

exigencies of the process of globalization and sociologists pushing their argument against ethnic identity in favor of that process, there indeed exist many nation-state situations in which there is not an “other” to compare or to come into conflict with the “I.” This is especially true in nation states with a population of homogeneous ethnic origin and religious belief or with the strong domination of a single ethnic and religious majority ruling over a weak and oppressed minority. In the case of the Armenians, especially in the Diasporan communities, the concept of ethnic identity has a strong conceptual construct, even if that ethnic identity has experienced setbacks in the process of sociopolitical change through time, even when generations of Armenians are undergoing assimilation and acculturation. In the relationship of “I” and the “other,” in this context, the latter is not always a recognizable persona, like the Turk who committed genocide against the Armenians and caused the survivors to scatter in the world and become the new Diaspora.² That “other” can be

² The concept of Diaspora is not new for Armenians. Diasporan Armenian communities have existed for a very long time. They consisted of Armenians who for one reason or another chose to leave Armenia and settle in a foreign land. However, those Armenians could return to Armenia whenever they wanted or maintain close ties with her. That was when a country named Armenia with her indigenous population of Armenians existed, even if mostly under the yoke of a foreign power. The Armenian Diaspora gained a new meaning after the Armenian population of Western Armenia was exterminated. The survivors were driven out of the country, scattering in the world, some joining the existing small communities, others forming new ones. “Armenia,” the Armenian *vilayets*, was obliterated in the Ottoman Empire. Constantinople and Tibilisi, the cultural centers of Western and Eastern Armenians respectively, lost