

Remembrance AND **DENIAL**

THE CASE OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

RICHARD G. HOVANNISIAN, EDITOR



Problematic Aspects of Reading Genocide Literature

A Search for a Guideline or a Canon

RUBINA PEROOMIAN

The Premise

Hagop Oshagan, a prominent post-genocide Armenian writer-critic, was the first to attempt the segregation of the genocide literature. He believed that the genocide literature is a special genre in itself deserving a special approach. He searched for a methodology that could unravel the impact of the Great Catastrophe (Մեծ Աղեւան) on the writer and his work. Very often, both in his critical and creative writings, he talked about the problems of writing in this genre and of judging this genre aesthetically. After Oshagan, other Armenian critics, too, discussed the literature of catastrophe as a separate category, and gradually the idea of the genre of genocide literature took shape. Genocide literature, thus, is understood to encompass that unique body of artistic creations triggered by a traumatic, unprecedented collective experience in the history of the Armenian people. Today, when we speak about Armenian Genocide literature, there is a general understanding of its meaning and scope, although defining boundaries remains problematic, and the definition of the genre still lacks precision.

The study of Armenian Genocide literature has taken many directions. In my own studies I have concentrated on the works of first-generation survivor-writers, such as Zabel Esayan, Suren Bartevian, Hagop Oshagan, Aram Andonian, Vahan Tekeyan, and those who fell victim to that atrocity they described so well, such as Siamanto and Varuzhan. I have tried to fathom the depths of the wound inflicted on the Armenian collective psyche and to

find answers to questions arising from these works. I have analyzed the treatment of key recurring themes such as self-criticism or internalization of catastrophe, the inability or unwillingness to grasp the reality of events, the image of the Turk, the manifestation of self-defense, and the role and duality of God. Through this typology of genocide literature, I have tried to reveal the victims' and survivors' perception of the catastrophe and the psychological impact of that catastrophe on future generations. In the knowledge that this unique Armenian experience has strong grounds for comparison with Jewish sufferings, I have ventured into the scholarship on Jewish Holocaust literature and incorporated the comparative dimension in my work.

In this essay, I work with a different inquiry which, unlike my adopted literary approach, is not controlled by questions arising from within the texts. The questions that I pose to the texts of the Armenian Genocide, to the critics, and potential readers are devised *a priori*, and arise from a concern about the problems of genocide literature. These questions, I contend, will lead to a better understanding of genocide literature and, what is more important, of the facts of the Event itself. I base my contention on the hypothesis that the genocide literature is a means to explain the genocide. I express, *imprimis*, my indebtedness to Alvin Rosenfeld's *A Double Dying*, which inspired some of key insights in this discussion.¹

Baffling Questions

Why read genocide literature? Is there anything to gain by reading it or to lose by not reading it? How should we read genocide literature and what should we look for in it? When does genocide literature stop being a fictional artistic creation and become a historical recording of events? Can literature contribute to our finding of the truth of the genocide?

Many readers may, consciously or unconsciously, avoid genocide literature because of its depressing and heartrending nature. When mere survival in today's world involves such an intense and consuming struggle, why engulf ourselves in the sufferings of others who came before us and deny ourselves a lighter, more comfortable literary diversion? A romanticized answer to this question would be that generations of the survivors of a national catastrophe should always remember the victims of that catastrophe and relate to it for inspiration and determination. Therefore, Armenians likewise owe it to their martyrs to read about their suffering, their ordeal, their doleful victimization. Sentimentalism aside, however, as Kafka says, we should choose books that ask more of us than we are willing to give. "We must have those books," he wrote, "which come upon us like ill-fortune and

distress us deeply like the death of one we love better than ourselves, like suicide. A book must be an ice-ax to break the sea frozen inside us."²

Books such as Hagop Oshagan's *Kaiserakan Haghter gutiun* (Imperial song of triumph) and *Mnatsortats* (Remnants), Aram Andonian's *Ain Sev Orerun* (In those dark days) and *Mets Vojire* (The great crime), and Zabel Esayan's *Averakneru Mech* (Amidst the ruins) do to us just what Kafka suggests. Nevertheless, can an ordinary reading of these books introduce the reader to the depths of the Armenian Genocide, to grasping its meaning and its expression in literature? Furthermore, these books are neither readily available nor accessible to non-Armenian readers and in some cases to Armenian readers as well. Here, the critic can play a role as mediator or facilitator. Is it not true that the most fundamental role of the critic is to introduce readers to a particular work or body of literature or, as Lawrence Langer states, "to lead readers back to the literature under discussion"?³ Beyond this basic function, critics must devise guidelines to help the reader to comprehend and appreciate genocide literature, for conventional literary approaches can only produce questionable results. Indeed, it is doubtful if adopting canons and inquiries of a particular school of literary criticism, such as the structuralist, formalist, Marxist, psychoanalytic, and feminist could work to explain the enormity of Armenian suffering and Turkish atrocity. It is doubtful if a search for the expression of class struggle, covert psychological drives, gender differences, or the deconstruction of sophisticated metaphors and complex grammatical structures could help the critic to fulfill this difficult task. Clearly, an appropriate critical method has yet to be devised.

In spite of its inherent tendency to reject conventional literary forms, the literature of atrocity is still based upon form and language. Very often, however, the forms have been revolutionized, taboos obliterated. A strong negation of tradition is intended when Suren, a protagonist of Shahan Shahnur's *Nahanje Arants Ergi* (Retreat without song, 1929), calls "Narek" (the popular title given to Grigor Narekatsi's Book of Lamentation, tenth to eleventh century) the most disgusting, sick, deceiving, and immoral Armenian book, an enemy, who poisoned the Armenian nation.⁴ Vahé Oshagan, likewise, breaks the tradition, overcomes the taboos, and in order to shock the indifferent community and the reader, describes an act of sacrilege in an Armenian church in America. Three Armenian terrorists enter the church in the middle of the Mass, proceed to the altar, and begin their "performance" of the planned profanity before the eyes of dumbfounded parishioners.⁵ Aside from negating norms and conventions of the past, these authors and still others are expressing a bitter outcry against the tragic lot of the nation. In their writings, they both reverse literary norms and rebel against the fate of

their people. This is in itself a unique response to the Catastrophe which tends to become a technique in the literary expression of genocide, as we will see.

Descriptions of harrowing scenes of brutality and powerful eyewitness accounts are abundant in Armenian Genocide literature. One can hardly control the torrent of emotions that Aram Andonian's account of the execution of a boy in the concentration camp arouses. The boy is caught trying to escape. The gendarmes torture him to death in front of the eyes of the dumfounded inmates to set an example of the punishment awaiting them if they ever think to flee.⁶ Hagop Oshagan's depiction of the slow and torturous beheading of a man while his wife is forced to watch can provoke nightmares. Reading these alarmingly vivid and graphic descriptions of barbarism, one can hardly help cry out with Oshagan, No! "It was not the outbreak of war that made the Turks so much Turk."⁷ Yet these works cannot have their full impact on the reader if there is no familiarity with the entire context of the atrocities. In the same vein, Siamanto's *Mahvan Tesil* (The vision of death) cannot have its full impact unless the reader is aware of the poet's tragic fate in the atrocities he ventured to depict. This is where the critic assumes an important role and where the enormous contribution of Jewish scholarship to understanding Holocaust literature lies. Armenian scholarship on genocide literature lags far behind, although the richness and plethora of the Armenian Genocide literature are indisputable. The fact of the matter is that the Armenian Genocide literature has not been properly studied and effectively introduced to the world. In contrast, the role Jewish scholars play in enriching and disseminating Holocaust literature is remarkable. The consciousness of the importance of this role reverberates in the studies of Holocaust literature. Edward Alexander's analysis of Isaac Bashevis Singer's *The Family of Moskat* is an example. On this novel, depicting events prior to the Holocaust, Alexander infers that the impact "gains its tremendous force less from the events within the novel than from the reader's knowledge of what will befall the Jews after the novel ends."⁸ The critic's role here is building the historical context, adding to what Rosenfeld calls the reader's "interpretive frame of reference" to complete the narrative of the atrocity.⁹ Rosenfeld builds on this hypothesis by exemplifying the case of Anne Frank's diary, a classic in Jewish Holocaust literature. He asserts that Anne Frank's diary exerts its greatest power when the reader realizes the little girl's fate in Auschwitz. The diary alone, without Ernst Schnebel's *Anne Frank: A Profile in Courage*, is not the same.¹⁰ Supplemented with historical background and information, genocide literature approaches the realm of factual narrative.

Conventional Methods Incapacitated

The critic tries to help the “reality” of the tragedy to come across as clearly and thoroughly as possible. Since the reality is human loss and suffering as well as the victimization of humanism in a man-made catastrophe and since the norms of artistic creation have also fallen victim to that catastrophe, no tool or method developed in all the schools of criticism combined can work. Confronted with the dilemma, Hagop Oshagan complains, “The generation of the Constitution had handed down no oracles to face up to such unplaceable acts. That is what also makes possible the destruction of our soul.”¹¹ Obviously, Oshagan expected a tradition of dealing with catastrophe to have been transmitted to his generation to enable them to grasp the meaning of these “unplaceable acts,” to explain them, to ensure collective survival. Oshagan’s expectation was probably based on his conviction that the Catastrophe of 1915 was not unprecedented but only the culmination of the previous ones. In an interview with Benjamin Tashian he is quoted as saying, “For two thousand years (sometimes five to ten times in one century) our people have experienced their 1915s.”¹² According to Oshagan, with a history studded with massacres and persecutions, Armenians should have devised the means to cope with them, to explain them, to respond to them. According to Oshagan, such tools have not been devised, and thus the transmission has not occurred. Nichanian digs into the depths of this statement by Oshagan and hits different cords. I would suggest that the ancestors of the Armenian people surely built a paradigm of responses to catastrophe throughout history, but this paradigm was disrupted by the enormity of the genocide of 1915. The “oracle” was certainly transmitted but was not enough to help to deal with such magnitude of devastation. Souls were destroyed; speech was incapacitated.

For the Holocaust, in the same vein, Rosenfeld writes: “‘Reality’ underwent so radical a distortion as to disarm and render no longer trustworthy the normal cognitive and expressive powers. As a result, reason seemed to give way to madness, as language did time and again to silence. When those thresholds dissolve, literature—a product of the composed mind and senses—is reduced to screams and whimpers.”¹³

Examples of this transformation are abundant in the literature of Armenian Genocide. Many times the author helplessly halts the narrative, witnessing the painful disruption of the paradigm of literary forms. Language becomes inadequate; metaphors, similes, and symbols cannot do justice to the realistic representation of the reality. The writer is incapacitated. Art is

strangled, rendered inarticulate before it is born; the outcome is silence or fragmentation, as in Siamanto's *Mahvan Tesil*:

Massacre! Massacre! Massacre!
 In the cities and outside the cities in our land.
 And the barbarians, with booty and blood,
 Return leaving the dead and the dying.
 Flocks of ravens hover above.
 Bloody is their mouth; they chortle like drunks . . .
 Listen! Listen! Listen!
 The sound of storm in the waves of the sea . . .
 O! close your windows and your eyes too,
 Massacre! Massacre! Massacre!

Siamanto cries helplessly, unable to find meaning or even metaphor in that catastrophic event.¹⁴

Others demonstrate the same dilemma actually by spelling it out in prose. Zabel Esayan confessed, "What I saw is beyond all imagination. . . . It is difficult for me to present the entire picture. Words are incapable of expressing the dreadful and unspeakable sight that my eyes witnessed." Nonetheless, she persists in recording the "confused and perplexed expressions" of the survivors of the Cilician massacres, "their sighs and tears, the incoherent words" that they stutter, "saying nothing of the reality."¹⁵ Suren Bartevian lamented his inability to find "words accurate enough, dramatic and tragic enough, to describe the depressing, suffocating scenes of misery." In another instance, he confesses, "This is the first time that I discover so brutally the impotence of the painful struggle of my pen, the inadequacy of all meanings of the word to capture the scenes around me . . . the horrifying reality that crushes my soul."¹⁶

Similarly, in Jewish Holocaust literature, Khaem Kaplan lamented over and over again, "It's beyond my pen to describe the destruction."¹⁷ Abraham Lewin, writing in the Warsaw Ghetto conceded: "It is hard for the tongue to admit such words, for the mind to comprehend their meaning, to write them down on paper."¹⁸ As Samuel Beckett wrote: "There is nothing to express, no power to express . . . together with the obligation to express."¹⁹

Despite the incapacitating effect of witnessing catastrophe, as Beckett suggests, there still exist both the paradoxical urge and the obligation to express what one sees. Rosenfeld calls this paradox the "phenomenology" of Holocaust literature, which he expounds as the "contradiction between the impossibility but also the necessity of writing."²⁰ In a broader context,

I suggest, this tendency can be seen as the phenomenology of the literature of atrocity.

Writers of atrocity attempt to recreate the dark, inexplicable side of human nature. We the readers, on our part, share the author's experience, but we only grasp a small corner of the reality of the catastrophe. Lawrence Langer is right in saying, "Our vision of it may never be complete, but the composite portrait offered by these texts does much to rescue it from obscurity and to light up its dreadful features with the deciphering rays of language."²¹

Through the act of language and the creation of art out of atrocity, thus, writers eternalize their morbid experience. In so doing, they seek a more or less cathartic deliverance and the securing of their own survival. One can surmise, then, that some genocide writers have thus triumphed over death and exemplified the human spirit of survival, making a new beginning possible.

In other cases, however, the undeniable outcome is the triumph of silence over language and of death over survival. Some critics and writers reject the possibility of literature of atrocity and find the term self-contradictory, the undertaking immoral. "There is no poetry after Auschwitz," Paul Celan declared. According to Michael Wyschogrod: "Art takes the sting out of suffering. . . . It is therefore forbidden to make fiction of the holocaust. . . . Any attempt to transform the holocaust into art demeans the holocaust and must result in poor art."²² Holocaust survivor and writer Elie Wiesel finds the attempt to create Holocaust literature an act of irreverence toward the event itself: "Auschwitz negates any form of literature," he wrote. "A novel about Auschwitz is not a novel. . . . The very attempt to write such a novel is blasphemy."²³ It is as if by recasting the Holocaust as fiction, a writer is denying its reality and dishonoring all those who suffered and died.

Hagop Oshagan did not deny the possibility of creating art out of the Armenian Genocide. He realized, however, that Western Armenian literature, being a product of social, political, and cultural determinants reacting on an artist's individuality, intellect, and creative mind, died with the genocide of 1915. It is, thus impossible to continue to create art in the same pre-1915 tradition.²⁴ He struggled throughout his life to find the right approach to it, and his unfinished novel *Mnatsordats* speaks of his inability to forge art out of such great suffering and horror. Suren Bartevian, likewise, tried in vain to find the strength and inspiration to create "the great elegy, the splendid epic poem . . . the divine and eternal 'Book of Blood'" (Նուիրական եւ յաւիտենական <<Մատեանը Արիւնի>>) that

would embody his idealized response to the Catastrophe.²⁵ The contemporary Armenian poet Krikor Beledian does not think it feasible to write poetry with the pre-1915 norms, traditions, and spirit: “The Catastrophe closed the chapter on poetry” (աղէսը փակեց պատմոթիւնը քերթուածին), he declares, echoing Celan.²⁶

In spite of these doubts, none of the writers mentioned above stopped writing about the Jewish Holocaust or the Armenian Genocide. The attempt to write after the Catastrophe, in spite of the Catastrophe, became the source, the beginning of the Armenian Diasporan literature. A new concept of Diaspora was born, a concept that was generated from the Catastrophe, which preconditioned the literary milieu with a set of factors entirely different from the pre-1915 era. Hagop Oshagan defined the Diaspora as an elongated catastrophe, in which decades of hope and aspirations had come to a tragic end, and despair, frustration, and fragmentation had become a way of life.²⁷ The agonizing reality of an inexplicable tragedy and an unsolved mystery influenced outlooks and perceptions and drove some writers, Jewish and Armenian alike, to make negation and repudiation the key to the technique they devised to write post-Genocide or post-Holocaust poetry. In the case of Paul Celan, the technique consists of the denial of, ironical allusions to, and reversal of traditional concepts from the Bible and other established works.²⁸

Shahan Shahnur also used this technique of repudiation and denial of old, traditional concepts that were held sacred by the Armenian people. This technique was especially effective in his novel *Nahanje Arants Ergi* and a collection of essays, titled *Tertis Kiraknoria Hamare* (The Sunday edition of my paper). Shahnur subtitled his novel “The Illustrated History of the Armenians” and began with the most provocative sentence to describe his protagonist, Petros or Pierre. “But he was a mature lad, the proof being that he could not delimit the words whore and God.”²⁹ Then, a graphic description of a lovemaking scene between Petros and the French girl follows. In his various works, essays, short stories, and novel, Shahnur portrays the assimilation and alienation of Armenian youth, survivors of the genocide, who have found refuge in Paris. Sorrowful episodes in their difficult struggle succeed one another and the blame for their failure to adapt to the new life, their alienation from the Armenian community, their sad ending in an asylum or in dark corners of the streets goes to the Armenian forefathers. Suren the bold and outspoken character in *Nahanje Arants Ergi* attacks them ruthlessly: “Armenians are sterile, senseless, and shallow. They have no right to live because they have not given birth. . . . Our forefathers are eunuchs; they have not been able to sculpt anything out of flesh. There is a great lack in us that they have not been able to fill. . . . The succeeding

generations of our forefathers have not been able to rescue us, give us that great love.”³⁰ Curiously, throughout the novel, there is no criticism of the Turk who perpetrated the Catastrophe and caused the aftermath. The blame is always laid on the institutionalized Armenian values and ideology, which were not able to withstand the calamity. Denying the past and attacking the older generation was not unique to Shahnur. That was a common trait among the members of the “Menk” group—of which Shahnur was a member—formed in Paris in 1931 of young Armenian writers, mostly orphans of 1915 massacres. Hagop Oshagan, also a target of their staunch criticism, attributes this phenomenon to foreign influences and the frustration of this generation of orphans to keep pace with the present.³¹

In his same novel, Shahan Shahnur launched another technique to remedy the Catastrophe very much similar to that of Zareh Vorbuni in *Sovorakan Or Me* (An ordinary day, 1956). The technique consists of touch-up and repair, according to Marc Nichanian. By trying to repair the wound, these two post-genocide Armenian writers tried to make up for the destruction and to reinstate the obliterated canons (*Օրէնք*). The novels of both writers symbolize the search to find proper norms for post-genocide literature.

The technique of contemporary writer Krikor Beledian consists of reversal and refutation. He keeps the language, the words and, at the same time, rebels against them. He refutes and negates the pre-genocide connotations of words and concepts with a negative prefix, as in poetry/anti-poetry (*պերպուած/հակաքերպուած*), language/anti-language (*լեզու/հակալեզու*), meaning/anti-meaning (*իմաստ/հակահմաստ*). In his collection of poems titled *Vayrer* (Loci), in which this prefix is frequently used, Beledian talks about anti-*matière* (*հականիւթ*). It is significant, however, that he moves from meaning to anti-meaning and not to meaninglessness; similarly, from language to anti-language and not to speechlessness or silence. The author desires to remain in the world of meaning and language, in spite of negating them: <<բայց ենք լեզուին մէջ հակալեզուին >>.³² In his critical work, in an analysis of Nikoghayos Sarafian, Beledian strives to find the traditionalism of the perception of the end or terminus, <<Վախճանի ընկալումի աւանդականութիւնը>>. His reference is, of course, to the Catastrophe, or more precisely to the eschatology of the Catastrophe <<Վախճանը, որ աղէտն է ստեղծեր>>.

To Read and Write about Genocide: A Must, an Affliction

As with Jewish writers and the Holocaust, writing about the Armenian Genocide has become more than a vocation or a calling for Armenian writers.

It is rather an affliction, a predicament. The Jewish writer asks, “how to write about Holocaust, yet how not to write about it?” Avoidance and denial are overcome, and the urge to write about it becomes an affliction that absorbs the writer. Art is born, albeit fragmented or incomplete, which then casts its spell over the reader. The reverse of the question is: “how to read Armenian Genocide literature, yet how not to read it?”

What is the value of genocide literature in the realm of hard facts? We know that historical facts conveyed by historians are less affected by the author’s imagination than genocide narratives such as eyewitness accounts, memoirs, and novels. Nevertheless, historians are not immune to artistic imagination and pictorialization. In the Armenian classical era the boundary between the two genres of history and artistic creations was fuzzy, almost nonexistent. Classical Armenian historiography is primarily an artistic representation of historical facts, a form of literary art. The issue is, therefore, not the existence but the extent or essence of “digressions.” In other words, as James E. Young put it in *Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust*: “In what way do historians fictionalize and novelists historicize?”³³ We have to agree that with the generations of the survivors of a historical catastrophe the overall portrait and the indelible impression of that catastrophe are shaped not so much by the hard facts but with the strokes of the artist’s brush fictionalizing the event.

In posing this question I do not favor one approach over the other. Neither do I equate scientific historical discourse with subjective representations of an event. I simply wish to demonstrate the intrinsic value of genocide fiction to a complete understanding of the Armenian Genocide. Just as historical knowledge of the event is essential for a clear interpretation of genocide fiction or symbolic poetry, genocide literature reveals the universal truths that lie at the roots of historical fact and puts inconceivable realities into human perspective. Thus the two genres are mutually complementary and indispensable aids to our grasp of the meaning of atrocity.

Today, when we look back on the Armenian Genocide, the distance of over eighty years has dulled our perceptions and colored our judgment. In order to be able to absorb the meaning of the Armenian Genocide as both a terminus and a beginning for the Armenian people and for Armenian art, in order to make it work as the touchstone of the Armenian national consciousness in the Diaspora, Armenian Genocide literature must be read and written about. Armenians owe it not only to their victims but to themselves to liberate their psychological, emotional, and creative responses to the Catastrophe. Their word may not be the last on genocide; others have suffered and will continue to suffer as survivors of other world atrocities. Nevertheless their

outrage against genocide should continue to echo as Armenians and citizens of the world in the endless struggle to perpetuate both humanity and humanism.

Notes

1. Alvin Rosenfeld, *A Double Dying: Reflections on Holocaust Literature*, 2d ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988).
2. Ibid., 18.
3. Lawrence Langer, *The Holocaust and the Literary Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), xiii.
4. Shahen Shahnur, *Nahanje Arants Ergi* (Retreat without song), 4th ed. (Beirut: Sevan Press, 1981), 120. This flagrant attack on sacred values of Armenian tradition is common with Suren, who vents Shahnur's own unconventional views on Armenian life and reality.
5. This outrageous scene of sacrilege is described in a short story titled "Otsum" (Consecration), published in the collection of short stories *Takartin Shurj* (Around the snare), 1988 by Vahé Oshagan. One of the terrorists slowly and disgracefully strips the priest of his holy attire, while he resolutely continues the mass. The other two, a boy and a girl, get on the front row pew and put on an obscene kissing scene. Amid all this the tape recorder they have brought in is playing loud and wild music stifling the holy liturgy, the *patarak*.
6. For the discussion of this episode, see Rubina Peroomian, *Literary Responses to Catastrophe, A Comparison of the Armenian and the Jewish Experience* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 163–64.
7. Ibid., 203.
8. Edward Alexander, *The Resonance of Dust: Essays on Holocaust Literature and Jewish Fate* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1979), 149.
9. Rosenfeld, *A Double Dying*, 24.
10. Ibid., 17.
11. This sentence is the opening of one of Hagop Oshagan's important remarks on Armenian Genocide literature expressed in volume 7 of his *Hamapatker Arevmtahay Grakanutian* (Panorama of Western Armenian literature), in the chapter on Suren Bartevian. Marc Nichanian analyzes this remark in "The Style of Violence," *Armenian Review* 38, no. 1 (Spring 1985): 6. By the generation of the Constitution, Oshagan means the Western Armenian *literati* of the 1850s who initiated the Armenian National Constitution to govern Armenian community affairs in the Ottoman Empire.
12. B. Tashian, *Mairineru Shukin Tak: Grakan Zruits H. Oshakani Het* (In the shade of the cedars: A literary discussion with H. Oshagan) (Beirut: Altapress, 1983), 19.
13. Ibid., 28.
14. See Peroomian, *Literary Responses*, 78.
15. Ibid., 94.
16. Ibid., 125.
17. Rosenfeld, *A Double Dying*, 7.

18. See Lawrence I. Langer, ed., *Art from the Ashes: A Holocaust Anthology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 3.
19. Rosenfeld, *A Double Dying*, 8.
20. *Ibid.*
21. Langer, *Art from the Ashes*, 3.
22. *Ibid.*, 14.
23. *Ibid.*
24. Hagop Oshagan, *Spiurke ev Irav Banasteghtsutiune* (Diaspora and the true poetry) (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1945), 2–3.
25. Peroomian, *Literary Responses*, 136, 138.
26. Krikor Beledian, *Vayrer* (Loci) (Paris: N.p., 1983), 149.
27. Hagop Oshagan, *Vkayutiun Me* (A testimony) (Aleppo: Nayiri Press, 1946), 93.
28. Rosenfeld, *A Double Dying*, 30.
29. Shahnur, *Nahanje Arants Ergi*, 7.
30. *Ibid.*, 100–102.
31. Oshagan, *Spiurke ev Irav Banasteghtsutiune*, 63.
32. Beledian, *Vayrer*, 121.
33. James E. Young, *Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust: Narrative and the Consequences of Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 6.