds will not cease. And this is not simply because of the beloved and esteemed students that I have taught here. Rather, I fully intend to continue my—or, *our*, if I may speak for the Promise Center—collaboration with the Strassler Center on numerous projects. And the Strassler Center itself will no doubt continue its pioneering work, not only on the Armenian Genocide, but on the broader topic of genocide, in general.

The brief account that I have given here cannot begin to encompass all of the people, the experiences, and our shared struggles and successes over the years. That is a shame, since so many of you deserve a specific expression of thanks and recognition. Even so, I believe the best way to conclude here is to bookend my talk with another exclamation of my gratitude for your support and your friendship. Every forward stride I made here was only achieved through your help. From the bottom of my heart, I would like to thank you and express the hope that—even with a continent between us--our connection will abide.

Thank you.