

same time, the feeling of being a foreigner and a feeling for the homeland...."¹¹⁵

Indeed, Karapents opens up his inner self in this essay: "I am a product of the diaspora rather than a Persian or American Armenian. I know no other world but the diaspora. Despite its contradictions, I feel at home on its paths." In the same passage, he admits that although he has adopted the American motto, *e pluribus unum*, and he feels like one out of many, sometimes he feels himself "as a being that leads a double life, meandering in the unending tunnel of duality" (76).

The struggle for supremacy between the two—Armenian and American—identities or senses of belonging echoes more clearly in another story by Karapents titled "*P'ayté nzhuygë*" (The wooden horse).¹¹⁶ Hrand Sissian, a San Francisco-born Armenian who goes by the name Grant, yearns for the land he has never seen, the sacred mountain he can only visualize in his imagination. He is an atypical diasporan Armenian because, thanks to his father, a former teacher in Yerevan, he has a very good command of the Armenian language and a special bond with his father's homeland. Perhaps it was that type of upbringing that led him into the snare of perennial conflict between his two identities which has plagued him all his life. When Grant, the American-born journalist, comes out the winner and a happy life is in sight, Hrand, the restless Armenian youth, enters the picture and ruins everything. In

¹¹⁵ Hakob Karapents, "*Groghe ev ir champan*" [The writer and his path], in *Erku ashkharh, grakan p'ordzagrut'iunner* [Two worlds: Literary essays], p. 80.

¹¹⁶ Hakob Karapents, "*P'ayté nzhuygë*" [The wooden horse], in *Antsanot' hoginer* [Unfamiliar souls], pp. 9–62. Written in Washington, DC, in 1965.