

shows that no matter how deeply assimilated into the mainstream culture and lifestyle, no matter how aloof from its Armenian past, the American-born generation still carries traces of the wounds of the Genocide.

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, the effects of the past and present roles of the perpetrators and world bystanders.

In the sphere of popular culture, the Armenian-American heavy metal band, System of a Down, best reveals the perception of the Genocide by third-generation survivors. Serj Tankian, a member of the band, speaks of his grandfather's experience during the massacres and deportations and how that experience was passed on to him as a child listening to his grandfather's terrifying stories. "When I heard these stories," he asserts, "my heart opened up and I felt like crying. It's mind blowing that man could do that to man in the 20th century." System of a Down immortalized the transmitted memory in their songs "P.L.U.C.K." and "Holy Mountains." Tankian considers these songs to be a homage to the Genocide and its victims. "It's part of our lives. It's a part of who we are."¹⁴ With these thoughts, Tankian reveals how the historical memory of the Genocide has become a component of the third generation's identity.

¹⁴ Quoted by Line Abrahamian in "Talking with Turks and Armenians about the Genocide," *Reader's Digest Canada* (October 2006). <http://www.readersdigest.ca/mag/2006/10/genocide.php>. Accessed September 17, 2007.