

which according to Karapents could be anywhere in the USA, Armenian refugees live in isolation in a tight-knit community. They believe this is the only way they can prevent their assimilation into American society and uphold their Armenian identity. This ghettoization also prevents them from adapting to New World ways, so that they feel different from everyone else and an inferiority complex sets in. They carry an old wound that will not heal. They feel themselves to be victims and therefore incomplete human beings, and in order to compensate and heal their wounded pride, they work harder to provide the best possible education for their children. Karapents shows their initial enthusiasm in establishing ethnic organizations and institutions, their internal quarrels, and the division of the community into opposing camps. He shows the second generation striving to get ahead and succeed in life, and one day in their busy life, they look up and see their offspring headed off in totally different directions. They are Americanized and they view the world and Armenian issues from a different vantage point.

Hakob Karapents, a second-generation writer himself, felt “a huge obligation placed on our shoulders by the reality of life,”¹³ which is to address the problematic aspects of life in the

¹³ Hakob Karapents, “*Groghě ev ir champan*” [The writer and his path], in *Erku ashkharh, grakan p’ordzagrut’iunner* [Two worlds: Literary essays] (Watertown, MA: Blue Crane Books, 1992), p. 76. For a general idea of the life and work of this important writer, beyond the scope of the present thematic study, see Rubina Perroomian, “*Hakob Karapents’ē hayapahpanman zinvor, Sp’iurk’ahay ink’nut’ian p’ntrogh*” [Hakob Karapents: A guardian of Armenianness, in search of the diasporan Armenian identity], in *Nork 1* (1998): 119–23. See also Anahit Aramouni Keshishian, *Hakob Karapents’, Ashkharhenkalum ev arvest* [Hakob