

two worlds always in conflict with each other, contradicting each other and refusing to reach a synthesis."⁵³

As an adolescent, Helene Pilibosian had turned a cold shoulder to her parents' and her people's past and showed no interest in hearing their stories, but as she grew more secure and self-confident, she dug into her nation's history and read stories of the Armenian Genocide. In her later years, after her parents were gone, she set out to celebrate their memory with the powerful tool of poetic expression, and to eternalize her nation's history in the context of the American present. Her struggle to define her identity, strongly rooted in her ancestral land, reverberates in her poetry, and the pain of separation is ubiquitous, in scattered references to "the Turkish sword" and "the hoary history," and in lines such as, "The apricot spoke Armenian,/and there I found my seed," "My mouth is dry/with stories of the desert/of Der-el-Zor so long ago," and "Remembrance is the epitaph/for the ghosts of humble glory."

In concluding this section in which I have tried to present narratives of the Armenian Genocide as monuments of remembrance erected by second-generation survivor-writers, I want to discuss an anthology that, in my view, embodies the collective monument. I have already referred to it many times in this study to quote individual poets. Here I would like to underline David Kherdian's devotion to the importance of Armenian American literature, its birth, its development, and the place it gradually created for itself in mainstream American literature. It was this devotion that drove Kherdian to undertake the difficult task of researching, assigning,

⁵³ Rubina Peroomian, review of *History's Twists*, in *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies* 18/2 (December 2009): 145–8.