

accounts and memoirs in narrative prose or poetry, or texts that only remotely echo the theme of the past cataclysmic experience—are surely different from the responses of the first generation. They cover a very broad spectrum and are immensely variegated.

In general terms, the literary responses of successive generations of survivors are crafted from a distance in time and space, without direct experience of the Genocide, with the impetus of transmitted pain or a suddenly discovered past, and they bear the influence of different cultural, religious, environmental, and sociopolitical factors—as they are created in different locales in diasporan communities worldwide—and with different levels of skill and understanding of the poetics of genocide. These works exhibit a variety of thrust and motivation: they may seek catharsis in order to relieve transgenerational pain, they may strive to establish further factual evidence in order to combat the perpetrators' denial, or they may reflect the author's unabated frustration with the continuing injustice and the international conspiracy of silence. The literary work may not even treat the Genocide as a theme yet still be permeated with the psychology of the survivor of a colossal catastrophe. For all intents and purposes, these responses encompass the echoes of the nation's collective psyche shaped by the violence, the pain of dispersion, the effects of self-accusation, the search for identity or the struggle to cope with a dual identity, and the effects of the past and present roles of the perpetrators and of bystanders worldwide.

The general outline above underscores my vantage point in discussing the functionality of genocide literature, in other