

their parents' complex attachment to the Old World. Hacop Karapents speaks of this generation gap in "Jefferson, USA" (1975).

Margaret Ajemian Ahnert was an active transmitter of her mother's memory. Ester entrusted her with all the abhorrent secrets of her life. She wanted her daughter to know and to teach her own children too. "When I die, the truth will die with me. You must know, and your children must know what I lived through."¹⁰ Indeed, Margaret carried that memory which shaped her outlook toward the Turks and Turkey. She had no control over it, wondering "What was wrong with me?... Had Mother tainted my life with the bits and pieces of her stories?"¹¹ Indeed, Ester's life story was told not only to her grandchildren but also to the world. Her memory was kept alive and materially preserved as well, through an inscription on the wall at Ellis Island. And there the three generations gathered, touching the letters of her name, feeling the spirit of a woman who had struggled and survived the most tragic, the most horrifying human experience.

The Turkish government tried to extinguish my mother from the face of the earth, but she prevailed, her name etched into this wall next to her beloved Albert [husband] for ever. Sara [great-granddaughter] hugged me; I felt her tears on my skin. Lynn [granddaughter] circled her arms around us both. We stood this way for a long while. I could feel Ester. "It's okay, Mother, you are safe, you are in America and we are here with you."¹²

¹⁰ Ahnert, *The Knock at the Door* (2007), p. 10.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 204.