



Preface

I am often asked if I am a descendant of Armenian Genocide survivors, by people who assume that is the reason for my dedication to the field of Armenian Genocide studies, teaching, and activism. More often than not, they are surprised to hear my response: No, I am not. My parents were born in Iran and did not share the tragic fate of Armenians in Western Armenia. In fact, my father was a toddler in a village in the Gharadagh (Kara Dagħ) region of northwestern Iran and later an ill-treated houseboy in Tabriz, and probably did not even hear about what was occurring on the other side of the border. Nevertheless, I was affected, and perhaps profoundly affected, and this, I would think, for particular reasons.¹

¹ In order to discover the roots of my psychic attraction to the subject of the Armenian Genocide and the puzzling relationship between my biography and my academic scholarship, I have attempted a self-psychoanalysis in “A Personal Note in Lieu of Preface” in my previous monograph, *The Armenian Genocide in Literature: Perceptions of Those Who*