

CRITICAL
APPROACHES
TO ARMENIAN
IDENTITY IN THE
21ST CENTURY:
VULNERABILITY,
RESILIENCE AND
TRANSFORMATION



HRANT DINK VAKFI
HRANT DINK FOUNDATION
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CRITICAL APPROACHES TO ARMENIAN IDENTITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY:
VULNERABILITY, RESILIENCE AND TRANSFORMATION

This book is a collection of papers delivered at the "Critical Approaches to Armenian Identity in the 21st Century: Vulnerability, Resilience and Transformation" conference which took place at the Hrant Dink Foundation's Havak Conference Hall in the Anarad Hghutyun Building, on 7-8 October 2016. The conference was organized by the Hrant Dink Foundation in collaboration with the Hamazkayin Armenian Educational and Cultural Society, and with the support of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and the Consulate General of Sweden.

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EDITOR

Altuğ Yılmaz

ENGLISH COPY EDITOR

Hrag Papazian

TRANSLATORS

Burcu Becermen, Can Evren, Kate Ferguson

Margo Gevorgyan, Ceylan Gürman, Nare Kalemkarian

INDEX

Lara Taş

PROJECT COORDINATORS

Karun Özçelik, Arican Paker, Lara Taş

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Anarad Hıgutyun Binası
Papa Roncalli Sok. No: 128
Harbiye 34373 Şişli/İstanbul
T: 0212 240 33 61-62 | F: 0212 240 33 94
info@hrantdink.org | www.hrantdink.org

ARMENIAN-AMERICAN OR AMERICAN WITH ARMENIAN ROOTS? THE POST-GENOCIDE CONDITIONS AND CIRCUMSTANCES IN AMERICA AND THE DYNAMICS OF IDENTITY

RUBINA PEROOMIAN*

We are a nation of survivors of Genocide whether or not our parents or grandparents went through massacres and deportation. We share the memory. Our common history, an important element of our national identity, has the Genocide at its core. We carry the burden of the traumatic experience endured by half of the Armenian nation who perished in the deserts of Syria or somehow survived the Catastrophe and vainly tried to return to normal life.

The post-1915 immigrant/refugees in America faced the tough and demanding struggle of adjusting to a totally new and unfamiliar situation. They formed ghettos and locked themselves in. For them, keeping to each other and finding solace in each other's company was a principal tool of survival and perpetuation. There, in the safety and security of their closed society, they could practice their culture, preserve their identity, and avoid confrontation with the suspicion and prejudice of the mainstream society.

THE DYNAMICS OF POST-GENOCIDE ARMENIAN ETHNIC/NATIONAL IDENTITY

To trace the dynamics of post-Genocide Armenian ethnic/national identity within the temporal and spatial conditions and circumstances in America, I draw upon the artistic expressions of the generation born to these survivor/refugees, that is, the literary responses of the second generation to their unique situation. These artistic expressions provide the place where the making and remaking of the relationship of the self and the social can be recognized. Or, as Bernard De Voto

* Research associate and lecturer of Armenian language, literature and history at UCLA

