

“A section of the same museum commemorated the Armenian Massacre (naturally, she said, some tourists came expecting remnants of Turks’ massacres of the Armenians, and it was always a jolt to discover that in this museum the story was the other way around)” (p. 32).²⁵ Turkish historical memory was not effaced as much as the Turkish governments would wish.

Stories about the treatment of Armenians circulated in now entirely Kurdish villages. Zakarya too remembers stories from his natal village of Ekrek, stories of Armenians being slaughtered and thrown in the river. And then he recalls the villagers’ silence about their Armenian roots: “My grandfather was Armenian. Our grandparents were Armenians but they converted to Islam.... My grandmother was Armenian. They took her from a family on their road to exile.... Make these Turks speak, and they can tell you many things” (Yalçın, p. 360). Such recollections have found their way into artistic literature. In *Snow*, a novel cast in an entirely contemporary setting, Orhan Pamuk refers over and over again to the overwhelming presence of Armenians in Kars one hundred years ago. “There had been a large Armenian community; it no longer existed,” Ka, Pamuk’s protagonist and poet-friend

without major changes. Since 2006, an extensive renovation has been underway, which involves removing all the wall frescos to be replaced by Islamic motifs, and destroying anything that recalls the building’s Christian origin. The work is being done with the support of the Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü (Directorate of Charitable Foundations).

²⁵ A similar case is the museum of Van, a section of which is dedicated to the atrocities of Armenians against Muslims in 1915. And that is the only mention of Armenians in the museum’s representation of the long history of Van.