

conditions, their deification of their martyrs and glorification of survivors, had translated in many into a rigid idea of Armenianness which they tried to maintain against all odds as an identity in isolation. That was the means they subconsciously espoused to fight the waves of assimilation, despite internal conflicts and external forces negatively affecting their ongoing efforts. Hacop Karapents' imaginary town of Jefferson, USA,<sup>37</sup> represents a microcosm of a heterogeneous formation called the Diaspora where Armenians have gathered from all corners of the world. They are the survivors of the big Catastrophe. Driven out of their birthplaces, they have come here to begin a new life. But they feel like outsiders, alien to the New World, alien to each other. They carry a wound that refuses to heal. "Their life is a puzzle, these former orphans of the Genocide. Their outlook is distorted; their souls are shattered. They live a thousand times a day the death of a martyr."<sup>38</sup> They are humbled and feel inferior in this New World. To make up for this inferiority, they work harder and harder. They work for the sake of the success of their children. They build a church and gather around it to safeguard their Armenianness. The Armenian Church is a bastion to sustain their identity and set them apart from the mainstream Christian society. "Despite being in America, they do not live in America. They have built their unique cocoon and taken refuge in it."<sup>39</sup> In this unique cocoon, as Theodore Adorno suggests, a person's individuality is

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<sup>37</sup> Karapents, "Jeferson, AMN" (1975).

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.