

“children of sad people,” people who “forgot the habits of joy.”³ And it made no difference whether the parents tried to hide their past or, on the contrary, talked about it incessantly in order to make certain their children would know what had happened to them.

Mary Terzian, the author of the award-winning autobiography, *The Immigrants' Daughter*, grew up in Cairo as the daughter of Genocide survivors. In her portrayal of a not-so-ordinary family atmosphere where the past was always a mysterious secret, she writes, “The effects of genocide were present in my mother’s glassy eyes and in my father’s angry temper. It affected us all and will probably have its effect on a few more generations.”⁴ Terzian belongs to the generation who migrated to the Western world as adults equipped with sufficient Armenian education to enable them to produce literature in the Armenian language. But she chose the English language for her creative writing in order to reach her targeted audiences: English-speaking Armenian-Americans who feel the burden of being marginalized as immigrants, and non-Armenians who should understand the immigrants and appreciate their contribution to the mainstream culture.

Terzian’s parents did not share their stories of victimization and survival with their children. In many such families, children show an adverse, almost hostile reaction that will be discussed in this chapter. Nor are the reactions often

³ Nava Semel, “Intersoul Flanking: Writing about the Holocaust,” in *Second Generation Voices: Reflections by Children of Holocaust Survivors and Perpetrators*, ed. Alan L. Berger and Naomi Berger (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2001), p. 71.

⁴ Mary Terzian, *The Immigrants' Daughter: A Private Battle To Earn the Right to Self-actualization* (USA: Booklocker.com, Inc., 2005), pp. xiv-xv.