

evoking compunction. I would like to think that it is a wound in the soul of every Turk who has not severed ties with the past, whose memory of the past hovers over his fears and hopes of the present. In his moving speech during the award ceremony for the 2006 Nobel Prize in Literature, Pamuk accepted the honor reflecting upon his understanding of the act of writing and pondering over the role of a writer and the literature he/she produces. He also said,

For me, to be a writer is to acknowledge the secret wounds that we carry inside us, the wounds so secret that we ourselves are barely aware of them, and to patiently explore them, know them, illuminate them, to own these pains and wounds, and to make them a conscious part of our spirits and our writing.²⁶

I would like to believe that among other pains and fears and secret wounds of the society that Pamuk so adroitly depicts and feels sympathetic about, there is also the wound of the unhealed and unacknowledged past, the haunting pain of the wound inflicted on one-and-a-half million citizens of the Ottoman Empire.

By bringing out the memory of the Armenian presence in Kars and their contribution to the unique culture that made Kars stand out in the Ottoman Empire, Pamuk also aims to show the importance of a multifaceted society, a society composed of people with different ethnicities and religions, different points of views and ways of life, a society composed

²⁶ This quotation is extracted from the text of Orhan Pamuk's Nobel Lecture, "My Father's Suitcase," delivered on December 6, 2006. <http://nobelprize.org>. Accessed on December 13, 2006.