# THE POLITICAL, CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC IMAGINATION IN ORHAN PAMUK

Thesis Submitted to the University of Calicut for the award of

*Doctor of Philosophy* in English Language and Literature

by

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**CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the thesis titled *The Political, Cultural and Artistic Imagination in Orhan Pamuk* is a record of the original studies and research carried out by Sapna Bharathan under my guidance and supervision and that no part of the thesis has been presented earlier for the award of any degree, diploma, title or recognition.

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis titled *The Political, Cultural and Artistic Imagination in Orhan Pamuk* is a bonafide record of research done by me and that no part of the thesis has been presented earlier for the award of any degree, diploma, or similar title of any University.

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## PREFACE

This study entitled *The Political, Cultural and Artistic Imagination in Orhan Pamuk* journeys through the process of understanding/ exploring Pamuk's narratives, seeking the intricacies of the imaginative realms which portray the multi-representations of Self, identity and nation. Pamuk's postmodern imagination fictionalised in the background of his beloved nation Turkey caught in the torment and conflict of identity, religion and power, becomes the space for problematising the dualites of binaries and its incompatibilities. This leads to a beauteous conclusion of an ambivalence which becomes a point of intercultural understanding, harbingering mutual respect, acceptance and advancement. Literature, thus, in Pamuk becomes a space of transcendence where culture, dialogues and art open up perspectives of mutual understanding.

Imagination enables Pamuk to write about the life of others as of his own. The study focuses on the novelist's politics of viewing the Other from the standpoint of the Self and his engagement with the techniques of postmodernism and postcolonialism which seek to represent the nuances of the past and the need to be reimagined so that re-definitions of Self and identity attained through renewed spaces of imagination sustain and enrich relations through an understanding of the Other's culture, politics and art. Pamuk, his texts and the readers become spaces of transcendence where cultural and political horizons can be widened to embrace even the voice of the unheard, the oppressed, and the shamed. This study which aims to explore the political, cultural and aesthetic spaces in Orhan Pamuk's works focuses specifically on three of his profound novels, *The White Castle*, *My Name is Red* and *Snow*.

The introductory chapter "Introduction: Imagination, Pamuk and the Nation" briefly defines imagination and its evolution to the postmodern stages. As Pamuk writes in the background of Turkey caught in its conflicting binaries, a brief context of the nation and its troubled stances are also outlined. The major works of Pamuk and his themes are discussed in this chapter which also outlines the nature of this interpretative study which makes a phenomenological approach to understand the representations of imagination as employed by Pamuk in his writings. His use of the various postmodern and postcolonial possibilities to represent the binaries and the ambivalence of representations, especially from the standpoint of the Other, is also elaborated in this chapter.

"Traversing Cultural Fixities and Identities," the second chapter, examines Pamuk's representation of the cultural imagination and the question of the conflicting Self. In the Turkish socio-political scenario where history itself is subject to re-representations, the trauma of the Self caught up in conflict within and outside is examined with reference to the text *The White Castle*. Homi K Bhabha's concepts of hybridity and mimicry, and his theory of third space have been used for an analytical reading of *The White Castle* which exposes the search for identity in the struggle between the Self and the Other.

The question of identity in the expression of the Self is discussed in the third chapter, "Vignettes of Artistic Imagination" which critically analyses the textual background of *My Name is Red* in which artistic imagination seeks genuine expression trying to break free of the binaries and the clashes of the ego, and the question of the text over image. Pamuk employs heteroglossia and polyphony to achieve the dialogic

interaction that the multiple voices of thought express, and relates to the critical notions of Bakhtin who approaches novels as manifestations of the Self discovering its Other. Pamuk bases *My Name is Red* on this concept of the expression of the Self and Other.

The fourth chapter "The Politics of Political Imagination" is an attempt to study Pamuk's use of political imagination as portrayed in *Snow*. Pamuk's deft handling of postmodern parody and pastiche enables the fragmented narratives to voice the gendered, religious and secular identities of the nation. The female representation in this political novel is analysed on the basis of Elaine Showalter's study of the models of difference. Pamuk satirizes, parodies and critiques the political context reflected in the unstable aspects of human life in *Snow*.

The fifth chapter, "Conclusion: Transcending Spaces," confirms how Pamuk's novels become spaces of transcendence where the boundaries of differences meet in an ambivalence that comes from the understanding and acceptance of the Other. The imagination and the politics of the novelist while becoming spaces of dialogue are also spaces for responsible creativity where the novelist and the reader are able to approach the Other from impartial points of view. Creative and judicious use of imagination becomes a space for genuine communication bridging the distance from the unfamiliar and the absent to the familiar and the present. The chapter also points to further areas of analytical study on Pamuk's works.

## Acknowledgements

Journeying through the realms of Pamuk's imagination, seeking the multi representations of self, identity and nation as manifest in the cultural, artistic and political imaginations, has indeed been a journey of self-discovery. Notwithstanding the nature of the academic study which took me to paths less travelled by and opened before me vistas of imagination I thought was unimaginable, the personal backpack was one of spatial, temporal and territorial shifts. The journey at every stage transcended itself to put me back to life, love and meaning. Counting my infinite blessings on being able to have worked on such a project, I place on record my sincere thanks to the special ones who made this dream happen.

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My father's unstinting faith in me is my source of perennial motivation.

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To Jackson—My transcendental Self and my Imaginative Other, who gave me my wings as well as the skies— I humbly dedicate this work.

Sapna Bharathan

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION: IMAGINATION, PAMUK AND THE NATION

Imagination is the human stronghold of understanding, judgment and synthesis, marking the cognition of memory, knowledge and the identity of mankind. It visualizes the space of transcendence of human life and experience. Imagination is cultural as it mirrors or reflects the Self and the Other in identities that originate and subvert. Imagination is artistic, as it becomes a text – a discursive context, for representation, dialogue, problematisation and reconstruction. Imagination is political as it situates itself in human complexities, journeying through race, gender, class and sex. The creative role of an artist lies in his representations that form an all embracing canvas that articulates and gives expression to identity, Self and nation, which by nature is variegated, multiple and shifting, form the platform for mankind to empathise, seek the beyond, and point out that there is always an other side to the story and probably as many answers as there are questions. Expressions of individual voices and dialogues live to tell their tale when imagination presenced in art, texts and politics reaches out to humankind to show that cultural, pluralistic diversities, notwithstanding the myriad manifestations of humankind share the same sky and dream the same dreams. Echoing these intentions Orhan Pamuk, the novelist, sketches his imagination in narratives and he justifies himself when he says: "The more we write, the richer these dreams become. . . . We come to know this world through writing, and the better we know it, the easier it is to carry it around in our heads"(*Other Colors* 7).

The faculty of imagination has been a subject of criticism and study and has

been approached from conceptual, phenomenological and historical standpoints. The ancient Greek, the Western and the modern philosophers have entertained and acknowledged its historical and etymological curiosities, and literature speaks of its paradigm in distinct shades of the pre-modern mimetic, the modern productive and the postmodern parodic imagination. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, whose philosophical thoughts embellished the Age of Enlightenment, in his philosophical and political work *Emile* which is a treatise on the nature of man and education, writes: "As soon as his potential powers of mind begin to function, imagination, more powerful than all the rest, awakes, and precedes all the rest. It is imagination which enlarges the bounds of possibility for us, whether for good or ill, and therefore stimulates and feeds desires by the hope of satisfying them" (52). Imagination, a vibrant sensory perception, gives visual and verbal shapes and enlarges the range of possibility, invariably by making present the future which had all the time been laid and bound to its past—the present of which had remained unknown as absent. The faculty of imagination projects something towards an open future. It does not have a particular temporal structure and when the author sits down narrating the experiences of the past and the present, he relates to something situated in future.

Imagination was given its formal philosophical expression by Plato who conceived images as imitations of imitations for even Nature and her expressions were being regarded as nothing more than the imitations or copies of the ideas. Aristotle shifted imagination from the metaphysical to the psychological level by identifying it as the bridge between sensation and reason. When Plato dismissed imagination as inferior, Aristotle approached it as a mediational faculty. Modern philosophers like Immanuel Kant, J.G Fichte and F.W. J. von Schelling provided

imagination with a transcendental model of formation. By denouncing the traditional interpretations of imagination and hailing it as the power of human beings to create a world of truth and original value, Kant, Fichte and Schelling freed imagination from its philosophical confinement and provided it the theoretical thrust which raised it to incomparable stature in the subsequent Romantic and Existentialist movements.

Transcendental imagination has its sympathisers all over the world and many have sensed it in the Romantics, especially in Samuel Taylor Coleridge. It finds its representation in Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria,* where he defines imagination as the "living power and prime agent of all human Perception and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite . . ." (246) that enables man to unite the world of the Self with the world of nature. The transcendent reach and the unifying power of imagination can also be traced in the prophetic poetry of William Blake, P B Shelley's *Defence of Poetry* and in the *Letters* of John Keats. The concept of imagination, like all ideas, is intimately bound up with specific socio- historic circumstances. Existentialism which replaced Romanticism in the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries, even while retaining some of its subjective elements, was considered as the most influential philosophy of imagination of the times and truly represented the existential limits of the people of the time. In many ways imagination gave shape to imparting the real world with meaning, life and soul. Existentialist philosophers like Martin Heidegger, Albert Camus and Jean Paul Sartre, sketched imagination in its humanist conclusions. Camus, by endorsing a humanist element to imagination, represented absurd imagination from a literary perspective whereas Sartre proposed a stricter philosophical argument based on the phenomenological method. Sartre writes: "The

imaginary appears ‘on the foundation of the world’, but reciprocally all apprehension of the real as world implies a hidden surpassing towards the imaginary. . . . So imagination . . . turns out to be an essential and transcendental condition of consciousness” (*Basic* 103). Heidegger, the German founder of phenomenological existentialism, interpreted imagination beyond its modern perspective to one of postmodern deconstruction.

Even as the paradigm shifts to the postmodern, imagination is assigned the role of deconstruction. The postmodern notion of imagination as propounded by Jacques Lacan, Michel Foucault, and Jacques Derrida is that of deconstruction. While the pre-modern tendency sought to repress creativity and the modern stressed the unique role of the individual and the Self in the representation of meaning, the postmodern imagination, avoiding extremes of silence and excess, sheds its inherited certainties and invents alternative modes of existence. An interpretative reading on imagination, especially in the postmodern contemporary context, is that of a phenomenological kind, one that journeys, subverts and reinvents. Postmodern imagination creates a text by deconstructing it, thereby reinstalling it with general history, and in the process gains insight into current issues by subverting tradition. It deconstructs the order of representation, and a phenomenological reading of it endows it with a poetical /ethical dimension whereby the egocentric and the subjective are toned down by dialogues with similar images from global perspectives to a human communication which learns from its own past.

One of the most prolific and widely acclaimed contemporary writers, Ferit Orhan Pamuk, Nobel laureate in Literature in 2006, is a distinguished literary figure in the Turkish and the international literary scenario since 1980. Pamuk’s works

inspire readings and re-readings ranging from levels of easy reading to diligent discourses on the socio-economic and political scenario of the Turkish present which carries with it, its illustrious past and its cumbersome ordeals of struggle for existence. His works often offer juxtaposing views of a nostalgic present replete with memories, tradition, religion, practices and aesthetics in strife with the Self that is constantly searching for itself. Born in Istanbul in 1952, Orhan Pamuk, attended school at Roberts College and following his family's wish, he enrolled for studying architecture at Istanbul Technical University. However, halfway through the course the artist in Pamuk got the better of him and he gave up the course to become an artist. But later he realised that it was writing that he wanted to do and once his mind was made up, for the next eight years of his life Orhan Pamuk devoted all his time to writing, shutting himself up in his mother's home in Istanbul. He recalls that it was a period in which he was not able to publish any of his novels and neither did he have any friends or life around him.

Pamuk's works span the socio-political issues of Turkey, its luminous past, confused present and the binaries of the state and the religion. His strife, his happiness, his East and West are within Turkey and he writes of its Westernisation as opposed to its traditions. His works portray the poetic search of the soul for its identity and make an appeal to the lost vestiges of humanity. Critically situated in Istanbul, Pamuk's works entail a phenomenological reading as it is the inward journey of the artist who expresses the politics and culture of the imagination he is open to. An artist, an architect and above all an author who painstakingly devotes hours to his work and diligently does research on his raw material, Pamuk, in each of his novels, experiments further with the literary modernity, mixing all the elements

of postmodernism and postcolonialism with history, cultural realism and narratives, to communicate his imagination across the masses, albeit breaking national and linguistic barriers.

Before outlining the deeper implications of Pamuk's imagination in his writings and the nature of this study, it is necessary to place the author in the context and to offer a brief overview of his works. Pamuk's early novels are *Cevdet Bey and Sons* (1982) and *The Silent House* (1983) — works which remained largely untranslated until 2012. *The White Castle* published in Turkish in 1985 and translated to English in 1990, highlighted Pamuk as the voice of the avante garde, and his succession of works continued, with the literary world acclaiming him as the Nobel laureate in 2006. Pamuk's other major works are *The Black Book* (1990), *The New Life* (1994), *My Name is Red* (1998), *Other Colors: Essays and a Story* (1999), *Snow* (2002), *Istanbul: Memories and the City* (2003), *The Museum of Innocence* (2008), *The Naïve and the Sentimental Novelist* (2010), *A Strangeness in My Mind* (2014) and *The Red Haired Woman* (2016). Though his early novels are experiments in modernity and largely deal with the theme of modernisation and its effects on Turkish life and culture, *The White Castle*, his path breaking novel which spirals around the problematic of the identity quest *Why I am What I am*, (54) highlights Pamuk's experiments with postmodern narrative techniques, especially historiographic metafiction, making him one of the most popular novelists of the times. In his subsequent works, Pamuk continues his quest for identity and problematises the clashes of the Turkish national identity that seems to have been caught in the East-West conflict.

Pamuk's reimagination of the Ottoman archives which began with *The White Castle*, takes on the resplendence of postmodern tools like metafiction, metanarration, and multi perspectivity, to render novels like *My Name is Red* which transgresses all known realms of imagination to portray the quest for the identity of the Self as represented in the multiperspectivity of politics, art and culture. Pamuk, who experiments with the genre of the political novel, portrays in *Snow* the anguish of a poet caught in the maze and violence of reforms, coups and the cultural crisis of Turkey in the throngs of a political and cultural schism. In *Istanbul: Memories and the City,* Pamuk fuses the stylistics of novel, narrative and autobiography in the portrait of a young Orhan, to feature the tale of his beloved city caught in its national identity and its schism between the East / West, the sacred / secular and the modern /traditional. The city and the author continue their quest enriched by their past and partaking of its lessons for the future. Themes of love in the face of conflicting traditional values and changing culture, the artist's undying love for his Istanbul and the agony of Turkey's transition remain the areas of focus in his novels like *The Museum of Innocence*, *A Strangeness in my Mind* and *The Red Haired Woman*. *Other Colors* and *The Naïve and Sentimental Novelist* are works which contain beautiful contemplations in fragments on Pamuk's own writings, his lectures, life, politics, memories, lifelong obsessions and flights of imagination. The objects that Pamuk drew upon to write the book *The Museum of Innocence* are collected and exhibited in the actual Museum of Innocence opened in 2012.

Pamuk's narrative imagination stretches across the historical present to revisit the past and address the future in its constant reference of the Self to the Other, reminding us that the Self is never sufficient in itself. While exploring the

narrative identity to project the Other as Self, the poetical, cultural and ethical aspects of the narratives point to a political aim to find expressions of the human self caught in the tumultuous world order, where East and West are considered binaries— a representation which the Venetian and Hoja deconstruct in their cultural translation in *The White Castle*. Pamuk's narratives, in their constant quest of relating the Self to the Other, make one realise the paradoxical limitation of any imagination to constrain itself or the Other to the representational form of any image — be it mimetic, productive or parodic. His narratives, thus, are extensions of the postmodern imagination, the recurring pattern evolving in the narrations being the question of the Other. His narratives seek faith in the willingness to accept that whatever particular medium they choose or image they construct, there is always some dimension of otherness which transcends them, and this narrative quest for the Other entails radical possibilities of political praxis. Thus *Snow* exhibits the binaries in close encounter, where Pamuk exposes them in all their excesses, leaving the reader to draw pertinent conclusions.

Pamuk draws from the historical past, projections of the future with ramifications of transcendental subjectivity, and reinfuses humanism into postmodern imagination. He rewrites the postmodern imagination which hitherto had been compared to a labyrinth of looking glasses which reflect and remit their own images, by giving it a narrative tale of relating itself to its Other and in the process lighting up a golden thread leading the reader out of the labyrinth and transcendentally beyond. Here originals are not lost, but a steady quest is on for the original, the Self and the genuine representations, and the ambivalence of such representations is problematised which in turn becomes a representation of the

postmodern imagination. *My Name is Red* details this quest for the pure as does *The White Castle*, but Pamuk reminds us that the search, the journey, itself is the answer.

Pamuk's writings essentially are personal as he locates his works within Turkey, its political, cultural, social and artistic nuances, and his characters bear close resemblance to himself and his family members. Hence interpretations of his works are naturally phenomenological as the writings are the echoes of a Self which has been imagined, created and evolved in the social, cultural and political background of a Turkey which has witnessed and withstood all what human beings in their broadest and narrowest sense of perceptions have done to it. The empathetic artist in Pamuk chooses the medium of his works to express the phenomenology of the postmodern imagination within and outside. Though his writings appear to be personal there could not have been a more serious voice heard or a clearer mirror, lamp or labyrinth of reality within and outside reflected, than when his imagination unfurls within the pages of his texts and intertexts. His narratives enriched by extensive and detailed research are paradigm indicators of the social, political and cultural Turkey, and even as aesthetics and literary forms mix and encompass there is the plaintiff of an individual soul appealing to human consciousness.

As a well-acclaimed author, Orhan Pamuk has received great recognition that ranges from the Impac Dublin Literary Award (2003) to the Nobel Prize (2006). Pamuk received laurels even for his first novel *Cevdet Bey and Sons.* The 1983 Orhan Kemal Novel Prize (Turkey), 1995 Prix France Culture (France), 2003 International Dublin Literary Award, 2005 Peace Prize of the German Book Trade (Germany), 2005 Prix Médicis étranger, 2006 Washington University's Distinguished Humanist Award (United States), 2014 European Museum of the Year

Award (Estonia) , 2015 Aydın Doğan Foundation Award (Turkey), and 2017 Budapest Grand Prize are some of the notable awards he received as tokens of international acceptance. His books are best sellers and have been translated worldwide into about sixty-one languages. Orhan Pamuk's name has been included in *Time* magazine's 2006 year's list of the hundred people who shaped the world. He has been given honorary membership of the American Academy of Arts and Literature and of the Chinese Academy for Social Sciences. Currently, he dedicates almost all his time to writing, in his beloved home country.

Journeying through Pamuk's world of literary fiction, the reader is taken through romantic interludes of entwined labyrinths, sometimes in a nostalgic past, more often the historical past blending with memories in a tangible present and the refined present portraying a future for posterity. Istanbul is a looming life force where the politics, culture and rich traditions are wistful realities but with a peaceful future of synthesis on the verge of realisation. But Pamuk's works, rather than aiming for a synthesis or a bridge, find their moments of achievements in celebrating the fragmentations of the Self, the ruins and the lost. Even as he appreciates the view of the Bosporus from his side, he is also imaginative of the Other's gaze and his ability to see both the perspectives bring about a harmony in accepting the multiplicity of perspectives.

In the imaginative conceptions of history, reality often transcends spaces, ethnicity, and identity and merges into representations of professed history. In Pamuk, history is not a mere platform of texts and events but serve as textual frames which achieve vibrant forms of political and imaginative landscapes of historiographical reinterpretations. The appropriation and accommodation of

authentic history get problematised in his texts as he soulfully renders in *Istanbul: Memories and the City,* "Here among the old stones and the old wooden houses, history made peace with its ruins; ruins nourished life, and gave new life to history. . ." (318). When deconstructing Turkish history which is mostly represented in a panorama of glory and conquest, the author secures a space for the unspoken and the unheard voices of the colonised who remain marginalized, and his textuality flows in the unspoken and unheard gaps. The literary and political contexts of Pamuk's works foreground the paradoxical position of a Self caught between the Turkish national tradition and the international identity. Pamuk's literary works are representations of the cultural politics of the state and the religion which used literature as a tool, and they also portray the artistic clash of the Turkish novel with its literary modernity. Pamuk's persistence with the themes of *Why I am what I am* and whether it is possible to be oneself, are but the problems of a perplexed identity that has long formed a conundrum for the people of Turkey.

Turkey, once the pulsating heart of the flourishing Ottoman Empire which had its capital in Constantinople/Istanbul, was a country which ruled and which in turn was ruled, and the political, aesthetic and cultural thoughts, practices and nuances had been experienced, articulated, concealed or displaced with the changes in rule and reforms. This has posed an identity question in many a native and especially in an artist whose sensitivity is on a higher plane. Reconstructing the past could be a way of accepting the present. Pamuk confesses, "To lock myself up in a room to write a new history—a new story with allegories, obscurities, silences, and never-heard sounds—is, of course, better than to write another history of defects that seeks to explain our defects by means of other defects" (*Other Colors* 297).

The modernisation reforms had many a sad story to tell. One of them was Ataturk's construct of a new language and a new history in his bid to totally eliminate the Ottoman past— a measure he believed was but imperative for the new national identity. But when the Arabic script was replaced by the Roman alphabet it was a severe cultural shock as the people were suddenly severed from their past. It left the people bitter, illiterate and deprived of their past. Ataturk, persistent with his reforms, personally went around familiarising masses with the new script, and his modernisation reforms were aimed at Westernising Turkey as Westernisation meant a higher level of civilization and placing it at par with the European nations. Huntington, one of America's greatest political scientists, summarises the liminal status of Turkey and its oscillation between an Eastern soul and a Western costume as follows:

> Ataturk . . . had created a new Turkey out of the ruins of the Ottoman empire, and had launched a massive effort both to Westernize it and to modernize it . . . rejecting the Islamic past, Ataturk made Turkey a "torn country," a society which was Muslim in its religion, heritage, customs, and institutions but with a ruling elite determined to make it . . . at one with the West. . . . Kemalism involves the difficult and traumatic task of destroying a culture . . . (*Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking* 74)

The transitional period between the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the rise of the Turkish nation was a difficult and unsettling period when the East-West question took on a totally different meaning. The writers of the period believed that it was the novelist's task to dictate on the literary level the necessary changing

boundaries of the East-West dynamics. Commenting on the East-West paradox precipitated in the Turkish national identity question, Emre Gökalp, the Turkish sociologist, observes: "The historical paradox of Turkish national identity stems from the tension between the emulation of the West/Europe that is regarded as the unique address of civilisation, modernisation, wealth and prosperity, and the hostility towards the same West/Europe . . . considered as the cultural/political 'other', or at times the 'enemy'" (175).

The latter half of the twentieth century also witnessed political upheavals and risings in Turkey. The emergence of novels in the Turkish literary scenario was a gradual expression of the many political, social and cultural upheavals in the country which naturally affected the literary imagination. Turkish novels in the post coup period attained new found expressions in form, style and content and the postmodern expressions released the Turkish novels from their didactic, educative purposes to represent humanistic artistic expressions. Orhan Pamuk played a very innovative role in the Turkish literary modernity. When Pamuk started his career in the 70s, the most popular kind of novels was the "village novels," that is, novels reflecting the economic and social problems and situations of the peasants and focusing on social conditions rather than on individual characters. The novels of the time considered the individual as a tool for depicting these social conditions. Novelists of that time generally used realism as their main artistic device and literary tool. Pamuk was the first writer in Turkey to make an aesthetic deviation and a shift from the structures of social realism of this kind of writing. He made the art of novel writing more complex by incorporating the framework of history and tools of postmodernism like metanarrative, parody and deconstruction. Unlike the earlier writers, he focused on

the technicalities of novel composition by adapting his writing to the contemporary European literary paradigms. In fact the ambivalence of Pamuk's writings critiques the phenomenology of the nation that had a past rewritten to identify its present. The texts problematise the conventional concepts of the text, the reader and the author. Pamuk's texts underline his faith in finding ways of peaceful coexistence within the conflicting complex, social and political scenarios.

The fiction that Pamuk imagines and creates into works of art, recreates history, reshaping the past in the light of present issues whereby imagination becomes a tool, a defining aspect in which texts of history are constructs of discourses for change and transformation. As Linda Hutcheon, the Canadian literary critic and theoretician states, "The border between past event and present praxis is where historiographic metafiction self-consciously locates itself. . . . [The] past *was* real, but it *is* lost or at least displaced, only to be reinstated as the referent of language, the relic or trace of the real" (*Poetics* 146). So Pamuk's texts are "a critical revisiting" (195) and in keeping with all the postmodern strategies unfurl as metanarratives. Inculcating the Turkish paradigm shift of the postmodern, Pamuk narrates his nation into being, freeing himself from the literary motives of his times and freely exploring the Ottoman theme. Erdag Goknar, critic and translator, has commented on the political transformation that happened in Turkey after the major military coup of September 12, 1980, and how the writers responded in a way that questioned the " grand narratives of nationalism/ Kemalism and socialism through aesthetic experimentation with content and form" ("Orhan Pamuk and the Ottoman" 35). The social, cultural and political identity of Turkey in the later 19$^{th}$ century strikingly featured an enigmatic schism between sameness and difference in the

relation between Turkish and Eastern identities—a mixed response of a desire to imitate the West and a fear of being an inauthentic imitation of the West. Pamuk in *The White Castle* responds to *Why I am What I am* by textually blending his 19th century Westernisation with the Ottoman past. In the stages of the transition, Pamuk has taken the chore of imagining the social life and the culture of Turkey during Ottoman times by portraying the flux of the East-West conflict. The flux in continuity evolves as a journey that stands as a proof for the transition from tradition to modernisation.

On February 6, 2005, Pamuk, by then, one of Turkey's prominent literary figures, is reported to have commented in an interview to the Swiss newspaper *Tages Anzeiger*: "Thirty thousand Kurds were killed here. And a million Armenians. Hardly anyone dares mention it. So I do. And that's why they hate me" ( McGaha 2). The remark Pamuk made had repercussions that ended in a trial where he was tried under charges of "insulting the Turkish identity" (3). He could have been even sentenced for three years imprisonment but in February 2006 the Turkish court was forced to drop the charges levelled against him only because of the worldwide protest and the pressure exerted by the European Union. Pamuk's political ordeal came uninvited. In "The Implied Author," his opening essay in *Other Colors*, he writes: " the political quandaries in which I then found myself, turned me into a far more 'political,' 'serious,' and 'responsible' person than I wanted to be: a sad state of affairs and an even sadder state of mind—let me say it with a smile" ( 9). In *Snow* which is in many respects a response to the national identity crisis of the 1980s, Pamuk indignantly remarks:

> But intellectuals like you . . . You say you want democracy, and then

> you enter into alliances with Islamic fundamentalists. You say you want human rights, and then you make deals with terrorist murderers . . . say Europe is the answer, but you go around buttering up Islamists who hate everything Europe stands for . . . say feminism, and then you help these men wrap their women's heads in scarves. You don't follow your own conscience; you just guess what a European would do in the same situation and act accordingly. (362- 63)

Pamuk addresses and represents the distinct faith that despite the conflicting issues that shaped and reshaped Turkey's cultural and historical imaginations, the past and its history converge on a nation without borders and on a culture which accepts multi-representations that are genuine and not part of any forced Westernisation. Pamuk's novels critique and reach out to the transcendence of human imagination. A writer well acclaimed, he has often been the target of severe mixed responses. His Westernised background and the affluence of his family make the fundamental religious groups in his hometown mark him as a "secular elite" (*Orhan Pamuk, Secularism* 58). The state's new found secularism makes him averse to the state powers who consider him an Oriental. He also criticises the state and thus faces a double accusation and his stances are often interpreted as double stances. Pamuk's retaliation manifests in his texts which are strong critiques of the cultural, political and artistic scenario of the times. Militant secularism and politicised Islam were already taking their toll on the state and even though in the days of decline the Ottoman Empire witnessed uprisings from varied ethnic groups, Pamuk, in his novels, revisits the golden Ottoman age when cultures coexisted in harmony in Turkey. Pamuk's works refer to the richness of the Ottoman times and present to the

reader the receding era of a flourishing Turkey, still abundant with its cultural affluence reflected in its social and artistic realms. He not only gives voice to Turkey's dynamic past but also acquaints the readers with the drastic changes which had been wrought upon the people of Turkey, largely in political and religious contexts, in the name of modernisation, and exhorts his country in the backdrop of the past to emerge out of the afflictions and tortures as a strong, bold nation, toughened and strengthened and even enriched by its trials.

Pamuk as a writer and an empathizer who caters to the panoramic view of life beyond the margins of binaries does not become judgmental as many are while commenting on the political, sociological, cultural, emotional and cultural milieu of the present world. As always he tries to address the different ruptures that do not get enough prominence in the current political and historical scenario. Hence he problematises everything that comes into his purview as a writer and his comments on the 9/11 attacks exemplify his stance on addressing the vital issues. To Pamuk's much discussed article on the 9/11 attacks that appeared in *The Guardian*, titled "Listen to the damned," he gave the subtitle: "It is not Islam or poverty that succours terrorism, but the failure to be heard," underlining his clear stand on the issue. In the article his concerns are regarding the widening gap between the rich and the poor, and he illustrates that the gap has crossed all limits and now it has stretched to such intolerable dimensions that "millions of people belonging to countries that have been pushed to one side and deprived of the right even to decide their own histories" and suffer from terrible "humiliation" and "spiritual misery." Hence Pamuk urges the Western world indirectly to reflect on their past doings and asks them to become more democratic. He observes that the military campaign being announced and

undertaken against the "terrorists" will only make the situation worse and points out that the Western world is slowly crumbling into an era of fear psychosis. "The problem facing the west today is not only to discover which terrorist is preparing a bomb in which tent, which cave, or which street of which remote city, but to understand the poor, scorned majority that does not belong to the western world" (Pamuk,"Listen"). He recommends that if the repair is genuinely intended human beings of every terrain and race have to be treated with dignity and respect.

Pamuk has always been aware of the problems of identity and nationalism. Connecting them is problematic, for relying on the past to invent nationalism and identity would be painful and upsetting as the past created would be always glorious than the present and might reflect only the nostalgic past of some people undermining the representations of many. Moreover, the official past imposed by the state makes the situation more complex. Pamuk as an artist did not have much choice but to problematise identity and nationalism; and that could be the reason why he quit everything to become a writer, a novelist. As a writer Pamuk tries to express the ambiguities and paradoxes involved, and he says in the interview with Pinar Batur, "my books are a way of coming to terms with all these problems of pain, the imposed past, invented past, and a personal narrative." He departed from the concerns of modernism long ago (which one can notice in his earlier works) and started fixing himself into the realm of understanding in a postmodern way. Thus emerged a writer who could inculcate his romantic pursuits while narrating and imagining the past. "But as an artist, I am more of a romantic. In fact, I look at the past not as a positivist, utilitarian outlook that I have to teach. No, it's just a way of escape. It's just some substance for a fanciful or fairytale like past. I like that" (13). Thus when Pamuk

writes, with deep roots and unforgettable narratives uniting the past and the present, Turkey evolves, and the best exemplification is found in his profound works like *Snow, The White Castle* and *My Name is Red*, the three texts this study takes into detailed analysis. Postmodernism is not a technique he employs to write his novels but it is his perception and life. Commenting on *My Name is Red*, a renowned historian and newspaper columnist observes in *The Guardian*:

> The perspective is a writer's joy which unites the generations and spans the centuries. And at its heart is an aesthetic tradition renewed and glorified without hatred or rancour. This is beauty itself, transfiguring and parabolic in its exploration of progress and loss, of seeming and being . . . transcending unity of understanding. (Williams)

Pamuk voices his hopes, fears, anger and humiliation, and even while he is trying to come to terms with the widening gap between the East and the West, he yearns for the multiplicity of cultures which the Ottoman past had plenty to speak of. Pamuk's search is for identity and though his writings are considered political, especially *Snow* being taken to be a political novel, his quest is for the human wholeness which is a mixture of the political, the cultural and the artistic. Pamuk never conformed to the choice of the writers of his times by writing educative or village novels nor did he involve himself with the active politics of the times. Pamuk sees *Snow* as an anti-political political novel as is cited in the *Boston Globe:* "This isn't a political novel of the '30s or '40s, or socially committed, or with a political agenda. This is not propaganda. . . . I'm not taking sides" (Feeney). But the fact remains that Pamuk has never been so political as when he deals with all the burning issues of the

times in *Snow,* and ironically, "*Snow* is a warning against the dangers of getting overly involved in politics" (McGaha 156).

Even though Turkey is declared a Republic the proper identity of Turkey is still a matter of contest. With an Ottoman past and a modernised present, the outcome has varied from ethnic strifes to minority risings and blatant Islamism. Pamuk traverses through all the diverse natures his country was exposed to, reminding the readers of what is lost and what remains, all the while exposing the extremities of glorifying the past or romanticising the present, and breaks through to dismantle the focus on binaries and ease the way to a transcendence that can hold together and move ahead with the ambivalences. Cultures are a mixture of ideologies that lineages have handed over, traversing temporal and spatial and even geographical borders, and humanity continues in the interlacing of cultures that over time and space evolve to create new spaces and understandings. Pamuk's East and West are the many representations of binaries of borders that are everchanging like the entity of the Self which is as much the Other as itself.

Orhan Pamuk, who was tried by the Turkish government for insulting Turkish identity before winning the Nobel Prize for Literature, comments during an interview to Mirze two years later, on the complicated interconnections of identity formation in Turkey: "religious identity is part of cultural identity, political identity is part of religious identity, and religious identity is also a part of Turkish political identity, so it's very hard. . . . The thought was to try to draw a strong red mark between religion and the culture and identity . . . that line is still blurry" (Pamuk, "Implementing" 179). Pamuk needs to be placed in the postmodern background to understand his works as written in a mode that accommodates future formulations of

the identities in transition. Crossing the borders on the levels of both content and form, Pamuk communicates as a writer of the future who understands historical, linguistic, and cultural legacies of various cultures and nations in terms of their resemblance in differences, reminding us of the shifting pace of passage across indeterminate and permeable borders. Pamuk fictionalises the past, dramatises binaries, and parodies history with the intent of actually transcending the in-between spaces. He appeals to humanity and his wish is that people would focus on good literature and forget the clashes and the politics involved, as he states in an interview given to Farnsworth: " what is important is not clash of parties, civilizations, cultures, East and West, whatever. But think of that other peoples in other continents and civilizations are actually exactly like you . . . Pay attention to good literature and novels, and do not believe in politicians" (Pamuk,"Bridging").

He has confessed to being influenced directly or indirectly by writers like Umberto Eco, Italo Calvino, J.L Borgs, Thomas Mann, Stendhal, Balzac, Dostoevsky, Marguerite Yourcenar, Rushdie and the charm of the oriental storytellers. Allusions in his works to techniques and thematic variations come from these infinite impressions and Pamuk improvises and experiments on the form of the European novel with a combination of Turkish traditional literature and postmodern narrative techniques. The writer, who holds Istanbul dear to his heart, expresses his feeling of inability to decide the state of confusion the city leads him to. In its ruins and its modernisation is left behind a feeling of "huzun" which is hard to define. It is this undecidedness of space, the coexistence of different perspectives that Pamuk celebrates unconditionally. As he describes in *Istanbul: Memories and the City*:

> Here among . . . its ruins . . . the city's poor neighbourhoods seemed

> prepared, in any event, to become my 'second world'. How I longed to be part of this poetic confusion! Just as I had lost myself in my imagination to escape my grandmother's house and the boredom of school, now, having grown bored with studying architecture, I lost myself in Istanbul. So it was that I finally came to relax and accept the *hüzün* that gives Istanbul its grave beauty, the *hüzün* that is its fate. (318)

In almost all works or novels of Pamuk the mirror image is reflected and he believes that like the multimillion images a mirror can produce of a single object, there are many expressions of a point of view and his books are projections of some of these reflections. He remarks in *The Naïve and the Sentimental Novelist*: "There is, of course, no such thing as a perfect mirror. There are only mirrors that perfectly meet our expectations. Every reader who decides to read a novel chooses a mirror according to his or her taste" (48).

Great works of literature are those that transcend all borders of limitations of comprehension to linger within, to probe the truth, to integrate the meaning transferred into moments of thought, creativity, and action. Orhan Pamuk, the author, the creator, the artist par excellence does much more. His artistic imagination taking its flight from the cultural scenario in which he is ensconced and where he explores multiple perspectives to reveal, question and problematise the world outside, often journeys on a personal quest to find transcendence. It is the artistic imagination of Pamuk inextricably woven into the political, cultural background of his thought that transforms his works into cherished pieces of undeniable conviction. His writings are political to the extent that personal is political. To quote Pamuk:

> An imaginative novelist's greatest virtue is his ability to forget the world in the way a child does, to be irresponsible and delight in it, to play around with the rules of the known world—but at the same time to see past his freewheeling flights of fancy to the deep responsibility of later allowing readers to lose themselves in the story. (*Other Colors* 8)

This thesis journeys through Pamuk's fictive worlds of postmodern imagination textualised in the background of a tormented Turkey caught between conflicting dilemmas of identity, religion and power. This interpretative reading focuses on the representations of imagination—political, artistic and cultural, as employed by Pamuk in his writings to represent the multi-representations of Self, identity and nation. It focuses on how Pamuk employs the various postmodern and postcolonial techniques/possibilities which raise history to metahistory and narratives to metanarratives to view politics, art, and culture from the others' standpoint and depict the ambivalence of representations. Using the binaries of fact / fiction, history /metahistory, East /West, original /imitation, Pamuk offers a multitude of representations problematising the fictional past, present and future, resulting in a fluctuation of meanings regarding history, identity and Self. History is merely a fictional past for Pamuk; imagination is a ground for placing himself in the others' shoes so that cultural horizons can be expanded, enabling him to be the voice of the unheard, the oppressed, and the ashamed. Imagination allows him to write of others' life as about his own.

Pamuk grounds his narratives on the fictive or imaginative present which draws its source from a reimagined past to construct identities with possibilities of

modification. The ambivalence arises from the fluctuations in representations of culture and identity which in turn reflect on the politics and the texts. The bridge that Pamuk offers as a transcendental space is his writing itself. Literature, especially that which opens up imaginative perspectives and facilitates dialogues, promotes world views and intercultural understandings. Pamuk, his texts and the readers become this space of transcendence. Literature and writings, by representing the ambivalent spaces of culture and identity, allow an all-encompassing perspective. Narratives will be written and rewritten as long as humanity continues. The hypothesis is generated from the ambivalence of representations in the postmodern conception of history whereby the political or cultural imagination of a particular event, history or identity gets politicised to the extent that its authenticity loses its representation and the fictional aspect surfaces. The focus of this thesis is on the process of representation in relation to the novelistic imagination of history or Self as Pamuk seeks to get into the idea of how " thinking about this other in whom everyone sees his own opposite will help to liberate him from the confines of his self" (*Other Colors* 228), and on how the whole phenomenon is made feasible using the realms of the political, cultural and artistic imagination in his works, with particular reference to his novels *The White Castle*, *My Name is Red* and *Snow*. Thus this study aims to explore within the postmodern framework the strategies and styles employed by Pamuk on the theme of representation.

Pamuk, being an author who never left his beloved Istanbul, loving it with such fervour that even its ruins inspired him to take its glorious past as an extension to its future, narrates his nation into being in virtually every text he makes. It is only natural that the trials and tribulations of his beloved nation echo their revisitations in

his representations of texts, reflecting culture, Self and identity. Pamuk is a deliberate artist, creating novels from imagining and understanding the Self as oneself and the Other. Much as he is also the Other— looking at things from the foreign "gaze" of the Other— and in the absence of the Other, becoming the "Western traveller" (*Istanbul* 260) too, he is the creator of texts, the author, the narrator and also the implied reader. Like his novels, collections like *Other Colors*, *The Naïve and Sentimental Novelist* and even his book *Istanbul: Memories and the City* which is hard to be classified as a mere novel, while catering to Pamuk's probing *Why Am I What I Am,* pour insights into why he writes the way he does.

This study takes its space and ambience from this stance of the author who never stops in creating and recreating the spaces that he has already infused into his creative writings. In *Other Colors* and *The Naïve and Sentimental Novelist* , Pamuk engages with his readers in different slots of space and time discussing the possibilities and even the impossibilities of his writing as an implied author. Moreover, his appeal as a writer to an implied reader is so comprehensive that the perceptions, comments and interventions he makes in his texts give forth other representations thus exemplifying his own philosophy of defining and redefining spaces of ambivalence. Thus *Other Colors*, *The Naïve and the Sentimental Novelist* and the interviews he has given serve as testimonies for his stated attitude and hence have become resource material for this study. Pamuk's literary innovations in the form and the content of the Turkish novels and his use of postmodernism to create worlds from existing worlds to make convincing representations of reality, history and fiction have often placed the author on the threshold of controversy. But detailed studies on the author and his works remove all such traces of controversy and prove

that his expressions are grounded in deep and unwavering faith and knowledge of the culture, aesthetics and politics he talks about which are in no way disputable.

Orhan Pamuk's translated works advertise his eminence in contemporary world literature. Translations, reviews, critiques and studies function as the bridge between Pamuk's works, the literary system and the larger context of the social system. Prominent translators of Pamuk who have also published reviews of his books include Maureen Freely, Erdag M. Goknar, Guneli Gun, Victoria Holbrook, Robert Finn and Ekin Oklap. The aesthetics of Pamuk's texts have been critically appreciated and evaluated by his translator-critic, Erdag Goknar whose book, *Orhan Pamuk, Secularism and Blasphemy: The Politics of the Turkish Novel* is the first critical study of Orhan Pamuk's all novels. It throws valuable insight into the conflicting stances of Pamuk and his nation and places on record a critical appreciation of the works of Pamuk, the politics of the Turkish novel and the approaches of the author in the globalized age. Goknar's study, "Orhan Pamuk and the 'Ottoman' Theme" disseminates, reflects and becomes a source for understanding the milieu of the author's writing. Extensive interviews with Pamuk by Skafidas, Knopf, Alexander Star, and Pinar Batur, to name a few, serve as the mediating source between the author and the reading public.

The book *Global Perspectives on Orhan Pamuk: Existentialism and Politics*, edited by Mehnaz M. Afridi and David M. Buyze is a collection of critical reviews on Orhan's works and it portrays Pamuk as an author who makes his functional space within the system, and elucidates how "Pamuk's novels and trajectory express a complicated fabric of today's global citizenry with nuances of religion, secularity, existentialism, nationalism, and violence." The book, divided into four sections

establishes global, postcolonial and postnational readings of Pamuk and explores and ruminates on the wide spectrum in which Pamuk's works can be read, emphasizing that in "our globalized world . . . the novel should be taken with much more seriousness as it is a vehicle that propagates a revisioning of one's imagination in how the self and world can be considered anew" (2). Michael McGaha's *Autobiographies of Orhan Pamuk: The Writer in his Novels studies* in detail the life and times of the author and sets him in the background of a cultural, historical and political Turkey. Mc Gaha's study assesses Pamuk as an artist "who dares to imagine a Turkey revitalized by the cross-fertilisation of East and West, a tolerant society where the traditional and modern, the religious and secular, can live together harmoniously" (178). The book also evaluates, reflects and reviews the extent to which the different translators could reproduce Pamuk's writings in English.

The article titled "'Suicide Girls': Orhan Pamuk's *Snow* and the Politics of Resistance in Contemporary Turkey" by Colleen Ann Lutz Clemens approaches the headscarf issue as a fundamental debate regarding the suppression of the female voice and takes the reader to a critical appreciation of Pamuk's novels, and reviews the novel *Snow* in the wake of Pamuk's focus on the vital political issues "from the point of view of a person who tries to understand the pain and suffering of others" (151). Feride Çiçekoglu's study titled, "A Pedagogy of Two Ways of Seeing: A Confrontation of 'Word and Image' in *My Name is Red,*" reflects on how the novel is a chronicle of the confrontation of two ways of seeing and goes on to establish how Orhan Pamuk synthesizes the postmodern and the modern and challenges the binaries "between dogmatic secularization and fundamentalist religion . . ." (16). "To Dig a Well with a Needle: Orhan Pamuk's Poem of Comparative Globalization"

by Grant Farred provides insights into how the works of Pamuk are extensions of representations of globalized comparison and are critical and ambivalent spaces of "unbridgeable but articulable historical aporia . . ." (86). Hywell Williams, Margaret Atwood, John Updike, Robert Houston, Richard Eder, Elizabeth Farnsworth are some of authors who have done outstanding reviews of his works. Jay Parini commenting on Pamuk and his literary brilliance in *The White Castle* says that "A new star has risen in the east — Orhan Pamuk, a Turkish writer. And if 'The White Castle' is representative of his fiction, he has earned the right to comparisons with Jorge Luis Borges and Italo Calvino, both of whom preside over this novel like beneficent angels"(3). Richard Eder reviewing *My Name is Red*, portrays Pamuk as a novelist, "whose intricate intrusions of past into present have been compared to Proust's works on the memory of a nation and a civilization" (7). John Updike comments that "Pamuk's ingenuity is yoked to a profound sense of enigma and doubleness. The doubleness . . . derives from that of Turkey itself. . ." (92).

This study which aims to envision the process involved in imagining the political, cultural and aesthetic spaces as transcending in Orhan Pamuk's works, draws on the critical concepts of Bakhtin, Bhabha and Elaine Showalter to interpret Pamuk's texts. John Brannigan's critically relevant observation that "texts are the products of social, cultural and political forces, not solely the creation of an individual author, and so texts reflect and engage with the prevailing values and ideology of their own time," gives the basis to deconstruct the cultural, artistic and political imagination in Pamuk (179). Bakhtin's *Problems of Dostoevsky*'s *Poetics* that has had a tremendous influence on Pamuk offers enough clues to the structure of some of Pamuk's early writings. Discourses on cultural and aesthetic imaginations

are discussed in this study leaning on the concepts of "creative" and "dialogic" imagination proposed by Bakhtin. Pamuk has employed the techniques of heteroglossia and polyphony in his novels thus affirming his alliance with Bakhtin in perceiving a novel: "The novel can be defined as a diversity of social speech types (sometimes even diversity of languages) and a diversity of individual voices, artistically organized" (Bakhtin, *Dialogic* 262). By professing himself to be a postmodern writer, Pamuk has opened the doors of imagination to fashion the precepts of postmodernism. His process of imagination has taken the leap many a time in the non-linear, multi-linear perspective as inscribed in Linda Hutcheon's *A Poetics of Postmodernism* and *The Politics of Postmodernism* where rooms of discussions are provided in the areas of historiographic metafiction, metanarratives, metahistory and narratology.

Turkey has been accorded a status of self colonialisation by researchers and historians and it is only natural that the writings of Pamuk cater to the postcolonial characteristics as well. A postcolonial reading has been initiated in this study in various contexts while going through the artistic, cultural and political identities imagined by Pamuk in his works. In Turkey's self colonialisation process under Ataturk, the ideal for a civilized Turkey was Europe and colonisation took over in every sphere of life in the modernised Turkey. In the process, ironically, Turkey itself imposed colonial status and was considerably weakened and isolated from the others. The West was looked upon with awe as well as with fear and with feelings evoked from a sense of shame. Orhan Pamuk, in an interview given to *The Paris Review* remarks that Turkey was never a colony and that the suppression that the Turks suffered was self-inflicted (*Other Colors* 370). With a language that was

wiped out and a history that got rewritten, the Turkish identity was in a crisis and it seemed to be holding on to the last vestiges of the past or tradition that religion seemed to offer. The Turkish identity crisis which arises out of the radical modernisation exhibits similar colonisation features as elaborated by Bhabha in *Location of Culture*. Homi Bhabha approaches the discourse on Self and the Other in a postmodern perspective while discussing the concepts of postcolonial framework. In *The Location of Culture* which is a series of essays, he argues that colonial discourse is not only that of the coloniser but also includes that of the colonised. His arguments show that the colonised people have always resisted the coloniser. He has elaborated his theoretical position based on notions of hybridity, liminality and ambivalence. Hence reading Pamuk's texts in the light of the key postcolonial concepts of hybridity and the third space, in-betweenness, mimicry, liminal identity and ambivalence extends the intent of his representations.

The artist or the novelist is a creator of texts where his imagination triggers the reader's imagination to the formation of a "virtual dimension" where we become others and others become us such that the writer's imagination gets transferred to the reader's imagination to the extent that, "[o]nce the reader is entangled, his own preconceptions are continually overtaken, so that the text becomes his 'present' whilst his own ideas fade into the 'past'; as soon as this happens he is open to the immediate experience of the text . . ." ( Iser,"Reading" 294). The author is dead, the reader is always in an evolving state and the evolution of the reader becomes the concern. Pamuk is always fascinated by the concept of the implied author and the implied reader. In some instances, Pamuk the writer can be viewed as a political analyst, especially in novels like *Snow* where fixed identities are subverted so that

one can unveil what is hidden. Here he echoes Wittgenstein's political philosophy of revealing the concrete functioning of power relations (129). Pamuk's political imagination draws parallels with Anderson's theory of imagined nation. According to Anderson even the myths and narratives are socially constructed to create an ideology of homogeneity in the name of national identity: "it [nation] is an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (6).

Pamuk while depicting the predicament of Turkey from the point of view of cultural conflicts which define the textscapes of his works, places the context of the Self too, which is caught up in the baffled state of the nation. In spaces of fragmented narratives, he transcends the binaries of conflicting contexts, to suggest that the conflict itself is the quest as it is the answer. Boundaries of Islamism and secularism transcend to define liberal secularism as ways and means of tolerance and endurance. The Self transcends its own limitations of time and space to journey into the Other until all cultures become essentially one or bear traces of each other in their infinite variety. The artistic pen and the writing pen transcend spaces and unite to produce textscapes larger than life and which scaffold the strongholds of humanity. Texts become representations of the many representations of Pamuk's imagination, his desire, his wish and his dream.

Pamuk's texts are evocative of Derrida who speaks of "the book" as "the infinite." "Between the too warm flesh of the literal event and the cold skin of the concept runs meaning. This is how it enters into the book. Everything enters into, transpires in the book. This is why the book is never finite. It always remains suffering and vigilant" (*Writing* 92). Ultimately Pamuk's texts become lived spaces, enlivened by relationships, histories, dreams, and memories. Imagination places

before the reader the absent texts so that the presence is imagined which itself is a representation of the past. Reminiscent of the Bakhtin order, Pamuk's characters dialogize situations so that in the polyphonic voices are heard the voices of the multitudes. The author resurrects himself from the failed texts, and his postcolonial representation echoes the Bhabhan sensibility of hybridity and mimicry. Pamuk's cultural synthesis is the opening of spaces to literary innovations to reintroduce secularism in alignment with Orientalism. His reimagination reduces the excesses to present in an absence the indeterminate Self. Transcending all cultural spaces, the Self is also the indeterminate Other constructed out of a mutual belonging opened up through writing.

In the context of the globalized world of today where power, politics and technology pervade every aspect of human relations, the paradox of the Self laments at the world torn apart by differences of politics, religion, language, gender, caste, colour and creed. It takes the writings of authors like Orhan Pamuk, who repeatedly reclaim the past, perhaps as nostalgia or as a warning, to call upon humanity to bring about a peaceful coexistence and to lead a life in all its beauteous joy and innocence. This study is ultimately an effort to get into the soul of the art of the novel which is the "history of human liberation." Pamuk believes that the involvement of art is an act of freeing oneself and he states: "By putting ourselves in another's shoes, by using our imagination to shed our identities, we are able to set ourselves free" (*Other Colors* 229).

# CHAPTER 2

## TRAVERSING CULTURAL FIXITIES AND IDENTITIES

Culture and ways of life are assumed to be transparent and interdependent. Every culture is unique and culture journeys through the complexities of different voices, tradition, history and memory and yet is defined and redefined in its representations by imagination which creatively addresses the varied, different cultures which are never in opposition to one another. Discourses on cultural imagination focus on dialogue in all cultural and historical directions in the role play of the Self and the Other, with the intent of understanding one better from the other's view point, so that cultural differences apart, mankind embraces each other in common humanity and well being. Narratives, traditions and memories are but tools for representing cultural imagination that redefines itself with each representation so that within linguistic spaces, cultures connect to feel, interpret and hold humanity. The journey of the Self is its search for itself, across all the multiplicities of cultural consciousness to arrive at reimagined sensibilities. It takes the works of authors like Pamuk to creatively address the Other with the intent of understanding the Self.

Bakhtin observes, "Discourse lives, as it were, on the boundary between its own context and another, alien, context" (*Dialogic* 284). In a novel or work of fiction the artist becomes the communicator, the texts become the space to dialogize with the Other and the process of reading or writing novels becomes the representation and exposure of varied cultures, a harmonious interlinking of which leads to a better understanding of humankind. Pamuk, through his novels, expresses the "desire to create the many possible types of heroes by overcoming all differences of culture, history, class, and gender—to transcend ourselves in order to see and discover the whole . . ." (*Naive* 71). Pamuk draws on his creativity to represent the cultural imagination so that in imagined and reimagined

spaces, the representations unravel the ambivalence that while cultures infinitely are different, men across the world need not be so. It requires dialogism to recognize the multiplicity of perspectives and voices, and thus narratives, tales and stories which are representations of expressions, serve to stand as symbolic spaces for culturally addressing the Other. One learns to communicate in spaces of objective perspectivity and effective actions because in the process of active dialogism and interaction, people can change to the extent that they recognize each other, understand and become equal and human.

Turkish national identity has been subjected to a critical cultural trajectory of ruptures and continuity where every aspect of cultural, political and artistic imaginations and tradition has undergone severe changes. Even as the writers of the post republican Turkish period like Tampinar, Orguz Atay, Yusuf Atligan and Yasar Kemal undertook the artists' responsibility of creating literary texts as open spaces of political, social and religious critique, Pamuk created a breakthrough in the Turkish literary scene with novels that questioned the Turkish identity, subverted truths, deconstructed national myths and parodied political coups. Even though Pamuk acknowledges the influence of the early Turkish writers, and even grounds his early novels in the customary Turkish (Republican) tradition of realist novels, he breaks free with his third novel, *The White Castle,* to focus on novels that could be termed metahistorical and metafictional. The Turkish modernisation movement of 1924 and the preceding coups had far reaching effects on the cultural imagination of Turkey and in addition to the feelings of loss and lament, the intermittent coups, especially the one in the 1980's, brought in alienation and fragmentation in the society and among the individuals. Pamuk's novel *The White Castle* which in every essence is epoch making in the Turkish literary scenario, is a literary deviation which probes into the problematic of the Self and the Other, East and West, and master and slave, to arrive at the

ambivalence that the journey to the Other is through the Self. Pamuk's literary revisions begin in the multilayered narrative of *The White Castle* where the cultural identity takes renewed shapes of imagination and the Ottoman Islamic past no longer becomes a mere shameful or dismissed past, but a tradition of value and longing and the "cultural capital in the present" (Goknar, *Orhan Pamuk,Secularism* 39). Cultural imagination makes Pamuk represent the past as one of continuity.

In the imagined spaces of narratives, the author creatively represents the Self in its multi-representations, the Other being one such representation. The creativity of imagination presupposes an inherent capacity to listen, understand and interpret the voice of the Other as having meaning. The artist, his Self or his imagination, creatively engages in a dialogue with the Other, and in intricate narrative labyrinths, traverses home journeying through the Other. Imagination thus foregrounds communication and invents language to make familiar the strangeness and uniqueness of the Other, and presents in many linguistic and artistic expressions the inescapable plurality of the world, and in the postmodern context, a plurality of imagination itself. The borders of political, artistic and cultural sensibilities are merged into one another, bringing forth renewed sensibilities. The artist in the process triggers the ontological enquiry where the question of the Self and identity gets addressed in the realms of cultural and political imaginations. The task becomes a shared one as those who are exposed to the same political, artistic and cultural sensibilities would articulate similar imaginings. As the culture of a country like Turkey that has been noted for its geographical position and political climate is often associated with the crisis of identity, Turkish identity invites critical representation in the imagination of the writers.

Pamuk makes his literary journey through the troubled cultural context of Turkey caught in the woes of modernisation and the memories of an Ottoman past. In the Turkish

cultural context, where the nation itself seems to have disowned its collective memory and cultural past, the questions of identity and the factors that go into the making of the Self or the being, are contested. The psychological ponderings of the postmodern nature apart, the ontological and epistemological queries are deepened in the Turkish backdrop where the Self gets deconstructed with the arising social and political situations.

In Turkey's past, in a flourishing Ottoman context the cosmopolitan Self was exposed to a homogeneous mixture of cultures varying from the Asian, European and the African; and the weakened Ottoman Empire later witnessed the uprising of various ethnic nationalist groups which left behind their cultural and social impact. A total change was precipitated by Ataturk's reforms by which every cultural and political identity including religion, dress, civil codes and alphabet, underwent changes and the capital city of Istanbul was left in ruins. The subsequent coups that occurred in the second half of the twentieth century and the effects of the Cold War resulted in the political, cultural and social situations weighing heavily on the identity of the nation and estranging it from the Self. The dream of inclusion into the European Union and the awe of the European Orientalist gaze made Turkey pale itself in comparison to the West. Apart from that Turkey also faced the effects of internal colonisation with Ataturk's modernisation reforms which regarded the Ottoman past as colonial. Ataturk's cultural revolution displaced many a native who had to begin learning a new alphabet and understand a new history. Pamuk's imaginative pursuits began with the recreation of the lost past to revised standards of literary modernity where transparent and transcendent spaces of discourse were opened, assimilating the old and the new, conquering the ruptures of history and cultural loss with the reimagination that his novels foregrounded for renewed cultural translations and discourses. "The important thing was not to create something, but to draw instead from the marvels created over thousands of years by the many

thousands of great minds who'd come before us, to change here and there and turn it into something new. . ." (*Black Book* 259).

The phenomenology of the Self as well as the question of the identity of the Self which has often been the ontological and epistemological enquiry of humans claims a rich and lengthy history that it may even encompass the wide panorama of our struggle and existence. The problems of being and non-being have been existential concerns and the dialogues and discourses on them date back even to the days of Socrates and Plato. Twentieth century discussions on the same shaped some theories in the fields of political, racial and sexual identity. Hegel, Heidegger, Sartre and others have contributed to giving different philosophical perspectives to it. Lacan's contribution to the understanding of the Other cannot be overlooked as it was he who explored it by decentering it, thus saving the discourse from running only into the streams of narcissism. The discussion on alterity or Otherness has ignited many contemporary theories that use the Other as half of a Self/Other dichotomy distinguishing one person from another. Master/slave, black /white, coloniser/colonised, Orient/Occident are some of the expressions discussed in this respect. Discourses on racial identity and feminist discourses discuss the racial Self and the woman as the Other. Even when the theme of most of Pamuk's works is the question of identity, he problematises the concept of identity and the Self instead of stressing the borders of differences. Instead of creating a solid and monolith identity of Istanbul as his precursors did, he deconstructs the monolith identity. Pamuk's re-reading of texts points to a blurring of borders with a demarcation from the original or ideal. There is a constant dialoging, representing, repeating and narrating which offers multi-perspectivity and meaning in dissemination. Pamuk, the postmodernist, through multiple layered fragmented narratives, represents and reinvents space and time to problematise and sensitise the perennial question of identity and Self thus communicating to his readers its

ambivalence and multi-perspectivity.

*The White Castle*, Pamuk's third novel and his first book to be translated to English, foregrounds Ottoman history in its interrogation of the national Self and society. "*The White Castle* transcends the social realism of the Turkish national tradition, establishes Pamuk as an 'intellectual' of cultural and political critique, and provides the first indication of his stature as an author of world literature" (Goknar, *Orhan Pamuk,Secularism* 96). In this novel, through the labyrinth of his fragmented narratives—the tale of Darvinoglu, the tale told by a Venetian/Turk and the tale as interpreted by Orhan—which form a text within a text and in its multifarious changes which offer multilayered meanings, Pamuk reinvents the Self and identity problematic, offering alternative views to history and conflicting binaries. Through non linear narratives indicating the impossibility or the ambivalence of identification, Pamuk does not give us merely alternatives but narrates the impossibility of fixities in history, culture, art and identity. Memory, both as a national and personal history, emerges as an important element where the past is an element that is constantly being rewritten. As Pamuk observes in the novel:

> Many men believe that no life is determined in advance, that all stories are essentially a chain of coincidences. And yet, even those who believe this come to the conclusion, when they look back, that events they once took for chance were really inevitable. (*White Castle* 5)

The novel, comprising a preface, the narrative and an afterword later published in *Other Colors: Essays and a Story*, begins with Faruk Darvinoglu, the historian turned librarian, narrating his discovery of a manuscript, the contents of which form the main body of the narrative and the preface. He explains how he came across the manuscript,

ostensibly the memoir of the Italian scholar, in a governor's "archive," amid piles of dusty "imperial decrees, title deeds, court registers and tax rolls," and how he decided to transcribe, translate and finally publish it. He professes his "distrust of history" and decides to "concentrate on the story for its own sake rather than on the manuscript's scientific, cultural, anthropological or 'historical' value" (*White Castle* 1).

The very opening of the novel strikes a chord of parody and satire as Pamuk introduces Darvinoglu as a historian who distrusts history. Professor Faruk Darvinoglu is a republican intellectual, a character from Pamuk's second novel *The Silent House,* who in the wake of the political coup of 1980, had lost his job and was reduced to serving at the forgotten Gezbe archive. *The White Castle* thus introduces him as a librarian in the Gezbe archive. Pamuk also presents a false preface in *The White Castle* as a critical comment on the preface as a literary device employed by the early Renaissance European authors whose works were given as models to the Turkish republican intellectuals and writers. Darvinoglu with his limited knowledge of the Ottoman script, adds his version to the translation again questioning the credibility of written and translated history. The narrative of the Turk and the Venetian, where Pamuk advances his literary experiments of rewriting history in a story, reads partly as a parody of Cervantes' *The Captive's Tale*.

The narrative of the Ottoman master Hoja and the Venetian slave, thus told, is set in seventeenth century Istanbul and in the narratorial venture, questions, repeats and problematises the question of identity and takes the reader through various dialogic levels of understanding, at the same time breaking down all his presuppositions. The narrative binds itself to the historical past and the literary texts connect one to the past. Pamuk writes in the "Afterword" to *The White Castle* published in *Other Colors*:

> That the East-West divide is one of the ideas cultures have used and will continue to use to classify and differentiate humanity is not, however, the subject of *The White Castle*. This divide is an illusion, but if it had not been made and remade with great enthusiasm over many centuries, my book would have lost much of the background color sustaining it. (252)

The narrative as told by the Venetian or at a later point of time as the reader is led to believe, by Hoja, begins with the incident of the Venetian captured and enslaved on a ship by the Turks. As the Venetian exhibits some knowledge of medicine, he is handed over as a slave to the Turk, Hoja. The Venetian and Hoja share an "uncanny resemblance" (*White Castle* 42) to each other while at the same time their knowledge, interests and pursuits are all in the East -West dichotomy. In an endless power game of struggle, conquest and acceptance, the duo becomes, to an extent, "cultural translators who convey the cultural memory of two disparate (European and Turkish) cosmopolitanisms to each other" (Goknar, *Orhan Pamuk, Secularism* 106). Hoja wants to learn much from the Venetian yet their desire to defy each other and control each other becomes a sort of battle for existence between them. In a love- hate, master-slave relationship, the two merge in and out of each other's personalities to create dialogue and construct stories, memories, dreams, treatises and inventions. They focus on the ideal, the unassailable Castle and invent a weapon to conquer it, but their quest itself is their means and end, their victory with the ideal remaining at the distance, an unrealised dream.

*The White Castle* presents itself as a narrative which is created in embedded worlds— the Ottoman world of Hoja and the slave, the republican world of Darvinoglu, and the present world of the narrator and the reader. While the different worlds of the

Ottoman past, the republican present, and the actual present of the reader and the narrator have their own centres, the different worlds also surround each other with equal intensity, shifting the focus from the narrative to the narrator and from the reader to the writer until what matters finally is the writing or the written which is a representation of fragmented memories which constitute the past, the present and the future. As much as the main narrative, even the dedication, preface, and the afterword, function as embedded worlds and levels of representation. Placed in the context of a narrative and a novel, *The White Castle* is primarily a self-reflexive meditation on the ambiguous nature of storytelling or historiography. The intertexts of literature and history, without any hierarchical supremacy, are provided in the novel and as Linda Hutcheon, the critic, observes, they "are both part of the signifying systems of our culture," and this gives them their value and meaning (*Poetics* 140).

*The White Castle* undertakes a cultural journey of the *I* in search of its Self. It is an imaginative journey because it sees the Self as different from the imagined Other, the Self is seen from a past imagined in the present, and it is a Self whose presence is an absent *I*. The Self could be itself or for that matter any other Self in the larger context of the human consciousness, as Saleem Sinai, the protagonist of Salman Rushdie'*s Midnight's Children* remarks: "I am the sum total of everything that went before me, of all I have been seen done, of everything done-to-me. I am everyone everything whose being-in-the-world affected was affected by mine" (383). Hoja, the Venetian, the historian, the narrator, and even the reader who follow the identity trajectory in *The White Castle* around the central probe *Why I am what I am*, might as well conclude with Pamuk that "men, in the four corners and seven climes of the world, all resembled one another . . . were identical with one another that they could take each other's place . . ." (*White Castle* 136). Pamuk's imaginative pen, in the guise of the

novelist, gives the power to "begin to test the lines that mark off that 'other' and in so doing alter the boundaries of our own identities" (*Other Colors* 228). Pamuk places his faith in the novelist's imagination of imagining himself as someone else. Yet to imagine oneself as someone else needs an understanding of the Self and the Other which again is to imagine the Other as Self. In this sense, Self itself is an imagination and the understanding of the Other is an understanding of the human Self with its innate and immanent potentialities.

The imagination of the reader too engages in a process similar to that of the writer in the literary process. More often in the postmodern construct where deconstruction is the form of construct, the reader recognizes that the novel along with its world is in the process of being and is unfinished, and in trying to come to terms with the uncertainties that seem to govern the world, takes an active part in the dialogic process that is central to the cultural practices and understanding. The authenticity of the novelist, according to Pamuk, "does depend on his ability to engage with the world in which he lives, it depends just as much on his ability to understand his own changing position in that world." There are no binaries of "an ideal reader unencumbered by social prohibitions and national myths, just as there no such thing as an ideal novelist." Pamuk contends that a novelist, "be he national or international . . . [writes,] first by imagining him into being, and then by writing books with him . . . [the reader] in mind" (*Other Colors 243*).

*The White Castle* is a novel which revolves around Pamuk's logic that, "[t]he central paradox of the art of the novel is the way the novelist strives to express his own personal worldview while also seeing the world through the eyes of others" (*Naive* 144). The quest for *Why I Am What I Am* takes the reader "to understand . . . and to believe simultaneously in contradictory views" and "to identify with those different

views without being unsettled, just as if they were our own" (174). Just as the childhood memories of the Venetian become those of Hoja, Pamuk believes that the reading of stories, novels and myths makes us understand the world we live in. Pamuk ensures the active participation of the reader by making him go through the hero's world which has a different culture and makes the reader realise what it is like to belong to the hero's world (*Other Colors* 232). The reader thus becomes, in the Kantian manner, autonomous, that is, free but responsibly aware of the cultural differences within and around leading to an understanding of the world he lives in a better way.

*The White Castle* is constructed as a metafictional reimagination based on the textual and material culture of Ottoman legacy as read from the archives of early modern Ottoman Istanbul and by addressing the problem of Self and identity, and returning to anecdotes of rewritten past, to express the ambivalence of the representations. In a framed metafictional narrative, *The White Castle* is essentially a reflection and representation of notions of history and translation and the oscillation between fact and fiction in literary and historical narratives. As Hutcheon observes: "That border between past event and present praxis is where historiographic metafiction self-consciously locates itself. . . . that past *was* real, but it *is* lost or at least displaced, only to be reinstated as the referent of language, the relic or trace of the real" (*Poetics 146*).

The ambiguous narrator in *The White Castle* who might be the Venetian slave or the Ottoman master or even a creation of Darvinoglu or Pamuk himself, writes down his story. Pamuk's writings have repeated this gesture of the author- writer or narrator engaged in the act of writing as a testimony to his conviction that writing alone breaks discursive and identity based confinements. *The White Castle* engages all the postmodern narrative strategies like multiperspectivity, doubles, synchronic narration,

the absent text, intertextuality, metafiction, metahistory, multiple genres and Sufi and Ottoman themes. The stories that the Venetian and Hoja tell about themselves indicate how identity is not a lost totality that needs to be restored but rather a representation, a story that is recreated with multiple fragments. Vexed with obvious similarity to each other and the question of identity, the duo, the Venetian and Hoja, decide to trace the past or the origin of the Self. In an attempt to go back to the past to know the present, the Venetian revisits his past—his childhood, his dreams and his home— and retells it, but with reinvention and specks of fiction. The past, which he labours to write down, is layered with imagination and the present. Just as Hoja reads it and gets inspired to write or even invent a past for himself, the imaginative process of reading novels takes a reader to reflect on his own memories, hopes and dreams as it is a "travel back and forth between the world in that novel and the world in which we still live" (*Other Colors* 232). It is an imaginary context where one frees oneself of one's own identity. By imagining them to be us and we to be them, there occurs an interplay of identities, memories and ideas, leading to a revelation that one's own history and culture reveal the core of the Other's culture.

Imagination relates to the space of the temporal synthesis of the past, present and future which forestalls any further synthesis. It is the space of representation, albeit an ambiguous one, where identity is considered because it is in a state of constant flux. Imagination, in order to relate to the space of meeting, weaves a narrative world, filled with dreams, memories and history. This fictive world is never a closed world but one that dynamically connects to possibilities and meanings, yet unexpressed. Imagination is a sketch of the horizon of objectivity from where one learns to communicate with the Other. By exploring into the Others' universe on the wings of imagination, one can distance oneself from one's own limiting familiar

horizons to look back at oneself and others with creative or renewed spaces of intelligibility. Pamuk elaborates in *Other Colors,* how careful reading of great novels enables us to understand the "unique lives" (230) of others and of their unique histories and cultures. We learn to see ourselves and the Other in the unlimited possibilities of an imaginative space, where there is reflection, communication and dialogue. *The White Castle* is this imaginative space of the artist which opens multivalent, inspiring and new critical spaces between cultural worlds. By redefining cultural horizons to confront identities as mutually transforming and inspiring, the aspiration for the ideal is subverted by imagining the ideal as the Self or the Other. The Venetian and Hoja translate themselves to the Other within their cultural spaces, through their interactions until they reach a point of time when they become so identical that tolerating each other and making sacrifices for the sake of the Other become a part of the innate will and the desire of the Self.

The space that evolves out as a discourse between the Venetian and the Turk gives forth many representations and as Hayden White asserts "every representation of the past has specifiable ideological implications" and every space and story has its own story to tell (*Tropics* 69). Pamuk's imagination, in *The White Castle ,* persuades the reader to imagine a Turkish historian in crisis in Darvinoglu who is disillusioned with his discipline which he feels distorts the possibility of truth. It is through Darvinoglu that the lost manuscript initially unfurls as a tale. It becomes an "inspired translation" and translates to the reader as the representative "voice from the Ottoman archive . . . of resistance, change, protest and politics" (Goknar, *Orhan Pamuk,Secularism* 92). The Venetian and the Turk, like Darvinoglu and Pamuk, are narrators and characters who, in the process of their cultural revolution, question their imposed or lost identities. Their questions lead to writing or rather the beginning of the rewriting of their past,that is, their memories and accounts of

their childhood. Their writings are attempts to provide themselves with a cultural past of continuity, free from the conflicting binaries of a cultural revolution and internal Orientalism. Their attempts fail but the absent texts, the gaps and the incompleteness become an account of hybrid imagination. The modern concept of looking at the past merely as embodiments of specific, social and cultural structures, and assigning the past a passive role is contested by the postmodern stance which believes in recognizing the past and relating to it, ironically.

Pamuk delves into the past and reimagines the present in the context of a cultural past that enhanced the lived world. The devices he uses to draw in the past are parody and irony and his purpose is to strengthen the present and perhaps the future in the wake of a forgotten past. As Linda Hutcheon observes: "To parody is not to destroy the past; in fact to parody is both to enshrine the past and to question it. And this, once again, is the postmodern paradox" (*Poetics* 126). The past thus intervenes in the transformation process of the present and the Turk and the Venetian merge into an indeterminate "Him"(132), while Pamuk experiments on the genre of the captive's tale, in defence of the fragmented past of Turkey's cultural transition. Pamuk revises the form of the European novels that had been handed over to the Turkish republic during its modernisation period by modelling his book on the classic work of the father of modern novel, Cervantes, and thus deconstructs the notion of the Western dominance of the East and the European early modern novels' portrayal of a Turk as an "Orientalized villain" (Hoeveler and Cass 126).

Pamuk's admiration for Cervantes is revealed when he declares: "Cervantes …I salute in the first and last sections of the book [*The White Castle*]" (*Other Colors* 250). Parodying *The Captive's Tale* of Cervantes in which Turks capture Europeans on a ship

and take them away as slaves, in *The White Castle* , Pamuk writes of the Turks capturing the Venetians but revises the tradition of Cervantes' tale of the Eastern conversion to Christianity, by blurring the borders of the Venetian- Hoja transformation. Instead of a compulsory conversion from one to the other, it becomes a mutual exchange of memories, dreams, inventions and finally identity itself, whereby it becomes hard to differentiate one from the other. Cultural imagination reaches its culmination when Pamuk places the reader in doubt in the final chapters as to who the master is and who the slave, and places the identity of the author of the manuscript in an enigma. Binaries of Self /Other, East /West, and master /slave thus become transcended in Darvinoglu's revision or recreation of a text which he retrieves from an archive, the archive being Pamuk's representation of Istanbul, the cultural capital of Turkey which was affected the worst in the republican modernisation movement and from the ruins of which any cultural past should begin, were it to be reimagined. He subverts the climax of *The Captive's Tale* which culminates in the Oriental conversion to Christianity, by portraying the Western slave as having undergone a cultural, national and religious transformation to a totally new identity, in his captive years, in the companionship of the Oriental. Rather than a conversion, a transformation or a mutual exchange is effected. In contrast to Don Quixote and Sancho Panza - the master and the slave in Cervantes' imagination, who are physically and temperamentally different, Hoja and the Venetian resemble each other and complement each other in their temperaments, aspirations and zeal for knowledge. Pamuk carefully places his narrative in the eventful and colourful period of the Ottoman rule in the second half of the seventeenth century, punctuating it with actual stories of the period, to inspire the readers' imagination.

As Hutcheon states: "Postmodern intertextuality is a formal manifestation of

both a desire to close the gap between past and present of the reader and a desire to rewrite the past in a new context." In keeping with the postmodern stance as theorized by Hutcheon, Pamuk here brings in striking "intertextual echoes, inscribing their powerful allusions and then subverting that power through irony" (*Poetics* 118). In the mock preface to the narrative, Pamuk ironically alludes to Darvinoglu's "archive" as "the dump" (*White Castle* 1). This reflects one of the drastic changes of the modernisation process in 1928, that is, the language reform by which all the Arabic and Persian letters in the Ottoman language were substituted with the Turkish script. Until 1927 only eleven percent of the Turkish were believed to be literate. With the new language reforms and the extended literacy programmes when the literacy rate was enhanced to eighty percent and above, the tragic part remained however that the written past and its language were lost forever, especially when Ataturk founded the Language Association with the assigned task of purging the Turkish language of all Arabic and Persian vocabulary. Thus the Arabic language was distanced from the Ottoman language and the new Turkish literature began only after 1930 (Mc Gaha 81). Pamuk's cultural reimagination thus begins from the archives where he tries to break down the mental silence by restoring the script to its language, and providing the readers an access to the cultural past of Turkey.

Darvinoglu steps into the work of translation but his limited knowledge of the Ottoman language produces in the bargain, a story not history. Pamuk ironically reflects on the Kemalist reforms whereby a whole language was wiped out overnight, leaving people at a loss even to read what was written on the tombstones. As Göknar writes: "Darvinoglu's act of 'inspired translation' connotes the horizon of nationalism as manifested in the alphabet reform of 1928/9 and the state-controlled language reforms of the twentieth century" (*Orhan Pamuk,Secularism* 101). In the garb of a

narrative lies a self reflexive metafictional writing on the nature of narrative and storytelling/historiography. The postmodern trait of mistrusting history and concentrating on the story for its own sake is reiterated in the act of Darvinoglu who is to transcribe and translate the manuscript, filling the gaps in his own manner and bringing out a historical artifact of *I*, the narrator.

In the preface we are told that Faruk Darvinoglu encounters the manuscript in an archive where all the documents are scattered around without any order or form regarding the content, date or author. He does not know what to do with it initially and so he re-reads the manuscript several times and starts writing an entry about the writer of the manuscript for the encyclopedia he works on. But he finds little evidence to the accuracy of the historical facts mentioned in the manuscript and the events rather acquire their significance as they are represented through the narrative. Thus history or truth is approached from a space where there is representation and dissemination. Darvinoglu, undaunted by these setbacks, furthers his literary pursuits but "gave up following possible leads and wrote the encyclopedia article solely on the basis of the story itself." He also takes liberty in the translation by a repeating or rewriting process and reinvents the original text. In fact he actually rewrites the manuscript to his imagination: " after reading a couple of sentences from the manuscript I kept on one table, I'd go to another table in the other room where I kept my papers and try to narrate in today's idiom the sense of what remained in my mind" (*White Castle* 3). Göknar interprets the act of Darvinoglu as a metaphor:

> [H]aving to shuttle between two desks in two separate rooms and record in the Turkish Latin alphabet only what is retained of the Ottoman-Arabic script is an apt metaphor to describe the unstable, in-between position of the nationalized body among other historical

texts. (“Orhan Pamuk” 35-36)

The narrator’s movement between the rooms to revise can be considered as an exemplification of the liminal identity. It is the in-between space which Pamuk reserves to overcome the binary concepts of identity and Self. It echoes the observations of Homi. K. Bhabha as he discusses liminality as one of the main concepts of postcolonial theoretical framework:

> Terms of cultural engagement, whether antagonistic or affiliative, are produced performatively. The representation of difference must not be hastily read as the reflection of *pre-given* ethnic or cultural traits set in the fixed tablet of tradition. The social articulation of difference, from the minority perspective, is a complex, on-going negotiation that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation. (*Location* 2*)*

Bhabha’s “cultural engagement” finds its expression in the modernisation reforms of Turkey. The transition period from Ottoman to Republic is complex and confusing as “cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation” demand negotiating and intervening spaces. “These ‘in-between’ spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood – singular or communal – that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself” (1-2). Pamuk makes use of this liminal space which is unstable and multilayered to conjure different levels of his narrations while addressing the perennial question of Self and identity.

Göknar has observed that Pamuk has never used the Ottoman past “as a repository of historical source texts, but rather as an intertextual model of literary form” (*Orhan Pamuk,Secularism* 99). In other words, Pamuk has employed the

Ottoman theme as an objective correlative to scrutinize "identity subversion or new understandings of selfhood" (Goknar,"Orhan Pamuk and the Ottoman" 37). Faruk Darvinoglu's translation of the manuscript confirms the impossibility of a full access to the text as well as the impossibility of a full access to the past. Though uncertainties challenge the truth of the book, it emphasizes that fiction underlies and is inevitable in all representations of history. Narratives produced through elements of fiction give meanings from different levels to the representation. Pamuk takes the readers to the point where truth, reality, identity and meanings are representations. The meaningful way to define Self or identity is through narratives produced with elements of fiction.

Stuart Hall, the cultural theorist, has remarked that even the process of identification is problematic and it changes continuously as we are represented:

> The very process of identification, through which we project ourselves into our cultural identities, has become more open-ended, variable, and problematic.
>
> This produces the post-modern subject, conceptualized as having no fixed, essential, or permanent identity. Identity becomes a "moveable feast": formed and transformed continuously in relation to the ways we are represented or addressed in the cultural systems which surround us. (*Modernity* 598)

The question or search for identity is problematised in the Venetian-Hoja relationship where though the characters bear an uncanny resemblance to each other, are in a constant state of change, trying to dominate one another at times to such an extent that their mutual dislike turns out to be the only point on which they do not disagree: "In those days it was perhaps only in this way we understood each other: each of us looked down on the other" (*White Castle* 15). The relationship of

the Venetian and Hoja, the slave and the master, becomes a dialogue in which the fixities of identities are questioned and a colonial discourse is narrated.

The stages through which the master and the slave transform themselves are similar to Homi K. Bhabha's depiction of the coloniser and the colonised in *The Location of Culture*. The conventional notions of the coloniser and the colonised are deconstructed and Bhabha makes it very clear that the colonised may take the subject position and the coloniser can become the object. He talks about the formation of hybridity and chances of negotiation:

> Hybridity is the sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal. . . . It unsettles the mimetic or narcissistic demands of colonial power but reimplicates its identifications in strategies of subversion that turn the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power. (112)

The Venetian, though a captive and for a period of time a privileged captive, is eventually given to Hoja as a slave after attempts to convert him to Islam fail. On their very first meeting, the Venetian is taken aback at his initial resemblance to Hoja. Though Hoja does not appear disturbed, he is on his guard and the two work together on mutual suspicion and yet in unison, getting the fireworks displayed. In spite of their many differences, they excel in their togetherness when working on different projects and very soon they start learning from each other. Yet the Venetian remains a Westerner in his outlook and Hoja an Easterner in his beliefs. They project all possible ways of differences between the East and the West, and the implications of the question *Why I am what I am* are not limited to Hoja but reflect one of Pamuk's main preoccupations, as well as that of Turkey's. It indicates the dissolving of the

conventional criteria such as nationality, proper name, physical appearance or professional skills, in determining identity. Here one witnesses the change of positions as problematised by Bhabha. Spaces of hybridity are negotiated where the subject and object positions are interchanged.

The slave is commissioned to teach the master everything that was taught in his country and gradually the teaching process starts changing and they begin, "to search together, discover together, progress together" (*White Castle* 23). They share an uncommon rapport in pursuing and sharing knowledge and at the end of six months they are no longer companions who studied and progressed together but part of a process of mutual learning and sharing. "It was he who came up with ideas and I would only remind him of certain details to help him along or review what he already knew" (23-24). Their topics of study range over everything under the sun including the tide, moon and stars until the idea dawns on the pasha to commission the *twins* to make a weapon—a weapon that would make the world prison for their enemies.

Hoja relentless in his pursuit of knowledge gathers all that is possible from the Venetian and is eager to spread his knowledge to his fellow beings who unfortunately he found were "fools" because "they asked first what was the good of the thing they were about to learn"(35). He nurtures the dream of educating them which ends in frustration. That they simply were not interested or could not understand, leads Hoja to the perplexing question: "Who can know why a man is the way he is anyway?" (37). The question *Why I am What I am* is equally vexing to both the Turk and the Venetian. The answer to this query is traced from mirrors to memories to writing. The Venetian knows that the answer to this is complementary and alone one will never find the answer. "I wanted to tell him to his face that without me he could not think at all, but I didn't dare" (50). Wanting to prove his point, the Venetian starts writing about his past in his quest to

discover who he is. Rewriting the past or history is but fictive as the Venetian revives and reviews, "sometimes painfully, sometimes happily, a host of memories. . . ." and finally gets inspired enough to write as his imagination leads him to. Under the curious scrutiny of Hoja, his accounts are sometimes factual, sometimes fictitious, and every time Hoja says that he is not satisfied, the Venetian would "go on to another memory, to another tale . . . [he'd] decided on beforehand to write down" (51).

As Linda Hutcheon observes, " Postmodern fiction suggests that to re-write or to re-present the past in fiction and in history is, in both cases, to open it up to the present, to prevent it from being conclusive and teleological" (*Poetics* 110). To relate this with *The White Castle*, in Hoja or the Venetian one does not, "find a subject confident of his . . . ability to know the past with any certainty. This is not a transcending of history, but a problematised inscribing of subjectivity into history" (117-18). The Venetian's intention when he starts writing is to find an answer to the question *Why I am What I am*. He decides to begin with memories of his childhood. His writing is his initial step to establish his identity as different from that of Hoja. He begins with recounting pleasant childhood memories. He refers to a story with fictional elements establishing a parallel between creating a story and defining what he is. The Venetian by defining himself through a representation in a story made up of his childhood memories represents himself as an Other. Thus memory becomes history as narrated in fragments. The Venetian gives an account of his childhood, especially his follies, fears, and dreams, and inspired by this, Hoja starts an account of his childhood memories. More than trying to find out what he is, Hoja wants to know "what it was that truly set him apart from his fools" (*White Castle* 52). It becomes a laborious self-humiliating process for him to revisit his past. He commands his slave to write tales that would excite him enough to account as his own, and the Venetian starts the task of

using his imagination to write Hoja's past. The "process of writing and repetition," the initial steps of Bhabha's discourse of the "desire to emerge as 'authentic', through mimicry" (*Location* 88), continues until Hoja realises that self criticism is the beginning of getting to know the Self. In the moments of self doubt and contempt that Hoja earned for himself, the Venetian— the Western slave, plays a victory game. "I felt that if I could make Hoja doubt himself just a little more, if I could read a few of those confessions he carefully kept from me and subtly humiliate him, then he would be the slave and sinner of the house, not I" (*White Castle 59*).

Just as Darvinoglu rewrites the manuscript, the Venetian writes Hoja's past, and Hoja inspired by the Venetian's tale, attempts to write his past perhaps fictionalising the whole. Quoting Foucault to exemplify the postmodern stance on "shattering" stable voices, paradoxically, to assert selfhood, Hutcheon says,

> [P]ostmodernism establishes, differentiates, and then disperses stable narrative voices (and bodies) that use memory to try to make sense of the past. It both installs and then subverts traditional concepts of subjectivity; it both asserts and is capable of shattering "the unity of man's being through which it was thought that he could extend his sovereignty to the events of the past." (*Poetics* 118)

The process of writing enables the Venetian to create, recreate, and fictionalize a past which is later recollected and imitated by Hoja. Thus a plethora of experiences as memory, mostly manipulated, would be regarded as history.

Drawn into the process of writing, the duo, in a perfect setting of a mirror image where they sit in binary positions, try to write down what they are. Their decision to write reflects a desire to reach an origin, an excavation of personal histories, a story to establish their legitimate identity. The personal and the accidental histories of the two

selves create a parallel with the historical setting of the narrative. Pamuk proposes through the fragmented, individual and multiple narratives of the Venetian and Hoja, which are as fictitious as real, that history too holds multi-perspectivity. History, just like the stories of the Venetian and Hoja, acquires its significance through its different representations. Pamuk, through his fictional characters, offers an alternative history that is composed of individual narratives. These fragmented narratives that constitute personal history revel in the explicit possibility of fiction. Memories, dreams and falsehoods are the ingredients at all levels— a telling reference to the Kemalist reforms which subsequently set up Turkish Language Association (1932) and the Turkish History Society (1931) to provide authenticity to the newly introduced Turkish language and the Westernised reforms. The Language Association was aimed to create a linguistic theory claiming the origin of Turkish words, and the History Society sought to create a convincing narrative that constituted the new nation with a genesis story. To quote Goknar: "Darvinoglu's work in the archive . . . is a critical commentary on the excesses of the cultural revolution, it makes the Ottoman context legible again, and it unearths a buried Ottoman Islamic cosmopolitan culture centered in Istanbul . . ." (*Orhan Pamuk,Secularism* 101).

Similar to the Venetian's version, Hoja reconstructs a new narrative as his life story using the memories that figure in the Venetian's childhood anecdotes. Hoja, imitating the coloniser's stance on mimicry, composes a story that is similar yet distinct from the Venetian's life story. This mimicry is a "representation of a difference . . . the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which 'appropriates' the Other. . . ." (Bhabha, *Location* 86). Thus the attempt of the colonised trying to be authentic through mimicry becomes ironic. As is the case with all representations, the repetition of the elements that initially appeared as belonging to the

Venetian, does not result in the reproduction of the same, but in the emergence of a new narrative that is similar yet different. Hoja, in trying to define himself literally, tries to be an Other by adopting the Venetian's identity. Although their physical appearances facilitate this exchange, it is with the story that he constructs that Hoja can obtain a representation of his Self as an Other. Thus history and fiction are an inextricable bringing together of different fragments. The question then from a postmodernist view is, as Linda Hutcheon poses: "To what, though, does the very language of historiographic metafiction refer? To a world of history or one of fiction?" *(Poetics* 118). History and fiction are not diametrically opposite when it comes to narrating the experiences that construct them. With the interpretative tool of imagination which functions both at the literary and dialogic levels where similarities and differences are eloquently articulated, history merges within it the element of fiction and vice versa.

As the narrative progresses, the writing process is disrupted with the plague outbreak which operates at another level where Hoja tries to restore the metaphysical binaries in order to define himself in opposition to the Venetian. The way the duo, with their East-West binaries, approach the plague shows their difference, the Otherness. The fear that they experience with the plague outbreak consolidates the Self/Other relationship of the Venetian and Hoja. Once again Pamuk refers to it in the *Afterword* to *The White Castle*, published in *Other Colors*: "That the plague might be used as a litmus test for the East-West divide is another old idea. . . .'The plague merely kills a Turk, while a Frank suffers the greater torment of fearing death!'" (252). Gradually even as the Venetian and Hoja closely resemble each other, the various recollections, dreams, attitudes and images reflect the distinctive Otherness. Thus identification is represented in ambivalences, where even as one is represented as another, the differences make them the Other. The Venetian and the Turk and their relationship go

through a series of transformation and identities from master/ slave to twin, brother and Self, until they resemble each other—a slow transition where thoughts, recollections, fantasy, dreams and knowledge lead one to realise the Other. It is a journey of power and fear, the roles of the weak and the ruler changing positions, but once the cultural transformation is made in a healthy exchange, when the Self acknowledges and accepts the Other in all its Otherness, the journey takes on the path of absolute love and supreme sacrifice.

Pamuk takes the duo through the mirror image scene, where again it becomes hard to distinguish one from the Other. In the postmodern context the mirror image holds immense possibilities of meanings and in Pamuk's writings, the mirror holds a very significant place. "Squeezing the nape of my neck from both sides with his fingers, he pulled me towards him. 'Come, let us look in the mirror together.' I looked, and under the raw light of the lamp saw once more how much we resembled one another". The Venetian recalls how initially he wished to be like Hoja when he had first seen him but now looking at the mirror image thinks that "he too must be someone like me." He exclaims: "The two of us were one person!"(*White Castle* 71*).* This exclamation is Pamuk's representation of the Self as always already multiple and fragmented. It also is the central plotline of the narrative. When the colonised adapts and imitates the language and gesture of the coloniser, the difference that marks the coloniser from the colonised is gone. Bhabha calls it mimicry, a situation "*that is almost the same, but not quite*. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an *ambivalence*; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference" (*Location* 86).

Even as the Venetian tries to make a movement in his mirror image as if to "shake off" (*White Castle* 72) the truth of the similarity, Hoja too moves, imitating his

gesture: "without disturbing the symmetry. . . . He also imitated my look, the attitude of my head, he mimicked my terror I could not endure to see in the mirror but from which, transfixed by fear, I could not tear my eyes away; then he was gleeful like a child who teases a friend by mimicking his words and movements" (71). Looking at the mirror image, Hoja realises that the Venetian fears that he too will be infested with the plague. Hoja plays upon this fear which is obvious at such close proximity and says, "Now I am like you,'. . . 'I know your fear. I have become you! "( 72). The mirror not only gives a space for the Other to reflect and gaze back but it also gives room for aggressivity and narcissism. Bhabha refers to it while discussing the "formative mirror phase" following the "Lacanian schema of the Imaginary. . . when it [the subject] assumes a *discrete* image which allows it to postulate a series of equivalences, samenesses, identities, between the objects of the surrounding world." Bhabha says that the positioning is problematic as the image with which the subject identifies, "is simultaneously alienating and hence potentially confrontational". This results in two forms of identification—narcissism and aggressivity. The doubling gives room for perceiving the ambivalence of colonial knowledge. Thus we can see how a coloniser always aggressively states his superiority to the colonised and at the same time expresses the narcissistic anxiety about his own identity. "Like the mirror phase 'the fullness' of the stereotype— its image as identity—is always threatened by 'lack'" (*Location* 77).

Bhabha's notions of anxiety are echoed in the fears of the Venetian. At first the Venetian becomes a bit frightened by this reality of a similarity. It seemed like everything about him would be imitated by Hoja, and he regrets that he had revealed everything about him to Hoja. So when Hoja expresses his wish to exchange identities, he is really scared that his identity would get lost. "He declared he [Hoja] could now say things he couldn't before because he had not been able to

see them, but . . . the words were the same, and so were the objects" (*White Castle* 72). Bhabha says that people have to confront their "uncanny doubles" (*Location* 194) as the colonised imitates the coloniser identically. Differences give the marks of identity for a coloniser to unleash his power. However, when the colonised imbibes and imitates the coloniser, especially making use of the coloniser's language and other embodiments, the coloniser confronts the problem of "double" when he develops a narcissistic anxiety.

The Venetian frantically observes that Hoja intended to take his place and he even hates the similarity of the image he sees in the mirror. In the Bhabhan discourse the uncanniness is inherent in colonial relationships, where the notions of culture and identity are both static and open. The Venetian dreads:

> He was going to take my place, I his . . . and my nerves grew taut as I heard him say that I would then make a freed man of him: he spoke exultantly of what he would do when he returned to my country in my place. I was terrified to realize he remembered everything I had told him about my childhood and youth . . . and from these details had constructed an odd and fantastical land to his own taste. (*White Castle* 72-73)

Fearful of the plague and even more of the overpowering influence that Hoja was having over him, the Venetian feels that his life is going out of his control. He has the uncanny feeling of it "being dragged elsewhere in his hands, and I felt there was nothing for me to do but passively watch what happened to me from the outside, as if I were dreaming" (73). The Venetian flees from the place and manages to escape to an island. Though a part of him rejoiced, the other half desperately longed for Hoja to come and take him away and at last when Hoja does come, the Venetian is only too

happy to revert to his slavehood stage. “Perhaps I had secretly been waiting for this, for I immediately retreated into the guilty feelings of a lazy slave, a humble, bowing servant. While I gathered my things together, instead of hating Hoja I reviled myself” (77).

During the festivities organised to celebrate the end of the plague, while watching Hoja from a distance, the Venetian sees his Self represented as Hoja, in their physical similarity. While Hoja stands closer to the Sultan, the Venetian watches from a distance, seeing not Hoja but himself: “the feeling I had was quite different: I should be by his side, I was Hoja’s very self! I had become separated from my real self and was seeing myself from the outside . . . I only wanted . . . to rejoin him as soon as I could” (86). Devoid of all fear for his master, the Venetian eventually comes to love him and loving him, the Venetian comes to loving himself. He had the belief that his “personality had split itself off” from him and “united with Hoja’s and vice versa…” (102). In fact they have become the imaginary creature in the making of an imaginary weapon to destroy the imaginary castle. Hoja confesses that the weapon had its genesis in the moment of truth when the duo had shared their image in front of the mirror and understood they were one.

Hoja and the Venetian, in their spaces of cultural exchanges and identities, grow out of their critically modernist spaces and colonial gazes, to the transcendental spaces of change and beyond. They transcend their cultural differences and write texts ranging from science, dreams, memories and confessions to treatises and scientific experiments– learning, imitating and partially sharing each other’s history. They are two people with two cultures, which are again representations of other cultures, and it can be seen that it is not to the borders of defining spaces but to the blurring of spaces and the in-between spaces that cultural imagination reaches out. Gradually, in the

course of the novel, Hoja is appointed the imperial astrologer but he becomes obsessed with science and this new weapon they are making. Strangely enough the Venetian is not enthusiastic about it and senses its doom, the reason being that though the Venetian has taught Hoja lessons in science and about weapons, he now looks at Hoja's proposed weapon with fear. Even though everyone including the Sultan believes that it is his brain behind it, the Venetian knows that he is nowhere near it. As Hoja becomes more interested in his work, the Venetian misses the togetherness of their early days. Moreover, he feels so much at home in Istanbul that his previous memories of his home, his mother, and his fiancé are all faded. "I no longer felt any enthusiasm for the details of that previous life, unless for the sake of one or two books I'd once planned to write about the Turks and my years of slavery" (*White Castle* 90).

During the years the duo is commissioned to make the secret weapon the narrator realises that they have become irreconcilably the same. Eventually the Venetian impersonates Hoja in his official designation of the imperial astrologer and for four years Hoja works on the weapon. He starts devoting all his time to his passion of creating the weapon while the Venetian takes his place at the Royal court. As the narrative progresses, the sedentary life that the Venetian leads, taking part in all the festivities and celebrations like marriages, circumcision ceremonies, holiday festivities and the like, causes a change in his physical appearance until the physical similarity between the Venetian and Hoja disappears, but by then their identities have totally changed. During the four years while the Venetian has impersonated Hoja, nobody has actually seen the real Hoja as he has been confined to his workplace inventing the weapon. The Venetian, who leads a public life, is believed to be Hoja. The Venetian, it is believed, is busy with making the weapon. With the passage of time Hoja is the one who first takes note of the changing appearance of the Venetian. When Hoja remarks

about the change in appearance to the Venetian, saying that he "had much changed, that I had finally become a completely different person," (111) the Venetian gets upset and disturbed. He had become so much a part of being Hoja that it becomes a comment on his identity:

> My stomach burned, I began to sweat; I wanted to make a stand against him, . . . tell him that I was as I had always been, that we were alike, . . . but he was right; my eye was caught by the portrait of myself . . . I had changed: I'd grown fat . . . my movements slow; worse, my face was completely different . . . (*White Castle* 111)

The Venetian- Hoja relationship takes the turn which Bhaba states is like "imitating an original in such a way that the priority of the original is not reinforced but by the very fact that it can be simulated, copied, transferred, transformed, made into a simulacrum and so on: the 'original' is never finished or complete in itself " (Rutherford, "Third" 210).

In the final chapters of the book, the weapon fails and Hoja knows that the Venetian will be taken to task for it. Hoja who by now is as much the Venetian, decides to be the Venetian and for the last time gathers as much information as he can about the Venetian, from him. But the Venetian has become so much a part of Hoja and Istanbul that "these stories" of his homeland "have seemed to me mere reflections of my fantasies, not the truth, but then I believed them . . ." (*White Castle* 129). In the quiet of the night, fed with romantic tales of his imaginary land, Hoja sets out wearing the ring and medallion the Venetian gives him. The Venetian is only too happy to stay back and take over as Hoja. Yet even after Hoja walks away into the night wearing the Venetian's clothes and the Venetian goes back to sleep in Hoja's bed, in the final chapter of the narrative, the identity of the narrating *I* remains ambiguous. As he

addresses the reader the narrator once again underlines the fact that he is also the writer of the story: “I have now come to the end of my book. Perhaps discerning readers, deciding my story was actually finished long ago, have already tossed it aside” (131). He also goes on to say that: “For the sake of my readers in that terrible world to come, I did all I could to make both myself and Him, whom I could not separate from myself, come alive in the story” (140).

Earlier in the narrative it has been said that the Sultan was the only one who could differentiate between the Venetian and Hoja. Unlike their nationality, name or physical appearances that fail to differentiate the Venetian from Hoja, their speech and behaviour allow the Sultan to identify the Venetian from Hoja. The narrator who remains an enigma as the final chapters suggest, could be Hoja from the clues derived by his addressing the reader using the phrases that have been associated with him. The dilemma of the reader but continues when the narrator details to the Sultan, things which only the Venetian could have known. But they have exchanged almost everything between them that there is no telling the difference. Representations multiply as much as ambivalences and definite answers are impossible. Even the narrator seems to have difficulty in understanding whether the Sultan is addressing him as the Venetian or as Hoja. The anecdotes that the Sultan tells in remembrance of the old days do not specifically refer to the Venetian or Hoja but rather evoke the “imaginary creature” (*White Castle* 102) that emerged earlier in the narrative as a combination of the Venetian and Hoja. The reader’s final guess about the narrator, whether it is the Venetian or Hoja, also ends in the picture of an imaginary creature.

In the “Afterword,” Orhan Pamuk offers another ambiguity to the narrator of the story:

> I am still not sure if it was the Italian slave or the Ottoman master

> who wrote the manuscript of *The White Castle*. When writing it, I decided to use the closeness I felt to Faruk, the historian in *The Silent House*, to safeguard against certain technical problems . . . At this point, I should like to point out to readers who imagine that I, like Faruk, worked in the archives, rummaging among the shelves of dusty manuscripts, that I am unwilling to take responsibility for Faruk's actions. (*Other Colors* 250)

The identity of the writer of the manuscript is determined by its representation in the narrative that leads to a definition that is only possible as ambivalence. The "unfinalizability" (Bakhtin *Problems* 63) is the only definition that can be offered, as it is in that ambivalent space that identity can be defined as ever changing. As Goknar observes, "the narrator of *The White Castle* cannot adopt a singular 'self' to the exclusion of a denigrated 'other'" (*Orhan Pamuk,Secularism* 125).

The intermediate switching of roles between Hoja and the slave free both the characters from their socio-religious backgrounds and gives them a transcendental space, at the same time freeing them from any imposed identity. Yet in the postmodern manner, Pamuk shifts the focus from both of them to destabilize even the identity of the author - narrator until the reader is no longer sure if Hoja or the Venetian or if the author were the narrator. The two cultures of the East and West dialogue on religion, science, history, and identity and once there is an exchange of the cultures, there is a transformation of the two to the extent that it becomes difficult to identify one from the other. The mirror gaze is a metaphor for this cultural exchange, where the Self sees itself as an Other in its reflection.

Pamuk's postmodern stance contests his own construct that the archive, the preface and the translation, as they figure in *The White Castle*, all indicate the

impossibility of a singular and original history. The same perspective has been propounded by Bhabha when he says:

> So it follows that no culture is full unto itself, no culture is plainly plenitudinous, not only because there are other cultures which contradict its authority, but also because its own symbol-forming activity, its own interpellation in the process of representation, language, signification and meaning-making always underscores the claim to an originary, holistic, organic identity. (Rutherford,"Third" 210 )

In the broader cultural context of Turkey which has a cosmopolitan past embracing conflicting cultures, Pamuk returns to the space of time called the past to show how the only possible way to produce meaning is through representation where the Self, the original text or truth will be repeated, reinvented as an Other thus creating an ambivalent space where meaning will be possible as representation. As already noted, *The White Castle* may be regarded as a colonial discourse and an epistemological focus of culture is enunciated while problematising the identities of the slave and the master. According to Bhabha it is a "process by which objectified others may be turned into subjects of their history and experience" (*Location* 178). He further says that it is a "more dialogic process that attempts to track displacements and realignments that are the effects of cultural antagonisms and articulations—subverting the rationale of the hegemonic moment and relocating alternative, hybrid sites of cultural negotiation" (177-78).

Pamuk's narration and the subject of identity and Self in *The White Castle* can be elucidated using Homi Bhabha's theories on postcolonialism where Bhabha interrelates the ideas of hybridity, ambivalence and liminality in formulating "the Third Space of enunciation":

> The intervention of the Third Space of enunciation, which makes the structure of meaning and reference an ambivalent process, destroys this mirror of representation in which cultural knowledge is customarily revealed as an integrated, open, expanding code. Such an intervention quite properly challenges our sense of the historical identity of culture as a homogenizing, unifying force, authenticated by the originary Past, kept alive in the national tradition of the People. (*Location* 37)

This third space dislocates everything including the dictated histories and the conformist approaches of authority. In *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha regards the text as the third space and the author as a negotiator within the scripted world. Thus the worlds of Darvinoglu, the Venetian and Hoja, as narrated, become the third spaces against the backdrop of Turkey where the writer Pamuk becomes the negotiator who undergoes the agonistic process of negotiation transforming the floating identities, past-present conflict and troubled memories into a space of both confrontation and negotiation.

The White Castle, which also gives the narrative its title, is a highly symbolic construction. The White Castle is the Doppio Castle which the Sultan aims to conquer during his military operations in the Balkans. The castle, a symbol for an ideal definition of identity is described as an unattainable dream:

> It was at the top of a high hill, its towers streaming with flags were caught by the faint red glow of the setting sun, and it was white; purest white and beautiful. I didn't know why I thought that one could see such a beautiful and unattainable thing only in a dream. (*White Castle* 128)

While the ideal castle could suggest the possible answer to the question of a definite

Self, devoid of all cultural clashes, the narrative leads to the realisation that it is not the ideal which matters but the journey to the ideal.

*The White Castle,* typical of Pamuk's novels, speaks of the presence of a "Him," be it a sacred presence, the author presence or a new cultural presence. There are different narrator figures for the three parts of the novel and there is a final emergence of a "Him," which could be a mediating voice or the solution to the phenomenology of an identity in conflict with its own duality. The duality that starts in the public life spreads on to the cultural life and gets settled in the individual and reflects as a duality in the intellectual who is caught in a nation which doesn't acknowledge its own national identity, cultural history and collective memory. Literature itself becomes a mediator for cultural exchange. Imagination transcends delimiting spaces to bring forth the narrator and the "Him," and uses the medium of the written text to reach out to the question of the material and the spiritual quest for a lost identity, deconstructing all stabilized notions of East- West dichotomy and finally even the narrative and the author, in the liberation of the text or the written word. In a conflicting process of disagreement and compromise, Pamuk creates the narrator who appears in all the subsequent novels to redeem and perhaps to deliver. The writing subject or the narrator often is Pamuk's imaginative tool to transcend the postmodern deconstruction. His works become a space for contestation, for the social, cultural and political ideologies of the past and present times.

Pamuk's cultural evolution places him back to the archive which he describes in *The Silent House* as the place where "as I read, I can almost conjure the people who wrote the pages, had them written, and whose lives in some capacity are bound to them" (83). Through Darvinoglu, Pamuk attempts to deconstruct history as the former reveals that the work of a historian is that of a story teller and he finds that he is

tempted often to tell the truth. Identity, especially the search for the Self in the flux of cultural upheaval, relies much on history and truth, and yet all that is history need not be the truth as the archive of Darvinoglu says. The story created is only a representation just as history too is an endless representation and imaginative reinvention. Fiction and history are expressions of ideological insights represented as cultural signs and Pamuk's reimagination of the Turkish cultural identity freed from the violence of a colonial tag and over-idealisation of the republican intellectual movement finds expressions in ambivalence and multiplicity of representations. Darvinoglu produces out of his archive a story, not history. His act of translation introduces the early Ottoman cosmopolitan past to the present, challenging a republican historiography of new modernity. Hoja and the Venetian, by an indeterminate switching of roles which transgresses all barriers of form, content and language, liberate themselves both from the confines of the cultural Self and Pamuk's literary Self, leaving the reader to question, to rethink of each in the light of the other.

Postmodern texts have invariably focused on the complex and multilayered meaning of the cultural Self emerging out of the socio cultural contexts, and literary theories, especially of the globalization era, focus on the Self- Other, slave-master relationship with the shadows of the postcolonial perspectives looming over. In other words, deconstruction is the soul of the postmodern writing. Linda Hutcheon in her *Poetics of Postmodernism* posits that the postmodern novel "begins by creating and centering a world …and then contesting it," (*Poetics* 180) contrary to the Bakthinian stance of beginning "by presuming a verbal and semantic decentering of the ideological world"(qtd. in Hutcheon, *Poetics* 180). She asserts:

> Historiographic metafictions . . . make their readers *question* their own (and by implication others') interpretations. . . . Postmodern fiction . . .

> often tends to use its political commitment in conjunction with both distancing irony . . . and technical innovation, in order both to illustrate and to incarnate its teachings" *(Poetics* 180-81).

According to Hutcheon, both the reader and the writer foreground postmodern fiction by stressing the context in which it is produced.

Postmodern novels "re-contextualize both the production and reception processes and the text itself within an entire communication situation which includes the social, ideological, historical, and aesthetic contexts in which those processes and that product exist" (40). The postmodern image prompts a reflex mirror to see the Self as the Other and the slave as the master of the Self, and also prompts a view from the Other's end. Imagination plays a credible role in giving shape to the cultural *I* which emerges as distinct from the Other but equally ambivalent in its identity as it is conditioned by the history of the past and the ontological present in its making. Imagination conditions one's attitudes, perceptions and anticipations in such a way that by addressing the Other in a cordial cultural space, one learns to address, understand and accept the Other.

Dichotomies have been used down the history of mankind for power and segregation. Edward Said in his path breaking text *Orientalism* questions: "Can one divide human reality, as indeed human reality seems to be genuinely divided, into clearly different cultures, histories, traditions, societies, even races, and survive the consequences humanly?"(45). Mankind has witnessed the dominance of the western world over the eastern—physically, politically and later even intellectually—for more than 2000 years. This has implicitly biased the cultural concept to the extent that all what is written and said about East /Oriental is more often a biased Western outlook. Pamuk, the postmodernist, offers only questions, never final answers. Focusing on differences,

Pamuk, the polyphonic artist, gives free voice to his heroes, and thus he enables keeping open the meaning of culture, its products and symbols. Pamuk through his imaginative dialogues, narratives and creativity inspires unfinalised and innumerable meanings in cultural exchange, whereby he hopes for the world to be a better place to live in. Cultural exercises define one's identity by placing oneself in the background of one's homeland while also creatively taking one to the cultural backgrounds of the others. The journey of the Self thus becomes a constant creative process of a dialogue between the Self and the Other.

To conclude, the chapter traverses through the multilayered fragmented narratives of Pamuk's postmodern imagination to deconstruct all cultural fixities so that the journey that the Self makes is in a perfect and unique understanding with its Other, assimilating all its differences as well as its togetherness. Pamuk's cultural imagination envisages imagined and reimagined spaces where dialogism in the form of narratives, tales and stories become tools that serve to recognize the multiplicity of perspectives and voices whereby the Self culturally addresses the Other. Texts become transcending spaces reverberating the artists' imagination and responsibility, exploring and probing political, social and religious stances. Similar to *The White Castle* which transgresses its narrative conventions establishing Pamuk's success to write himself out of the Republican historiographic mode, *My Name is Red* matches all denominations to surpass as a text, which in its artistic imagination deconstructs all the possible fixities of the binaries to celebrate art, which in itself is an expression of humanity, as the next chapter discusses.

# CHAPTER 3

## VIGNETTES OF ARTISTIC IMAGINATION

Imagination in its artistic sense projects as a mental action in the form of unlimited possibilities of human experience. Works of art are the consensus of indefinite perceptual viewpoints that are affected by historical and socio-economic contexts and reflect the individual as much as the community in the spatiotemporal sense. Human experiences are an intricate mix of life and art, and invariably it is form that distinguishes the works of art from life. Art and form are interrelated, and fictional forms are rooted in the materials of life intrinsically, and imagination, a tool in the art of fiction, becomes life itself. The genre of the novel offers verbal space for the perspectives of consciousness to merge with the "artistic visualization" (Bakhtin, *Problems* 36) of the world. The artistic imagination aspires for the Dostoevskian capacity "for seeing everything in coexistence and interaction . . ." (30).

Orhan Pamuk, who once aspired to be an artist himself, gives a free rein to mixing the visual and the verbal in *My Name is Red*. Celebrating his artistic imagination, he adopts the Dostoevskian stance of artistic thinking to portray the dialogically intersecting consciousness whereby he broadens the realms of "artistic visualization" permitting glimpses at the human being from divergent angles of view. Pamuk innovates brilliantly with the generic variety of polyphony in the novel to speak of art and artists, the search for style and identity, and the stance of his beloved Turkey. The polyphonic artistic thinking capacitates a reaching out to unimaginable borders pertaining to the "*thinking human consciousness*" in relation to *"the dialogic sphere in which this consciousness exists*," to create a tangible work of art (*Problems* 271). Pamuk advances his experiments in Turkish literary modernity and his postmodern outlook leads him

again to the Ottoman archives from where he lays open the exquisite canvas of the Ottoman art of painting through which he weaves an intricate tale mixing the themes of romance, murder, mystery and history in *My Name is Red* which the contemporary world acknowledges as one of his greatest works. The novel redefines his representations of the binaries of East/West and Pamuk, the artist, draws from different levels of perspectivity. He employs heteroglossia and polyphony to achieve the dialogic interaction that the multiple voices of thought express. Pamuk shares the critical notions of Bakhtin who believes that "the novel is the characteristic text of a particular stage in the history of consciousness not because it marks the self's discovery of itself, but because it manifests the self's discovery of the other" (Holquist 72).

Authentic artistic imagination that makes new demands on aesthetic thought unfurls as a multi-perspective narrative in *My Name is Red* where Pamuk takes a closer look at the Self from the artistic perspective which finds expression in writing. Shekure, Pamuk's representation of female agency in *My Name is Red* and one of his finest female characters ever, observes, " with one eye on the life within the book and one eye on the life outside, I, too, long to speak with you who are observing me from who knows which distant time and place"*(My Name* 51). In Shekure's glance, Pamuk seems to reiterate his view that "[i]f you pay close attention, the people in miniatures are at once looking into the world of the painting and also looking at the eye observing them—in other words, at the painter or the person viewing the painting"(*Other Colors* 267). In the larger artistic canvas of imagination and the novel as a genre it becomes the master Dostoevskian stroke as explained by Bakhtin. The "artistic characterization" of the narrators does not mean a "fixed image" or a "specific existence" as in a portraiture, "but the *sum total of his consciousness and self-consciousness,* ultimately *the hero's final word on himself and on his world*" (*Problems* 48).

Moving on the praxis that artistic imagination is all about dialoguing with the Self and the consciousness of the Self with the larger human consciousness, the process of narrativisation is one of the central forms of human comprehension. As observed by Hayden White, "narrative might well be considered a solution to a problem of general human concern, namely, the problem of how to translate knowing into telling . . ." (*Content* 1). Moreover, communication and dialoguing can give new meaning to existing ones and broaden cultural horizons to wider outlook and political understanding. Cultures can be artistically and imaginatively dialogued to open spaces of renewed interaction in narrativisation where with an imagination that is artistic and cultural, dialogues can be facilitated, the difference between the one and the other can be creatively represented, and even without assimilating or merging, new symbolic spaces can be created. These spaces can be enriched, incorporating understanding and love for the one and the other, like the Turk and Hoja in *The White Castle.*

Artistic imagination is an evolution or a method more than just content. Such an understanding of artistic imagination relies on the assumption that image is an emerging meaning. It is a capacity, a dynamics and a power to extend or import meaning. Aesthetic or literary forms are invariably the endless creations of dialogised interaction of different voices. In *My Name is Red* Pamuk effects a virtual painting in words, replete with the artists' antagonism and temptations and the contrasting shades of the past/present, East/West, traditional/modern, secular/sacred dichotomy in the Turkish scenario. Pamuk, empowered by the historical and cultural legacies of Turkey, consciously or rather deliberately, places the schisms on an aesthetic sketch of the postmodern view. As he reaches out to the international realm, bridging the contesting barriers in content and form, his imagination extends the purview of postmodernism to

communicate across the intangible borders of human existence and identity, uniting binaries leading to a beautiful configuration of form, content and meaning.

Pamuk's imagination which reaches out to human consciousness across generations and centuries, reimagines the cultural past of art and culture, presenting it for the future. "In *My Name is Red*, the Ottoman cultural archive is a source of literary reimagination that becomes a commentary on the modern present" (Goknar, *Orhan Pamuk, Secularism* 135). The extent of Pamuk's imagination and his notion of a text find echoes in Barthes' formulation that "[t]he Text is plural" ("From Work" 159), leading to signifiers which allude to other signifiers and other texts in succession. This results in providing ample opportunity for the readers of *My Name is Red* to take up the task of imagining and finding the signification for the numerous signifiers mentioned in the text. It rather becomes a play, and the charm of the game that gives forth the pleasure in gaming is the realisation that the text is plural in meaning. A wide panorama that consists of other texts is reflected, echoed, and paralleled in the text. In *My Name is Red*, texts from history and tales and parables from the Ottoman past and Pamuk's personal history merge in and out of the tale told. The imagination of the artist in *My Name is Red* provokes the reader to "[t]ry to discover who . . . [he is] from . . . [his] choice of words and colors . . ." (20). The artistic imagination unfolds to embrace, as Bakhtin observes about Dostoevsky's novels, " not a multitude of characters and fates in a single objective world, illuminated by a single authorial consciousness; rather a *plurality of consciousnesses*, *with equal rights and each with its own world,*[which] combine but are not merged in the unity of the event" (*Problems* 6). Narrators from different perspectives speak their part of the tale in the novel which unfurls before the reader as a painting in words.

Pamuk's questions of Self and identity and the ambiguity of representation find expression in *My Name is Red*, in the query: "Does a miniaturist, ought a miniaturist have his own personal style? A use of color, a voice all his own?" (20) The cultural quest in *The White Castle—Why I am What I am*— extends its meaning to his individual style, opinion and artistic taste which find expression in a novel which itself is a miniature painting in its picturesque details. *My Name is Red* comes across as a beautiful painting, with the artistic imagination extended to its widest possibilities that, "[i]f, however, one paid very close attention to the secret symmetry of the colors, which the miniaturist could only convey with total resignation to his art … the careful observer would immediately see that the secret behind these illustrations is that they're created by love itself." The artist embraces the world with its innumerable shades and hues, and holds it so closely to his expressive self that ". . . well-being flooded the world in the very same manner" (*My Name* 179).

*My Name is Red* which tells its tale from multiple perspectives, prompts the reader to return again and again to the narrators who range from the corpse to the dog to the tree to the murderer and characters like Black, Shekure, Esther and Enishte. Though the characters are created by the author, their intentions, follies and thoughts are voiced not by the author but by the characters themselves and as the tale gets told, imagination gets revived in the reader and its ambivalence of representation multiplies in its perspectivity. As Pamuk says,

> I return to your paintings again and again to hear that whisper, and each time, I realize with a smile that the meaning has changed, and how shall I put it, I begin to read the painting anew. When these layers of meaning are taken together, a depth emerges that surpasses even the perspectivism of the European masters. (204)

*My Name is Red* is an aesthetic expression of the Bakhtinian concept of heteroglossia, where "[t]he novel orchestrates all its themes . . . by means of the social diversity of speech types . . . and . . . the differing individual voices . . ." organised artistically (*Dialogic* 263). The heteroglot novel, according to Bakhtin, is characterized by

> [t]he social and historical voices populating language, all its words and all its forms, which provide language with its particular concrete conceptualizations . . . organized in the novel into a structured stylistic system that expresses the differentiated socio-ideological position of the author amid the heteroglossia of his epoch. (*Dialogic* 300)

Capturing the artistic sensibilities of the characters, which are animate and inanimate, the narrators in person dialogise their dilemma at the epistemological, ontological, narrative, discursive, linguistic and interpersonal levels in which they exist. All these voices are embedded in the larger canvas of young Orhan who "[f]or the sake of a delightful and convincing story, there isn't a lie . . .[he] wouldn't deign to tell "(*My Name* 503).

Pamuk links *My Name is Red* with the poet Nizami Ganjavi's rendition of the Shirin and Husrev story from the twelfth century. *My Name is Red* is traditionally bound to the source texts of the past for an intertext but the representations of the source texts are artistically interlinked to its imaginative interpretations that the tales become the background of romance, murder and mystery. This intertextual enterprise takes us to Derrida's conception of deconstruction where a text is not restricted by a book's "margins". It cannot be restricted as it "overruns" and carries "traces" of other texts. It is, as Derrida asserts, "no longer a finished corpus of writing, some content enclosed in a book or its margins, but a differential network, a fabric of traces referring

endlessly to something other than itself, to other differential traces. Thus the text overruns all the limits assigned to it so far. . .” (“Living On” 84). Pamuk observes that “the highest achievement of a novelist, as a creator and an artist, is the ability to construct the form of a novel as an enigma—a puzzle whose solution reveals the novel’s center” (*Naive* 170). *My Name is Red*, with its multiperspectivity, creates a different centre with each reading.

Pamuk, the deliberate postmodernist, clarifies his standpoint when he claims: “As we move through the landscape of the novel, and as we read other literary novels, we come to feel the center vividly by believing in and by identifying with contradictory voices, thoughts, and states of mind” (*Naive* 176). The paradoxical centre here is this lack of centre itself which makes the reader go through the totality of each narrator, as if it is his own. The reader becomes the text as much as the narrator and gets into the intricacies of each conflict, emerging the wiser of the perspectives, towards a fresher and broader outlook on culture, art and humanity. This is the power of imagination as manifest in writing/art. This is the phenomenology adopted by the artist Pamuk who delves into the deep forgotten archives of rich Ottoman splendour in search of its buried priceless miniatures and masterpieces resplendent with human and cultural values. In the background of a confused lost modernity, he retrieves them and with his novelistic imagination restores them, shedding excesses of imitation and intimidating elements, whereby cultural differences are transcended by discourses and dialogues to render treasured manuscripts that foster humanity and love across nations and generations, for posterity.

Pamuk’s reimagination of the Ottoman legacy in the ordered world represented by art becomes masterstrokes in *My Name is Red* where discourses between the visual, vocal and verbal artistic forms of expression are embraced in one final manuscript of a

text which speaks of an incomplete manuscript, the Sultan's book. Pamuk's imagination invokes two distinct traditional cultures of painting, the Eastern art of miniature and the Western art of portraiture and he explores the representation of Self/Other, East/West, and secular/sacred in the framework of the tensions evolved in the conflict between the two perspectives and styles. The interchange of word for image and text for miniature is done in an artistic manner that the whole book reads as a painting in colours that reaches out to the reader's mindscape. It pervades into the senses as the colour red in *My Name is Red* where red is the name for every fluid process of representation– be it imagination, artistic expression, divinity, and even murder and violence. As Red says, "[v]erily and truly I've been everywhere and I am everywhere" (*My Name* 224). "Life begins with and returns to me," (226) and "command[s] the world to 'Be'!"(228).

Drawing on the stylistic parallels between miniature painting and the art of portraiture, Pamuk creates multiple layers of meaning in distinct modes of representation,

> since representation can never fully coincide with what it represents or capture an entity in its entirety (since it can never be the same thing that it represents), it can only signal its reference in some form of doubling – like a mirror image, which is both identical and non identical with what it reflects (Seyhan, *Tales* 190).

*My Name is Red* indicates how all representations inevitably contain the possibility of formal conventions and how all that have been conventionally defined as binaries are problematised through the shadowy space that emerges through the variety of narrating voices. "The power of a novel's center ultimately resides not in what it is, but in our search for it as readers . . . Both the center and the meaning of the novel change from one reader to the next" (*Naive* 176). In *My Name is Red*, the art of classic miniature

depicts aesthetic figures with variety, but impersonally. A miniature painting does not stand by itself but only as an illustration to support the text, and without individual characters or expressions. This was art as the Islam culture permitted. Miniatures were allowed as decorations to the text and subordinated to it. The theory applied to miniature painting within Islamic art was that it should only complement the text. "If there's something within the text that our intellect and imagination are at pains to conjure, the illustration comes at once to our aid. The images are the story's blossoming in color. But painting without its accompanying story is an impossibility" (*My Name* 30).

As decreed by the norms of Islamic art, miniature paintings represent themselves in seeing the world through Allah's perspective. The artist, by accepting Allah as the Omnipotent, represents his paintings from the elevated level of God's perspective and depicts ideal images, perfected over years of painstaking drawings and repetitions, leaving no trace of personal identity or style, because " painting is the act of seeking out Allah's memories and seeing the world as He sees the world" (96). The artists painstakingly engage in the art of representation, and by the time they perfect a work they become blind. This blindness is welcomed, as it is believed that Allah's vision of the earthly realm, " could only be attained through recollection after blindness descended, only after a lifetime of hard work and only after the miniaturist's eyes tired and he had expended himself " (97).

The Italian art of portraiture, on the other hand, in tune with the Renaissance and the spirit of freedom, advocates artistic autonomy and celebrates individual style and perspectivity. Thus, paintings are not depicted to illustrate or to support a text; they are independent works of art. Style, which is considered a flaw by the miniaturist, becomes a distinct mark of individuality here, as portraits depict a person as "a unique, special and particular human being" (206). "They don't paint the world as seen from the

balcony of a minaret . . . but as they are actually seen by the naked eye . . .” (205-06). They don’t need “an accompanying tale” to “complete” and “embellish” but can stand for themselves, unlike the miniature paintings which always come as part of a tale. Hence it is with awe that Enishte Effente, on viewing a portrait remarks: “As I regarded the work, I slowly sensed that the underlying tale was the picture itself. The painting wasn’t the extension of a story at all, it was something in its own right” (31). To ponder on what makes the two schools, the Eastern art of miniatures and the Western art of portraitures, differ makes one arrive at the most crucial and hence indispensable point—the notion of the artist’s presence. Style, the mark of the artist’s identity that makes the artist outstanding in the Western school of painting, is considered a flaw among the miniaturists. Enishte Effendi, the master miniaturist in *My Name is Red*, obsessed with the self portrait and trying to see what makes it different from the Eastern way of painting, finally states that “[t]hey depict what the eye sees just as the eye sees it. Indeed, they paint what they see, whereas we paint what we look at” (206).

The central focus of the novel—the artist’s style and what style is—moves to its ambivalence as Pamuk, by detailing the stylistic and theoretical details of both the Eastern and Western styles of painting, leaves the reader to imagine alternative definitions of identity and style, at the same time leading him to contemplate that these two styles coexist in a blurring of borders. Pamuk’s attempt is to highlight the futility of a distinct binary while drawing infinitesimal details into the art of miniature which itself is multivalent in its representation. As Enishte Effendi remarks, “‘Nothing is pure’ . . . whenever a masterpiece is made . . . I can be certain of the following: Two styles heretofore never brought together have come together to create something new and wondrous” (194). Similar to a miniature painting where detailing is done in the minutest manner, the characters in *My Name is Red* unravel miniature stories, and the

perspectives from different narrators repeat the overall structure of the narrative to reinvent it in each chapter. Repetition is Pamuk's postmodern device to show that the presence of meaning can only be produced through representation. This is precisely what the miniaturists do, that is, make copies of a copy. But just as how a singular definition of Self is impossible, each copy or representation remains different.

Pamuk's artistic imagination embraces the form and content of *My Name is Red* as a miniature painting with microscopic narratives narrated from the narrator's perspective, while making it an intrinsic part of the larger canvas of the whole plot. The fragments speak in colours, objects, animals and people. The art of writing becomes as aesthetic as a beautiful miniature painting in Pamuk's imagination. Pamuk's imagination reaches beyond the boundaries of miniature and portraiture art and in an interview given to Knopf he comments on the "dilemma" of the "traditional Islamic painter" who is trained to "seeing the world through God's eyes" and from a high elevated angle as if from the "mind's eye." He can never perceive the Western ways of art which sees the world through the eyes of an individual person. One sees things in a "totality" while the other almost sees from a singular point of view but Pamuk, justifying his story *My Name is Red,* says:

> I tried to tell my story in the manner of these Persian masters. These two distinctive ways of seeing the world and narrating stories are of course related to our cultures, histories, and what is now popularly called identities. How much are they in conflict? In my novel they even kill each other because of this conflict between east and west. But, of course, the reader, I hope, realizes that I do not believe in this conflict. All good art comes from mixing things from different roots and cultures, and I hope *My Name is Red* illustrates just that. (Pamuk, Conversation)

*My Name is Red* has been conceived by Pamuk to take place when Sultan Murat III was the ruler of the Ottoman Empire during the latter part of the sixteenth century. The Sultan's interest in miniatures and arts has assigned him a place in history as a patron of arts. The influence of Venetian art in which portraits celebrated individual identity was gaining popularity in the Ottoman period and the reign of Sultan Murat III, the period in which the novel is set, witnessed the obvious changes. It is no coincidence then that *My Name is Red* begins with death, the death of the miniaturist signifying the death of the brilliant tradition of miniature art. "I am nothing but a corpse now, a body at the bottom of a well," (3) begins the novel, the narrator being the corpse of Elegant addressing the reader, taking him into confidence, striking an indisputable relation between the reader and the different narrators of each chapter. The lament is the impending death of miniature art, when the corpse says, "I've died, but . . . I haven't ceased to be" (4). When the story gets unfurled, we understand that Elegant Effendi has been assigned a mission along with three other miniature artists to give illustrations to a manuscript that is considered controversial and hence is of a secret nature. The most intriguing nature of the stated commission is that the work is allocated by Sultan Murat III –the Ottoman ruler of the sixteenth century. Elegant's corpse warns the readers of an "appalling conspiracy against our religion, our traditions and the way we see the world" (6). It urges the reader to "[o]pen [their] eyes" and "see" (6).

Gathering from the narrators' account, with each chapter being narrated by different voices, the reader is led to the plot of the novel which in brief tells or rather paints the mystery behind the murders—the murders of two miniaturists, Elegant and the master miniaturist Enishte, belonging to the court of the Ottoman ruler Sultan Murat. These two miniaturists have taken up the secret work of commissioning the book for the Sultan, supposed to contain representation along the Western lines of portraiture,

including a portrait of the Sultan himself. The Sultan's book threatens to change Islamic art not only by making illustrations in the Western style of portraiture but also by awakening both the secret wish of Islamic artists to distinguish themselves as individuals and the desire of every person to see his or her image immortalized in art. The book is a secret, and the four miniaturists, Elegant, Olive, Stork and Butterfly, busy with their individual miniature depictions, are hardly aware of the overall layout of the book, though a bit suspicious about the radically non-traditional nature of Enishte's commission. The book is the Sultan's dream of releasing a manuscript commemorating the glory of his rule on the occasion of the anniversary celebrations of the first Islamic millennium. The blasphemous nature of the book lies in the fact that the paintings it is to contain are commissioned along the Western lines of portraiture considered sacrilegious in Islamic terms as they are a digression from Allah's perspective of totality. The book's transgression of sacredness lies in its depiction of objects as they appeared to the eye rather than to the mind, and in containing the life-like portrait of the Sultan himself.

The Ottoman cultural archive becomes the artist's foreground and background, where his imagination projects its literary expressions on the panoramic canvas of the modern present. Goknar states that Pamuk synchronises the Ottoman past with the modern present by making use of narrative devices which make his characters placed in the sixteenth century, aware of the modern day reader and the contemporary elements. The synchronization is also made by interweaving Pamuk's personal elements into the Ottoman novel dated in the past (*Orhan Pamuk,Secularism* 135). The narrators are characters who "are on the threshold of two worlds represented by two distinct historical periods: their own Ottoman Islamic era and the reader's modernity" (136). The plot centring the murder and the investigation of the murders lead to tales and parables on the culture and history of miniature painting and is a visual walk down the ancient Ottoman

archives of art and tradition. The powerful love story of Black and Shekure and the cultural constraints of the era on women, which fashion Shekure and her decisions, are individual miniature sketches which skilfully blend into the larger canvas of the artists' central conflict—the East or the West. Each narration and narrator convinces the reader to arrive at his own conclusions without the author compelling him to form points of view.

The novel spans nine days in Istanbul during the winter of 1591 after Black is summoned by his uncle Enishte Effendi to work on the secret book commissioned by the Sultan. Black, who is assigned to write the manuscript and is returning to Istanbul after a twelve-year exile, "is to a degree modeled on Hüsrev" (*Other Colors* 265), a character from Ottoman myths whom most of the miniaturists had as their model. He is lured back to his hometown by passionate thoughts of his childhood love, Shekure, and more than his uncle's summons, the ardent desire to meet his beloved hastens him back to Istanbul. Black arrives in Istanbul after the murder of the miniaturist Elegant but it almost coincides with the murder of his uncle Enishte Effendi, and he finds that he has to deal with the murders of both the miniaturist and his uncle. Pamuk has categorically stated that he identifies himself with Black, "whose thoughts, constitution, and temperament are close to my own and who carries a number of my sorrows and uncertainties." Pamuk also writes about the minute detailing he does to his literary works as an artist would do to his paintings: "I pay most attention to the shadowy patches and moments of fragility in my books, as miniaturists do in their paintings, and in much the same way I want readers to notice where I am troubled and sorrowful" (*Other Colors* 268).

To a postmodern study, the art of miniature constitutes the main focus even as history gets questioned. Pamuk understands the new sense of history as the relative factor that is affected by power and politics. Though Pamuk broadens the ambiguity of

styles in painting, he uses the same styles used in miniature painting for the artistic expansion of his imagination in literary terms, broadening its scope, meaning and the ambivalence of its representation. He tells the "underlying" tale of *My Name is Red* as a visual text—the images, colours and style predominating his conviction that "[t]ime doesn't flow if you don't dream" (*My Name* 466). Though as he looks at the past from a nostalgic point, Pamuk decides to move on, understanding and accepting the cultural differences, and in the Turkish modern context, even being proud of the rich legacy of the Ottoman past. The paradox manifested in the postmodern notion of the presence of the past shows that it can be regarded as a critical reflection of the artistic and the cultural, problematised in the present.

Postmodern fiction models history as a realistic pole of representation and problematises it to question its relation and relevance to reality with paradoxical combinations including self-reflexivity. The very sense of history gets textualised and narrativised, and history works as intertext when Pamuk presents Sultan Murat III and Master Osman as historical characters textualised:

> The reign of Ottoman Sultan Murat III, (during whose rule the events of our novel take place) . . . witnessed a series of struggles between 1578 - 90 known as the Ottoman-Safavid wars. He was the Ottoman sultan most interested in miniatures and books, and he had the *Book of Skills*, *the Book of Festivities* and the *Book of Victories* produced in Istanbul. The most prominent Ottoman miniaturists, including Osman the Miniaturist (Master Osman) and his disciples, contributed to them. (*My Name* 507-08)

Pamuk, in *Other Colours,* also writes about the miniaturist Zeytin (Velican or Olive) based on a real life miniaturist in the Sultan's court (267). Sultan Murat III's grand

deeds were recorded in history but it was also believed that he had military agreements with the West to hold him in power. The Sultan's greed for power made him secretly commission the illustration of a book in Venetian Style so that he could impress the Westerners and save his throne. It was meant not only as "an olive branch extended to the Venetians, but also to avoid aggravating workshop jealousies" (*My Name* 134).

The postmodern establishes an intricate relationship with fiction and history based on mutual interaction and suggestion. As Hutcheon states: " [H]istoriographic metafictions situate themselves within historical discourse, while refusing to surrender their autonomy as fiction . . . the intertexts of history and fiction take on parallel status in the parodic reworking of the textual past of both the 'world' and literature" (*Poetics* 124). The artistic standpoints of the Western tradition of painting and the Eastern or the Islamic tradition of painting, place a totally different emphasis on the Self of the artist. While the former wishes the artist to be his Self, the latter expects the opposite and asks the artist not to be his Self. In the Western tradition the stamp of the artist is left deliberately and undeniably on the work he creates; he needs to mark the work with his singular identity as opposed to the miniaturist who needs to remain anonymous, eliminating all traces of personal style. This again leads to the question, what is Self ? In the murderer Olive, whose identity Pamuk keeps a puzzle almost to the end of the novel, the question of the Self, the identity, becomes a major conflict between the temptation to draw in the Western style and the loyalty to the Eastern, leading him to commit his act twice. Eventually when he tries to make his self-portrait, he fails miserably, because he is caught in the confines of his own style and can never bring himself to do justice to a portrait in the Western style. Examining the self-portrait which the murderer finally attempts but which pushes him further into his identity crisis, he exclaims, "[I]t made me appear more profound, complicated and mysterious than I actually was" (*My Name* 485).

The murderer disheartened with his attempt at imitating Western art reflects, “Imitating the Frankish masters without having attained their expertise makes a miniaturist even more of a slave” (486).

The world of the miniaturists was also on the verge of destruction, as Pamuk mentions in the final chapter, with the workshops disbanded “with the ascension of Sultan Mehmed, who turned his back entirely on all artistry” (500). The sense of loss was felt, as Pamuk writes: “Thus withered the red rose of the joy of painting and illumination that had bloomed for a century in Istanbul, nurtured by inspiration from the lands of Persia.” The question of style which caused dissension between “the old masters of Herat and the Frankish masters” ceased forever, unresolved, “[f]or painting itself was abandoned; artists painted neither like Easterners nor Westerners.” The miniaturists seemed to quietly accept the situation though “with humble grief and resignation” (501). However, to a sincere artist, this abandoning of the traditional way of painting was heartbreaking. It was akin to tearing himself away from his past, his roots, and his culture. Pamuk dramatises this world of the miniaturists caught between the clash of Eastern and Western ideologies of Self and style. The trauma of this conflict even leads the murderer to kill as he could not integrate the East and the West or choose one above the other. The search here is for the identity of Turkey which still needs to be defined. The murderer queries, “Were you able to determine who I am from the way I sketched a horse?” The conflict within is, “Am I an artist who would suppress the masterpieces I was capable of in order to fit the style of the workshop or an artist who would one day triumphantly depict the horse deep within himself?” (339). The murderer is haunted by thoughts of whether he ought to surrender his styles to the Western thought or remain the proud independent self he is, competing with himself, with his own unmatched skills.

The representation of style, pertaining to the question of individual style as represented by the miniaturists and the Venetians as a contest of authority, individuality and self, is problematic. It is problematised to the extent that dualities are focused, widened and then subverted in the larger context of a symbolic structure. Pamuk writes, "If you ask me, *My Name Is Red* at its deepest level is about the fear of being forgotten, the fear of art being lost" (*Other Colors* 269). He details how for about two centuries and a half, under the Persian influence, since the time of Tamburlaine "the Ottomans painted, for better or worse." The miniaturists' works were greatly admired by the Shahs but as Islamic art forbade independent illustrations, their works were confined to selected circles. But the history of Eastern art and the glorious tradition of miniature art were "cruelly" changed with the invasion of the Western form of portraiture that had an immediate appeal and freedom from religion, resulting in the miniaturists and their art being wiped out. Though Pamuk takes an impartial stand in the novel, he laments "the sorrow and tragedy of this loss, this erasure" and places *My Name is Red* also as a record of "the sorrow and pain of lost history" (270).

In the post modern context the identity of the narrative self is ceaselessly reinterpreted by imagination. Pamuk incorporates the stylistic features of the miniature paintings into the narrative and in an aesthetic way draws the similarity between the two art forms of representation, painting and novel. In the painting of the novel he portrays an Other, but in words, effecting reproduction of another art form bringing out the similar in the dissimilar. Employing the techniques of postmodern fiction when narrating a significant happening in the plot, like the murder of Elegant Effendi, Pamuk implies that art can be represented in different ways and it also gives the reader a chance to overview the society in which the miniature artists of the Ottoman times in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries lived and how their works reflected the culture and history of

the times.

Torn between the dualities of style, the Eastern art of miniature and the Western art of portraiture, the murderer adopts the dual stance of a murderer and a miniaturist while addressing the reader. He feels that his physical self is divided into two, "just like those figures whose head and hands are drawn and painted by one master while their bodies and clothes are depicted by another." He is a "God-fearing man" to whom becoming "a murderer" is difficult to "adjust." He constantly fights an internal battle with his other self, and when he speaks as a murderer uses the "derisive and devious second voice," different from the one he uses in his "regular life" (*My Name* 119). "*The double-voiced discourse*" is stated in Bakhtin's critical theory as: "*another's speech in another's language*, serving to express authorial intentions but in a refracted way. . . . It serves two speakers at the same time and expresses simultaneously two different intentions: the direct intention . . . and the refracted intention . . ." (*Dialogic* 324). The "double-voiced discourse" of the murderer enables Pamuk to express the "direct intention" of the murderer as well as his own "refracted intention."

Being a miniaturist basically, the murderer believes that "style, or for that matter, anything that serves to distinguish one artist from another, is a flaw — not individual character, as some arrogantly claim" (*My Name* 119). Even as he professes that he has no personal or distinctive style or imperfection in his creativity to betray his hidden personality, it is ironic that he kills in his quest for this style. The murderer as well as the reader is left to serious pondering over whether the murderer kills for defending his art or for the freedom he lacks in executing his art. Even when he makes the attempt to murder Enishte, his master, he could not resist asking his master whether the latter credited him with a style. He is pleased and even proud when his master answers, "Believe me, none of the Venetian masters have your poetic sensibility, your conviction,

your sensitivity, the purity and brightness of your colors, yet their paintings are more compelling because they more closely resemble life itself" (205). The dilemma of the artist had earlier prompted him to kill the miniaturist Elegant who he believed was on a false propaganda regarding the Sultan's book which he and the fellow artists were so painstakingly working upon and which he knew his master Enishte idealized. He believed that Elegant had betrayed them and he has told his master: "By slandering you, your book and us, Elegant Effendi was planning to set Nusret Hoja of Erzurum's men upon us. He was convinced that we'd fallen sway to the Devil. He'd begun spreading such rumors, trying to incite the other miniaturists working on your book to rebel against you" (196). The Nusret Hoja and his men apparently are believers who support fundamentalism and hence oppose the invasion of Western styles and thoughts. In the final moments of his confrontation with his master, the murderer realises that he has killed Elegant for nothing, for when he takes a look at the final picture he painfully realises that Elegant, Nusret Hoja and his men have been right and that the pictures are blasphemous. In utter shame and bewilderment he laments, "Enishte desecrates everything we believe in. What he's doing is no longer an insult to religion, it's pure blasphemy" (148).

The murderer is the embodiment of the conflict that pervades Istanbul's artistic community. He is also the embodiment of the split Self which seeks the Other. He is the Self, constantly in dialogue with himself and the world consciousness. He is one of the brilliant miniaturists, trained so thoroughly that the old schools of painting are second nature to him but at the same time fascinated, strangely but naturally, with the Western ways of painting, especially self-portraitures. He is described as having the most powerful pen and a talent that "could create a picture that would force the most devout man to renounce his faith . . . [and] could also bring the most hopeless, unrepentant

unbeliever to Allah's path" (204). He is also a bundle of contradictions and complexities, the perennial artist, "prey to jealousy, jubilation, hope, anger, and agitation about how people might respond. . . " (*Other Colors* 269), unsure of himself and eager to be praised for his style. In fact, he is also desperate to immortalise himself, both with an individual style and by becoming the central figure in what should have been the Sultan's portrait. He cannot be satisfied within the confines of traditional Islamic art but he is also not able to master the art of the Franks. His dearest wish, to be remembered and praised as an individual artist, can never be achieved in his own tradition because of its inimical attitude towards glorifying the individual. It can also never be achieved in the Western ways of art because of his own imperfect mastery of the Western art of portraiture. In the broader context, the murderer's conflict is that of Turkey's very own. The Ottoman tradition and the Western ways are at loggerheads causing such anguish in the everyday life of a Turk that he is confused within and outside.

The murderer is torn between the desire for freedom in the use of his artistic imagination and the lure of the mysterious charm of the Western art of portraiture. Being a genuine miniaturist, he cannot bear to see his art destroyed by the infidels, much as he wants to have his style and signature commemorated. He kills twice for art's sake— one in defence and the other for freedom, and yet he is not able to escape from the labyrinth of his confusions and finally ends as a corpse "endless[ly] waiting . . . to quit" (*My Name* 494). Pamuk, describing the death of the murderer, remarks that his corpse could finally "[f]rom the muddy ground upon which my head had fallen . . . neither see my murderer nor my satchel full of gold pieces and pictures, which I still wanted to cling to tightly." Even when death overtakes him, the process is reminiscent of the artist (Venetian) "viewing" from the ground level, instead of the miniaturist from the "mind's eye," with Allah's vision. He says, "What I saw from ground level filled my thoughts:

The road inclining slightly upward, the wall, the arch, the roof of the workshop, the sky . . . this is how the picture receded" (493). It was like observing a picture, staring at it so long that it becomes a part of memory and stretches into timelessness. Memory, blindness and time, the key terms with reference to miniature illustrations which Pamuk details in *My Name is Red,* thus become immortalised with the artist bringing into memory the timelessness of the scene of his death when he achieves the moment of darkness or blindness — eternal blindness being a genuine miniaturist's infinite desire.

The miniature tradition shares the belief that God's vision can only be manifested through the memory of a blind miniaturist who has the idea of God's all encompassing view central in his thoughts. Hence when miniaturists illustrate, they try to depict God's view and every illustration is a depiction from memory. The Western artists of portraiture and many an untalented miniaturist imitate this process of drawing from memory. "First, the illustrator looks at the horse, then he quickly transfers whatever rests in his mind to the page. In the interim, even if only a wink in time, what the artist represents on the page is not the horse he sees, but the memory of the horse he has just seen" (*My Name* 97). Blindness and memory in painting have been topics of discussion among thinkers like Derrida. *In Memoirs of the Blind: The Self-Portrait and Other Ruins*, Derrida postulates that drawing is based on anticipation and memory. He talks about invisibility or blindness which takes place between the artist, the object and the illustration, and points out that painting principally relies on memory. "[E]ven if the model is presently facing the artist, the trait must proceed in the night. It escapes the field of vision." He explains how ". . . the draftsman does not presently see but he has seen and will see again: the aperspective as the anticipating perspective or the anamnesic retrospective . . . (45)." Derrida takes the example of a self-portrait where one has to rely only on memory while drawing and states: "The subtitle of all these scenes of the blind

is thus: *the origin of drawing*. Or, if you prefer, *the thought of drawing*, a certain pensive pose, a *memory of the trait* that speculates, as in a dream, about its own possibility. Its potency always develops on the brink of blindness" (3). He talks about the process of "trait" and "re-trait" while drawing self-portraits, as one does not always see with one's eyes.

Memory and blindness and their relation to time and paintings are highlighted in Pamuk's description of the process of illustration where a miniaturist's lifetime is devoted to acquiring the state of blindness in the process, and following which he draws from memory. Ironically, memory also plays a vital role in the case of anyone who draws self-portraits because he represents on the page only a memory, as the shifting of his eye from the object to paper demands memorising. In all depictions, illustrations as well as portraitures, whether they are done by masters or amateurs, Easterners or Westerners, memory and blindness are inevitable, though the perspective, aspirations and expressions vary. In *My Name is Red,* blindness which becomes equal to memory, at least for a wink of time, becomes a trait, a dream, a vision, where the loss of sight marks the beginning of seeing and thinking. *My Name is Red* thus opens spaces of probe in the artistic imagination where the differences between the East and the West concerning the philosophy of art merge to spaces of creativity that deconstruct the notion of limiting perspectives. Pamuk also uses the postmodern paradox to critique the artists' perception, questions what they actually see and view from their mind's eye, and brings in the element of memory to state that the differences between the Western and the Eastern art meet along the borders of memory since any artist would be blind just before the actual drawing and would rely on his memory for the depiction. But Pamuk inverts the possible comparison between the Eastern and the Western artists' state of blindness and asserts that seeing and viewing are totally different and quotes the *Koran,* in the epigraph to *My*

*Name is Red:* "*the blind and the seeing are not equal.*" Nevertheless Pamuk, in the epigraph, citing *the Koran* indicates that all representations are God's representations: *"To God belongs the East and the West,"* and that it is the Self itself that is reflected in every representation.

As stated by the murderer, Enishte Effendi, the master miniaturist, has invited his own death by undertaking the task of the illustrations in the Sultan's book. Enishte Effendi who initially could not understand how a picture could be painted without its accompanying tale comes back from his second visit to Venice, totally enamoured of the self portraits he has seen there:

> Each one was different from the next. They were distinctive, unique human faces! . . . In all of Venice, rich and influential men wanted their portraits painted as a symbol, a memento of their lives and a sign of their riches, power and influence – so they might always be there, standing before us, announcing their existence, nay, their individuality and distinction. (*My Name* 130)

He is filled with the desire to experiment in the manner of the Frankish artists and manages to convince the Sultan to commission him to do the illustrations in the much coveted book. Enishte Effendi, in this sense, could be the Eastern Other who fervently wishes to imitate the Western Other. The murderer, the Eastern Other, secretly admires his master the Western Other and wishes to be his slave until the last moment. He even commits a murder for the cause of art and more for his master, but eventually ends up with the murder of his master because he cannot comprehend the change in the latter's perspective and identity. Enishte Effindi's motive behind the artistic experimentation is not guided by wealth but by a pure desire to see himself immortalised in art, in the Western style. Even though he engages the four miniaturists for his work and later

entrusts Black to write the story, he does not convey his idea of mixing the artistic forms to them.

The dilemma of the artist, the murderer, prevails as a lasting portrait. Even when he realises that his art is doomed and he is trapped, tracked down for the murders he has committed, he warns his fellow artists that, they are never going to "attain individual style" if they mean to imitate the Frankish masters in their style. At the same time if they don't change, if the painters of the old tradition are still faithful to the old masters, the Sultan who is already impressed by the Venetian style of painting will replace them. In either case they are doomed since they will lose their position as palace miniaturists. "No one will look at us anymore, we shall only incur pity" (*My Name* 474). He is also convinced that Enishte Effendi's completed book with its painting celebrating the Sultan's portrait, at the cost of forsaking the integrity of the artists, will only invite contempt from the Venetians. "They'd have quipped that the Ottomans have given up being Ottoman and would no longer fear us" (487). The alternative lies in the fact that there is "always work for the artist who wants to remain pure, there's always a place to find shelter" (489) and he wishes to flee further East to Hindustan to preserve his integrity as an artist. But Black reminds him that the case is no different in King Akbar's court and that "East is east and West is west" (488).

The artist is caught in the flux of change. Much as he loves the Eastern way of painting, he craves to experiment with the Western way which captures his fancy and which he, at the same time, hates. He kills once for the cause of the Eastern and once for the cause of the Western and yet when he tries to make an imitation of the Western style, he fails miserably. The murderer, in the Dostoevskian sense, "represents a person *on the threshold* of a final decision, at a moment of *crisis,* at an unfinalizable— and *unpredeterminable*— turning point for his soul" (*Problems* 61). Pamuk's suggestion of an alternative is the

written text where he encapsulates both the schools, the Eastern and the Western styles, focusing on the differences and conflicts, perspectives and imagination. “ By structuring his novel with this aesthetic guide, Pamuk returns to the overarching problematic of the individual artist and the restrictions of the religious or secular state . . . ”(*Orhan Pamuk, Secularism* 148). Pamuk also achieves the virtually impossible task of a book that is an enlarged painting or even a portrait— not in paint or canvas but in words. But according to the Islamic rule the book is only secondary as speech is primary and writing secondary, but again, Islamic rule considers writing superior to painting.

Pamuk also explores the artistic imagination of representation in detail. Thus specific details like the importance and relevance of illustrations placed within gilded borders, the recommended methods of drawing the details of eyes or nostrils and the struggle between the different schools of painting grounded in innovation and imitation are carefully described and picturesquely embedded. For instance, when the master illustrator views, “ if the picture is to be perfect . . . it ought to be drawn at least a thousand times before I attempt it " (*My Name* 152), the reader is driven into the fabric that constitutes the crux of miniaturist paintings. Pamuk pays undivided attention to his text as would a miniaturist to his painting, thus bringing out multi-representational portraitures of the nation, imagination and the Self.

Memory and history get revisited in the intertextual manner when Pamuk recounts the age-old tradition of the artists in *My Name is Red*. Traditional Islamic approach to art is unravelled in miniature paintings where a collective style is illustrated in the art of repetition and meaning in which memory plays a crucial role. It is well in contrast to the Western paintings where individualistic styles and portraits are lauded. A miniaturist has to illustrate the same figure repeatedly to achieve perfection and according to the tradition, illustrations are regarded as God’s perceptions. A true

miniaturist may spend hours, days and even years perfecting a form, for instance, a horse. He virtually spends a lifetime on it but when the process of illustration is memorised, very often loses his eye-sight. " The old masters of Shiraz and Herat … claimed that a miniaturist would have to sketch horses unceasingly for fifty years to be able to truly depict the horse that Allah envisioned and desired " (24). It was but natural then that the best pictures of horses ended up being drawn in the dark because by the time the miniaturist perfected it, he would have become blind and the horse would have to be drawn from memory. In an interview given to Elizabeth Farnsworth, Pamuk, commenting on his tale of the Ottoman miniaturists of the sixteenth century, says that he was representing "two worlds." One was of the miniaturists' "communitarian world" where there was "an endlessness of time" and the other of a whole new Western world. A change of view from one world to the other was agonizing as the transition was from the miniaturists' "single, all embracing, medieval or Islamic point of view," to a "multi-voiced, multi-perspective, rich, western point of view". Both worlds viewed life differently and Pamuk says that he "dramatized this clash of different ways of seeing the world, since I love dramatizing the eastness of East and the westness of West" (Pamuk,"Bridging").

The murderer expresses his deep wish that "God willing, one day, we'll fearlessly tell the story of our own lives the way we actually live them" (*My Name* 483). When Black generalises this comment saying that "All fables are everybody's fables," Pamuk takes us to Darvinoglu's archive once again where he produces a tale as written by Darvinoglu about Hoja's tale as told by the Venetian and vice versa: "But as the methods of the Europeans spread, everyone will consider it a special talent to tell other men's stories as if they were one's own" (*My Name* 484). This is evocative of Bakhtin's description of a polyphonic novel in which there are levels of stories within a story:

"Behind the narrator's story we read a second story, the author's story . . . We acutely sense two levels . . . The level of the narrator . . . of the author … The narrator himself, with *his* own discourse, enters into this authorial belief system along with what is actually being told" (*Dialogic* 314). Pamuk also speaks of the "relation between the art of the miniature and the language of the book" (*Other Colors* 266-67). Similar to Hüsrev and Shirin whose eyes do not meet despite their close proximity, "my characters tell their stories, addressing each other and the reader at the same time. They'll say, 'I am a picture and I mean something'. . ." (*Other Colors* 267).

In *My Name is Red*, style or identity is crucial in identifying the works of art. The Eastern miniaturists believe that the artist's signature or his style in a work of art is a flaw whereas the Western portraiture artists believe that the signature of an artist is a distinct mark of identity that makes his art unique. Pamuk plays upon this very style of the artists to make the point clear that miniaturists too have their distinct styles and no portrait, despite having a style, can be original but is merely a representation of the many representations. Mastering the art of miniature illustration requires long years of dedicated effort when the artist perfects himself in the art of copying the illustrations of his masters until the picture is memorised to the point that even when the artist is blind, he can illustrate perfectly. The illustrated picture truly copies the original made by the masters which itself is a copy of God's representation.

Though it is style that the Eastern world of miniatures seems to consider a flaw, it becomes a postmodern paradox when the question of style is contested among the miniaturists themselves. The three artists Olive, Stork and Butterfly whose nicknames are suggestive of their styles or flaws are identified by their distinctive styles. In an attempt to find the murderer, who before committing the murder has rendered the painting of a horse for Enishte's manuscript and has also left behind pictures of

drawings of horses on Elegant's body, Master Osman and Black, having detected a flaw in the depiction of the horses' nostrils, decide to make the three miniaturists draw their versions of horses. Pamuk details the thoughts of the artists when they draw, to point out that each one thinks uniquely and distinctly and that ultimately all art—Eastern /Western, painting/writing, text/image— is but representation, be it a copy or original.

When Olive draws the horse, he contemplates the picture of a horse in his mind and once the picture enters his "mind's eye," he forgets the whole image and his very self and his hand "decisively" draws the horse. Olive's unmistakable quality or style is that, "When I draw a magnificent horse, I become that magnificent horse" (*My Name* 334). Butterfly draws an equally magnificent horse but he is more in awe of his master hand that is able to make such drawings. He says, "When I draw a magnificent horse, I become a great master of old drawing that horse" (336). Stork too makes a wonderful picture by outlining in stencil and then joining the dots. He considers himself clever not to have wasted much time but to have drawn a perfect horse which he feels the others cannot do. When he draws a magnificent horse, Stork is: "I am who I am, nothing more" (339). The three are distinctly different in their attitudes and perspectives and each one of them has his own style of representation. So does the murderer who makes an attempt to paint the self-portrait in the Western style and exclaims that something is not right, and that his face in the mirror does not resemble his face in the portrait even after long hours of patient drawing. Pamuk seems to establish that a portrait which is identified by style or individuality is also just a copy and is not the original of the picture it represents. Pamuk's postmodern approach to the Self as one of the many representations of identity, and the notion of the reciprocal relation between the East and the West, find expression in the miniaturists' illustrations which seem to hint at styles unique to their perception and culture. Even when the portraits are believed to bear the mark of the artist and have

distinct styles, they are only pictures of the Self as represented at a certain point of time. Style, identity and Self are interrelated and interdependent and hence are incomplete or bear meaning only in representations of the other.

The questions of style and the representation of style as personal and related to the Self which itself is complete only through its relationship to the Other, take one to Turkey's problem of identity and the psyche of the artist, Orhan Pamuk. Turkey with its inward colonisation has looked towards the ideal West in its reforms but Ataturk's radical Westernisation process eradicating all traces of the Ottoman past has inflicted deep wounds in the artist Pamuk who relates the question of style to himself. Pamuk also compares himself to the storyteller who invites defamation telling stories of truth, and likens the latter's sad plight to that of his own: "In . . . *My Name is Red*, when I wrote about the old Persian miniaturists who had drawn the same horse with the same passion, memorizing each stroke, for so many years that they could re-create that beautiful horse even with their eyes closed, I knew I was talking about the writing profession, and my own life."

Pamuk had resolved to be a writer and over years of painstaking effort, practised the art of novel writing like a miniaturist perfecting his illustrations, and adding his "style" as a postmodernist. "If a writer is to tell his own story . . . as if it were a story about other people . . . he is to . . . patiently give himself over to this art . . . "(*Other Colors* 407). He had to face a lot of opposition when he chose novel writing as a profession. His parents wanted him to be in the family business. Even when he became an established writer, the personal elements he added to his stories created a lot of strained relations with his mother and brother. Moreover, his remarks about the alleged mass killings of Kurds and Ottoman Armenians invited a lot of political fury. He was accused and tried for insulting his nation and was hence even addressed as a traitor by

the public. The meddah or the storyteller in *My Name is Red* is a politicised voice of artistic expression that represents the local origin of more complex textual narration in the rise of the Ottoman Turkish novel. Pamuk says that "the saddest part of the book is his, [the storyteller's] sorry end. I know how this storyteller feels—the constant pressure." The storyteller had to fight for his existence and his voice. Pamuk remarks:

> In a cobbled-together demi-democracy like ours, in this society so riddled with prohibitions, writing novels puts me in a position not altogether different from my traditional storyteller's; and whatever the explicit political prohibitions might be, a writer will also find himself hemmed in by taboos, family relations, religious injunctions, the state, and much else. (*Other Colors* 263)

In the face of Turkey's confused attitude to the question of East or West, Pamuk's approach is open to the acceptance of cultures and civilisations, much to the anger of the secularists and religious conservatives. He believes that it is normal for Turkey to have two different cultures treated as natural. He even takes pride in the fact that he is enriched by the "legacies" of both the cultures and that his books are "made from a mixture of Eastern and Western methods, styles, habits and histories. . . " Pamuk's happiness, his "double happiness," comes from being able to "wander between the two worlds" in which he is equally "at home" (264). Pamuk is an optimist to the core and he remarks that "Turkey should not worry about having two spirits, belonging to two different cultures, having two souls" (369). He cannot conceive of a Turkish politics that insists on Turkey having "one consistent soul"—Western, at the cost of ruling out the Eastern. Pamuk is not against Westernisation and he deeply adores the cosmopolitan culture of the lost Ottoman Empire. He prays for a modernity which would also give enough space to the "national culture" of Turkey, abundant in its "own symbols and

rituals." He hopes that the Turkish politicians would "strive to create an Istanbul culture that would be an organic combination of East and West . . ." (369). He imagines and tries to present in his works, " a strong local culture, which would be a combination — not an imitation—of the Eastern past and the Western present"(369-70). He strongly believes that a new Turkish culture would emerge once Turkey joined the EU, and that the Turkish identity would achieve newfound freedom and confidence. He strongly disagrees to any slavish imitation of the West or the past Ottoman. "You have to do something with these things and shouldn't have anxiety about belonging to one of them too much" (370).

The question of style and the tutelage of miniature art in the parables narrated in *My Name is Red* are problematised in dialogues. The question is posed through the deliberations between the miniaturists and Black, and between Black and Master Osman, where references are to fables from the Islamic world. A dialogic approach is made feasible for the characters to enumerate stories and legends from the East to drive in the fact that importance is always for the content, for the word. Similarly, images are used to describe the words inscribed and one can say that word precedes image. When it comes to style, the miniaturists use the examples from the Islamic lore to illustrate that style is a flaw. Though the miniaturists decry style believing that "imperfection gives rise to what we call 'style'" (*My Name* 79), it is understood that representations are not similar to one another and each artist has a style and a perspective. The work of the artist is moulded by the socio-psycho culture of his times though art and culture change with the changing times.

Pamuk draws all his artistic aspiration to the foreground of a written text that depicts equally if not better, the artists' imagination. He makes an intricate mix of traditional images in *My Name is Red* where the text overwrites the image. Goknar

writes: “Pamuk revises these scenes by removing them from their traditional contexts and rewriting them in a process of image/text intertextuality” (*Orhan Pamuk, Secularism* 140). Pamuk dwells on traditional paintings, rewriting their contexts to tell the tale of murder and love. He encapsulates the traditional renditions of the love story of Shirin and Hüsrev by Nizami and Firdowsi and models the love story of Black and Shekure along these lines. He refers to these masters to provide a source to his narrative and yet he opens them to differences in meaning and rereading. The detailed version of the story of Hüsrev and Shirin appears in Pamuk’s collection *Other Colors*. Hüsrev and Shirin’s story is one of representation— visual and textual — and is one of the best known in the illustrated stories of Islamic art. Pamuk projects his “politics,” “intrigues” and “coyness” into the cultural background of the story of Hüsrev and Shirin to form his “ novel’s central concern: to blend the more distilled and poetic style derived from works in the style of Persian miniatures with the speed, power, and character-driven realism of the novel as we understand it today” (*Other Colors* 265).

In the age of miniature artists an illustration is always complemented by a story and what is essential is the story. The illustration never distracts with a style or identity: “Our eyes, fatigued from reading these tales, rest upon the pictures. . . . The images are the story’s blossoming in color” (*My Name* 30). An illustration which is not supported by a text runs the risk of becoming “an absent story” (132) and a space for idol belief. Pamuk creates a new text for the same Shirin and Hüsrev painting when he describes Shekure and Black, and their love and agony of separation. Black had professed his love to Shekure twelve years ago by depicting the Hüsrev- Shirin painting. The colours blue and red represented himself and Shekure and there were no distinct facial features except the colour. But as the painting represented romance, Black expressed his love with the representation. He carried the memory of the painting with him for years, cherishing the

idea of his memories of his lost love, though her face had slowly been effaced from his memory". Pamuk admits that one of the themes of the book is "to remember someone's face, the uniqueness of people's faces" (*Other Colors* 265). The gilder's murder of Enishte Effendi is described in the foreground of the story of the murder of Hüsrev by his son. At the scene of the murder is the painting depicting the jealous son of Hüsrev murdering his father while he is asleep next to his beautiful wife, Shirin. Pamuk's artistic imagination represents anew the stories, colours and paintings of the Ottoman times in a postmodern text that represents a painting.

Focusing on the stylistics of the novel and the painting, Pamuk the artist, commissioned to a view of human consciousness at its fullest, naturally resorts to the most ingenious of styles when he wants to reach out to mankind. Hence the portrayal of his characters in *My Name is Red* attains the highest artistic expression by "a representation of the inescapably dialogical quality of human life . . ." (Bakhtin *Problems* xxii). Bakhtin idolizes the polyphonic ideal in Dostoevsky where the characters at their polyphonic best are shown as "'consciousnesses' that can never be fully defined or exhausted. . . (xxiii). Pamuk experiments with the text writing over the image in *My Name is Red* where he adopts Dostoevsky's dialogic in the novel: "The dialogic . . . is constructed not as the whole of a single consciousness, absorbing other consciousnesses as objects into itself, but as a whole formed by the interaction of several consciousnesses, none of which entirely becomes an object for the other. . ." *My Name is Red* addresses the viewer through the consciousness of its characters—the murderer, Black, Shekure, the miniaturists, the corpse, dog and even the coin and the tree— and there is no part of the book attending to the perspective "of a nonparticipating 'third person'" (18).

When contemplating the artistic representation of *My Name is Red*, one cannot

overlook the complex construction of ideas and forces navigating the characters as they are very dominant. Hence the reflection of a complex construct is dominant in the perspectives of the characters when they are represented to perceive the reality that surrounds them. In other words, the world has been exposed to every character in a particular way in accordance with the desired construct in the representation. Thus the dog speaks from his world, the tree from its world and the murderer from his. Pamuk oscillates between the East and the West, miniatures and portraits, and the Self and the artist, but he does not theorise or give a monologic expression in *My Name is Red*. He presents them side by side, dramatising the internal conflicts and growth of his characters "forcing a character to converse with his own double, with the devil, with his alter ego, with his own caricature . . ." (28), with his death and so forth. He advocates Dostoevsky's "simultaneous coexistence" (29) which he desires for the cultures of the East and the West in his Istanbul. Pamuk's liberal stand on culture and politics leads him to the polyphonic novel where he lays open the interaction of consciousnesses in the sphere of ideas: "Every experience, every thought of a character is internally dialogic, adorned with polemic, filled with struggle, . . . open to inspiration from outside itself … not … concentrated … on its own object; it is accompanied by a continual sideways glance at another person" (32).

Pamuk's artistic form, drawing attention to itself and also to the world outside, like Shekure's glance, the dog's glance, and the murderer's mirror glance, is the artistic imagination of the "sociology of consciousnesses" (32). His imagination uses the genre of the novel to say that what is important is not how the narrators appear to the world but how the world appears to the hero/narrators (47). The reader gets to know about the murderer only from the murderer himself just as he comes to know of Shekure or Black or the dog only from their self-revelation. Pamuk's discussion of the question who he is

or why a person is what he is, through the consciousness of the characters, is analogous to Dostoevsky's observation: "the object of the hero's own introspection, the subject of his self-consciousness; and the subject of the author's visualization and representation turns out to be in fact a *function* of this self-consciousness" (48). The murderer tells us what his conflicts are, what he hides and how he commits the murder. The author merely leads us into his consciousness. The inward glance and the constant dialoguing that the characters make with the reader give forth a totally different experience as the levels of representations keep on changing, thus creating a unique artistic relevance in the representations:

> [T]hey can no longer finalize and close off a character, can no longer construct an integral image of him or provide an artistic answer to the question, "Who is he?" We see not who he is, but *how* he is conscious of himself; our act of artistic visualization occurs not before the reality of the hero, but before a pure function of his awareness of that reality. (48-49)

The art of the polyphonic novel transfers the reality of the narrators along with their self awareness and the world around them to their own fields of vision, with the result that the reader does not get their objectified images but rather the narrator's discourse on himself and the way in which he perceives the world. In other words, we cannot identify many characters working under the umbrella of the unified consciousness of the author since they are in the "plurality of consciousnesses and their worlds" (17-18). Pamuk has left out definite physical or facial description of his narrators, and even names are scarcely called out and the reader in the Bakhtinian sense can, "hear him; everything that we see and know apart from his discourse is nonessential and is swallowed up by discourse as its raw material, or else remains outside it as

something that stimulates and provokes" (53). Pamuk refrains from the literary finalisation of his characters for he, like Bakhtin, believes that there is something about each human being that can be revealed only by himself as there is also the fact that as long as a person is alive, he is subject to change and he cannot be finalised.

Turkey with its internal colonisation also presents a postcolonial perspective that abounds in representations of ambivalences as opposed to the concept of fixities. Bhabha too problematises the concept of fixity while discussing the colonial stereotype:

> [T]he colonial stereotype… ensures its repeatability in changing historical and discursive conjunctures; informs its strategies of individuation and marginalization; produces that effect of probabilistic truth and predictability, which for the stereotype, must always be in *excess* of what can be empirically proved of logically construed" (*Location* 66).

Bhabha uses the psychoanalytic term "ambivalence" in a broader context where social and political conditions are characterized. It functions as an analytical instrument to trace the dynamics of "fetishistic disavowal" (77) while discussing "otherness" (88) in colonial discourse. Pamuk too makes use of this tool in *My Name is Red* as a representation to overcome the East-West binary structure to which Turkey is polarized.

Pamuk's portrayal of life in deliberate fragments vindicates his life too. To a person who has taken a vow to be a writer and excluded himself from the outside world to get a perception beyond, art is not a recluse or a medium to propagate, as propounded by modernists and romantics. To quote Pamuk:

> A writer is someone who spends years patiently trying to discover the second being inside him, and the world that makes him who he is. When I speak of writing, what comes first to my mind is not a novel, a poem,

> or literary tradition, it is a person who shuts himself up in a room, sits down at a table, and alone, turns inward; amid the shadows, he builds a new world with words. (*Other Colors* 406)

Art is considered, understood fundamentally, as a space for oneself, the Other and the imaginations of the past, present and future to gather, to speak with each other and mankind. Yet essentially as an artist is as much an individual, a self and the Other, his expressions and his imaginations are shaped by the socio-cultural and ethnic milieu he belongs to. Pamuk, as an artist, rises above this imagination to state that in a Turkey which is at crossroads, being its own coloniser and colonised, wanting to embrace the West so badly but engaged so romantically to its glorious Eastness, it is possible for two cultures to coexist.

Roel Meijer, in his *Introduction* to *Cosmopolitanism, Identity, and Authenticity in the Middle East,* writes of Turkey's glorious past where "[d]uring the Ottoman period… groups of different religious and ethnic backgrounds intermingled and exchanged ideas, lifestyles, and cultures" (1). History also gives an account of the reign of Mehmed II as a period during which the Persian, the Greek, the Christian, and the Ottoman lived in peace and harmony and also respected the others' cultures and religious practices. Even when the miniaturists conceived that style was a flaw and signature unnecessary, Pamuk in his reimagination of the Ottoman past points to the fact that even the art of the Ottoman miniaturists was a mixing of the Persian and the Indian styles, for nothing remains pure. In the world of art, what remained finally were those that survived the dominance of power but with drastic changes effected in them. The Ottoman past was no exception with the miniature art gradually losing out to the popularity of the Venetian art of portraiture, and the miniaturists themselves being lured by its immediate charm and the Ottoman kings embracing it for power and authority.Miniature art was replaced

by portraiture and there was a rather hasty change with subtle shades and drawings replaced by dark colours, and a violent mixing of colours.

Even though power and novelty are envisioned, the imbalance of proportions paradoxically heralds slavery and intimidation, and Pamuk, dreads this as he has seen its political variant happening in Turkey. So even when the author as well as the artist in him calls for a generous mixing of colours and cultures, he fears excesses that can damage the social fabric of the present society just as Kemalism has wiped out all traces of Islamic past to welcome Westernisation. This process pains the artist, and raises immediate concern in him to ask for a space to understand culture, religion and politics. Artistic imagination thus should rise above the petty conflicts and engage with the changing needs of the time, embrace the past and enhance the present. Pamuk, through his fiction, projects hybridity as a subversion of conventional notions of identity to favour multiple culture positions and thus urges everyone to rise above the perils of cultural binarisms. In *My Name is Red,* Olive, the true representation of an artist caught in the imperfections, inconsistencies and paradoxes of his artistic imagination, murders and gets murdered, perhaps to breathe free in his death. In his conversation with Elizabeth Farnsworth, Pamuk mentions: "I don't have a solution for these things, but ironically, my novels perhaps . . . are addressing the issue that we have all these general questions— questions of identity, belonging to a civilization . . . and tell to the reader that actually what matters are not civilizations but human lives. . ." ("Bridging").

*My Name is Red* ends with the Sultan's book being incomplete, the scattered pages shifted to a library where a "fastidious" librarian binds the pages as he fancies. This serves as an intertextual frame to the archives of Darvinoglu in *The White Castle*, where Darvinoglu creates stories as his fancy leads him to. Black is resigned to the fate of the miniature art being lost: "a sweet secret long surrendered to memory" (*My Name*

500), with the dilemma of the two different painting styles never clearly resolved, and the "different" techniques and "worldviews" (303) difficult to be harmonised. The best testimony that Pamuk can offer for his writing and the techniques used is: "I don't want to be a tree, I want to be its meaning" (61). His purpose for narrating this book in this fashion is further elaborated: "Where there is true art and genuine virtuosity the artist can paint an incomparable masterpiece without leaving even a trace of his identity" (22).

Just as Darvinoglu, the professor of history in *The Silent House*, disillusioned with the modernisation reforms returns to the archives in *The White Castle* to retell the Venetian-Hoja story, deconstructing all the fixities of the East-West, master-slave binaries as representations of the self that mirror-like reflects itself in infinite succession, Pamuk's artistic imagination in *My Name is Red* problematises, deconstructs and subverts notions on style, uniqueness, identity, image, text and the East-West, to draw the reader out of the cultural fixities to a space of transcendence where every context, be it political, religious or social, understands the Other reflected in the expressions of the Self. Artistic imagination exposes the cultural differences as similar by portraying the Other as the Self so that in the journey of mankind in the diverse complexities of life, there is a thinking beyond to embrace humanity as a whole, understanding and assimilating its many representations. Pamuk journeys with his representations to unfurl spaces of imagination, where creative thinking flows in textscapes incessantly and powerfully.

The artistic imagination of the artist journeys through the stylistic possibilities of the varying artistic forms, technique and content to dwell on the possibilities of a space where history, politics and culture meet to dialogise their differences, extremities and hopes. Pamuk places the multi perspective narrations and polyphonic voices side by side, presenting and dramatising the internal conflicts and growth of his characters,

laying open the interaction of consciousnesses in the sphere of ideas where his artistic imagination plays a credible role in awakening consciousness to alter and change the boundaries of the limitations of stifling identities, freed from the constraints of the stylistic binaries and the conflicts of the ego of the artist. The artistic forms of different genres can also overlap and exist and flow uniquely as the colour red in *My Name is Red*. In a cultural context where one recognises the Other and in an artistic context where the differences merge into the unique, Pamuk aspires for the political context too to be all encompassing and wields the imaginative artist's prerogative to represent the issues of cultural differences, social authority and political differences in such a manner that their ambivalences are showcased, problematised and revised as in his political novel *Snow* which is the focus of the next chapter.

# CHAPTER 4

## THE POLITICS OF POLITICAL IMAGINATION

The politics of art as manifested in representation and the politics of life as manifested in the differences of race, culture, gender and nations can be brought under the purview of an all encompassing coherence, when an imaginative artist uses his imagination to free mankind from the ideological and self constructed identities. Often it is the imaginative artist's prerogative to represent the issues of cultural differences, social authority and political differences in such a manner that their ambivalences are showcased, problematised and revised. Pamuk says,

> A novelist's politics arise from his imagination, from his ability to imagine himself as someone else. This power not only allows him to explore human realities previously unremarked—it makes him the spokesman for those who cannot speak for themselves, whose anger is never heard, and whose words are suppressed. (*Other Colors* 229)

Representations of mankind vary in their multitudinous expressions and the ambivalences and complexities are just what make them what they are. In cultural and artistic expressions they fascinate the audience primarily because of these differences and yet where power is wielded these representations often become a dangerous game where differences are overlooked. Pamuk, the imaginative artist, believes that the novel empowers, "the understanding of humankind by imagining its characters in situations that we know intimately and care about and recognize from our own experience" (227). He expresses his wish to belong to the world of imagination which "gives the bounded world of everyday life its particularity, its magic, and its soul" (236).

Though Pamuk has remarked that the idea of the novel *Snow* made him think of a combination of a novel and politics, he admits that the "political novel is a limited genre because politics entails a determination not to understand those who are different from us, while the art of the novelist entails a determination to understand those who are different from us" (*Naive* 145). Pamuk, who identifies himself with Dostovesky, has commented that what he saw shocking in Dostovesky was the belief in the coexistence of "Man's will to power; his capacity for forgiveness; his ability to deceive himself and others; his love for, hatred of, and need for belief; his addictions, both sacred and profane. . . " (*Other Colors* 143). But the imagination of the artist persuades him to represent the very factions which upset and frighten him so that he voices his worst fears in his art, hoping for a world order. Pamuk, in his Nobel lecture elucidates his indignation towards the world and says that writing is his answer to this anger as well his way of letting the world know about Turkey and of the kind of life lived there.

Pamuk's central character in *Snow* is Ka, a culturally self conscious, artistically unfinalisable and politically enigmatic hero. He is a parodic and ironic representation of his times, an intellectual, and a liberal secularist who is a contextual mismatch of a dreamer and a poet who fails to keep pace with the representations of life as they unfurl before him in all their complexities and extremities. Ka fails miserably in his self representation but the author figure Orhan comes to the forefront and attempts to rescue his dear friend, his alter ego. He retraces Ka's journey, attempts to retrieve his nineteen poems, investigates Ka's role in his re-entry to the snow-filled Kars and finally writes the novel *Snow* for him. *Snow* is a political, self reflexive metanarrative representative of its times and of the political imagination of the artist who projects the past, himself, and the confused individual in dilemma in the historical, cultural and political context in which he is situated and where he is yet to recognize the

multifarious voices of secularism, fundamentalism, power politics and endless games as different from their ideological definitions.

Ka is a representation of an individual who is unable to cling on to a particular sect, or group or ideology. He often becomes a prey to the clash between ideological truths and the fabricated constructs of the state of affairs in politics, religion and social life, especially in the post Kemalist Turkey. However, the portrait of the character is conceived in contrast to the existing world order where affairs of political and current interests are being decided by people who have fixed identities and ideologies to such an extent that they become polemic in a character unlike Ka, because Ka believes that ". . . the rights of each person are in some sense immanent in the discussion" and that "[t]hey depend only on the dialogue situation" (Foucault 111). The Polemicist on the contrary never accepts the dialogic way of discussion; instead

> confronts … [the] partner in the search for the truth . . . [as] an adversary, an enemy who is wrong, who is harmful, and whose very existence constitutes a threat. For him, then, the game consists . . . of abolishing him as interlocutor, from any possible dialogue; and his final objective will be . . . to bring about the triumph of the just cause he has been manifestly upholding from the beginning (112).

Pamuk places Ka on the threshold of a confused world where dialogues are stifled and truths are twisted, to problematise the social, cultural and political milieu of Turkey which has been described by Huntington in his article as the "most obvious and prototypical torn country. . ." ("The Clash" 42).

Pamuk ventures to reveal the "hidden symmetry" (*Snow* 384) of the Turkish political scenario ironically resplendent with conspiracy, coups and betrayal, as he walks down the fine thread line of the binaries of fundamental Islamism and liberal

secularism in the garb of his hero Ka, deconstructing their very nature by parody and irony, "to subvert fixed sites of identity" (Goknar, *Orhan Pamuk,Secularism* 189). Through his political imagination in *Snow*, Pamuk strives to convey the fact that in the political context of living in a shared world, the coexistence of binaries is to be tolerated and encouraged for a harmonious cohabitation. Politics is determined by one's cultural, social and artistic orientations, and politics blindly invaded by religion or religion governed by politics can only lead to violent deceitful existence. Moreover, "As people define their identity in ethnic and religious terms, they are likely to see an 'us' versus 'them' relation existing between themselves and people of different ethnicity or religion" (Huntington, "The Clash" 29), and the novelist has to play a credible role in ensuring peaceful coexistence by using his imagination to alter and change the boundaries of the limitations of stifling identities.

The politics of the novelist, according to Pamuk, is to use the power of one's imagination to rise above the limitations of one's stifling identities attached to race, culture and gender, and in renewed hybrid spaces of mutual understanding, attune one's sensibilities to a world order. Pamuk explores this chance vividly in *Snow* where the artist in him shaped by the historical and the postmodern, critiques the existing political context as he says: "I am using this story as a way into the subject that I am coming to understand more clearly with each new day, and that is, in my view, central to the art of the novel: the question of the 'other,' the 'stranger,' the 'enemy' that resonates inside each of our heads . . . " (*Other Colors* 227).

As Pamuk narrates his Self into being, the tale told is of multiple ideologies and belief systems which overlap and entangle each other in the wider context of the state and religion, Self and Other, and East and West. Pamuk, committed to postmodernist imagination, situates himself and his subjects across all possible imaginations, looking

at the Self from the Other's point of view and the Other from the vantage point of the Self, so that dialogues and perspectives provide multi-cultural and political views. In such varied perspectives, Pamuk tries to prove his political stance of recognizing the differences in race, class, gender and so on. In the Derridian style Pamuk situates Ka in the turbulent socio- historical context of modernist Turkey so that the readers make the journey with him, getting exposed to the farcical fixities of the times. In relating to such contexts and situations, the reader journeys with the author and the characters through the snow filled bleakness of Kars, to situate and understand the character Ka who is a contradiction of an intellectual republican with a Westernised education, and a nostalgic Eastern longing, torn between modern secularism and Islamist fundamentalism. Ka, who is not defined in his religious, modernist or even political outlook, finds himself playing an inevitable role in the bizarre politics of the state during his three-day visit to Kars. Ka who wins public attention as an intellectual and an atheist with romantic ambitions and poetic musings, suddenly finds himself at the centre of action as the chief negotiator in the secular state politics. His plight is both ironic and tragic as he gets caught in the whirl of the military controlled state politics with his unstable self and his questionable stances, making matters worse that it even borders on hysterical comedy.

In the search for an identity and the definition of the Self, which Pamuk ponders over in *The White Castle* and *My Name is Red*, he seems to have a firm answer in *Snow*, as expressed by Ipek to Ka ,"Just be yourself "(294). But Ka who is yet to know what he is or why he is, finds it difficult to be himself, as the conflict between his intellect and beliefs situate him in contexts totally alien even to him. Ka often wants to say aloud that he is not what he seems to be as projected by the state and the press, but he is forced to take a stance that is at loggerheads with his soul searching self. Personal

becomes political in the state controlled precariously understood/ realised freedom and Ka, whether he believes it or not, finds himself acting much against his professed ideologies. In an interview given to Lila Azam Zanganeh, Pamuk remarks how he has written to his heart's content in *Snow* "about contemporary Turkey, Islamic politics, fundamentalism, secularism, the nationalistic response to military coups, the nationalism of our ethnic groups, the political forces at play and their ever-multiplying factions." ("Politics"). Pamuk takes sides with none but exposes the farcical aspect of every ideology that thwarts human independence and interdependence.

Seyhan, author and critic, observes: "Like most of Pamuk's previous novels , *Snow* is a metafiction, a text that reflects on the act of (re)constructing a story from fragments of other stories, evidentiary documents, eyewitness accounts, tapes, videos, notebooks and other traces of memory" ("Seeing"). Orhan, as the author figure in the novel sets out to reconstruct the biography of Ka (Kerim Alakuşoğlu) from his personal possessions, artifacts and papers and evidences. The journey made by Ka, and by Orhan four years later, are gestures of their political dissidence of the ideological landscape that constitutes contemporary Turkey. Pamuk employs strategies and diverse modes that include deliberate distortion and subversion of happenings while representing Turkey as a country struggling for self definition, in *Snow*. Employing the intricacies of themes like selfhood, exile and oppression which are multilayered and embedded in Turkey's real world politics, Pamuk poses a critique against the linear notions on Turkish identity. As the plot progresses, one feels the presence of the novelist exploring the extensions and possibilities of borderlines and the ambivalence they create while communicating complexities and ambiguities involved in the question of identity and displacement.

Even though Kars and Frankfurt stay in the backdrop when Pamuk discourses

on the Self and the Other in *Snow*, the complicated and the deliberate use of dualities and the temporal nature of identity and its multifacetedness testify the assumption that even the borders are not finite—they are in the process of merging. Both Ka and Pamuk make the journey of crossing the borders of East-West, sacred-secular, and traditional-modern, by travelling and through writing. The journeys both make, physically and literally, reconstruct the Self in its political contexts which are at the same time complex and contradictory, in contrast to the alternative history of a smooth transition from the Ottoman past to Ataturk's modernisation kept in the official museums. The story of Ka which unfurls before us is thus the journey of a sensitive human being, a poet and a fragile unstable self as depicted by the snowflake icon, and in the words of Goknar, a "temporary . . . unstable and object of transformation" (*Orhan Pamuk, Secularism* 198). The journey which traverses through hopelessness at many a critical moment conveys the political imagination of the artist Pamuk who seeks hope against all odds:

> I myself was not immune to the power of that shimmering fiction that any citizen of an oppressive and aggressively nationalistic country will understand only too well — the magical unity conjured by the word 'we'. . . . all were inextricably bound by the same hopeless story (*Snow* 401).

Ka, in an unstable position, is an insider as well as an outsider, a believer and a non-believer, secular as well as sacred in his religious beliefs, a leftist political exile as well as a stranger to the contemporary Turkish society and Kars. He is Pamuk's political voice who, in trying to sort out this dilemma, conveys that "what I am trying to do is push the truths of art to their outer limits, to become one with myth . . ." (344). In *Snow,* Pamuk elucidates the perspectives of the secular military alliance as represented

by the heads of the military and state intelligence, Colonel Osman Nuri Çolak and Z Demirkol, along with the theatre performer Sunay Zaim , the perspectives of Islamic terrorism as represented by Blue, the students of the religious high school and the Welfare party, leftist socialism as represented by Turget Bey and the space of female identity as voiced by Kadife, Ipek, Teslime , Funda and Hande. Pamuk's imaginative pursuits are represented in the novel which expresses the excesses of the above ideologies, guiding the reader to "become" "others," to understand these from the Other's perspective, and to liberate himself from the confines of his delimiting Self. Elaborating on the question of the "other" aspect in *Snow,* Pamuk writes:

> It was the other aspect that drew me to the streets of Frankfurt and Kars: the chance to write of others' lives as if they were my own. It is by doing this sort of research that novelists can begin to test the lines that mark off that "other" and in so doing alter the boundaries of our own identities. Others become "us" and we become "others." (*Other Colors* 228)

*Snow* is a metaphor for the silence of the land, of the unvoiced agony of its people who are cut off and isolated from universal truths by the projected history of reformed laws. Pamuk, who has had a Westernised education and upbringing, has practically lived all his life in Istanbul and has been part of the large cultural harmony that Istanbul shared in its yesteryears. The native, the artist and the novelist in him are deeply pained at the dictatorial methods adopted by Ataturk and his successors in enforcing a secular code on the Turkish society which predominantly exhibited the Islamic culture. The obsessive enthusiasm of the nationalistic forces within the country also hurts him and he aspires for a peaceful existence and a smooth transition to the EU. Pamuk, romantically bound to his Turkish culture and traditions and his novelistic

imagination, urges for a peaceful coexistence of the same along with the secular liberalized reforms, without violence.

Pamuk's imaginative pen wields itself at this juncture, writing deliberately, mixing fact with fiction, and history with the present, to project his world views so that the reader can get acquainted with every perspective. Pamuk remarks: " To understand what is unique about the histories of other nations and other peoples, to share in unique lives that trouble us . . .such truths we can glean only from the careful, patient reading of great novels" (*Other Colors* 229-30). Stuart Hall's observation on how history can be used in the construction of identity runs on a similar line:

> [I]dentities are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not 'who we are' or 'where we came from', so much as . . . how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves. (Hall and du Gay 4)

The imagination of the novelist and that of his "freewheeling world … can seem treacherous" (*Other Colors* 231), but Pamuk states that this representation, this imaginative transformation of reality, leads one to understand one's own world as well as that of the other. Imagination embraces the Other in a cultural and moral consciousness, sharpening its aesthetic awareness to the extent of enhancing the political capabilities of human collectiveness. Pamuk assumes the role of the author-narrator when his central character becomes involved in an ideological issue to which he has no answer yet.

John Brannigan, Professor and critic has rightfully pointed out that "texts" are not merely the artist's individual creations, instead they are expressions of the ideological values prevalent, and of the socio-political and cultural factors operating at

that particular time (179). Pamuk believes that the novelists fashion the reader's imagination to journey back and forth between the fictitious world of the novel and the real world of the times. Thus the novel takes the reader to worlds hitherto unknown and to "the hidden depths of characters who seem on the surface to resemble people we know best" (*Other Colors* 232). Ka, typical of Pamuk's characters, is vulnerably humane as well as susceptible to deceit and jealousy and despite upholding diverse and modern ideologies, meets his end tragically, having lived a failed life. The failed text and the failed author are but replaced by the author- narrator who takes over to complete the story. Pamuk's characters come across as complex multifaceted unpredictable beings who are approached sympathetically, and he remarks in an interview given to Jörg Lau:

> I'm not interested in a blanket condemnation of all Islamists as evil, as is often the case in the West. At the same time, I am critical of the Islamist perception of the secularists as undignified imitators of the loathed West. I want to destroy the clichés cultivated by both sides. This is what I perceive as the task of a political novel. ("Turkish Trauma")

In *Snow*, his political imagination leads Pamuk to problematise the stances taken by the Islamist, the leftist, the atheist and the military to such an extent that they stand exposed. Pamuk, quoting Tolstoy once said, "If a character is too bad, make him good" (McGaha 164). As Pamuk later tells Alexander Star, "the problem of representing the poor, the unrepresented, even in literature is morally dubious. So [the art] in this political novel… is to turn it around a bit and make the problem of representation a part of the fiction too" ("I was not a Political Person"). Ka, who is a displaced exile, on his return to Kars from Frankfurt has to confront many lives experiencing displacement. Even the historical identity of the city of Kars has been

shaped or torn by many changes that included Ottoman, Russian, Armenian and the Turkish entities and hence stand, as a symbolic embodiment of exile. In Kars, everyone is in exile—the list extends from Islamists leaders like Blue to the secular leaders and officials, and the traditional Muslim population to the former Communists. *Snow* metaphorically describes the isolated context of Kars which most time of the year becomes an island not only because of the heavy fall of snow but also because of its territorial positioning. Moreover its historical identity and its poverty marginalize it from the main land of Turkey and hence one can even consider it as a place of exile. It is in this context that Pamuk places Ka, the political exile, who, unable to find himself at peace in Germany comes back to Kars to reinvent himself as a poet. The displaced self of Ka initially appreciates everything he finds in Kars—the snow and the old archaeological sites. Interestingly, the reader notes that he is not fully aware of the violence that seems to persist in the air. He represents the elite intelligentsia of Turkey. Ka's own sense of alienation is encountered by the voices of the displaced people in Kars. This becomes a political stand offered by the author to acknowledge the displaced voices, by regarding them as characters in the novel.

Thus in *Snow* one listens to the Islamists who talk for themselves, and also to the secularists who talk about everything they are involved in, including religion, politics and everyday life, from different points of view. In *Snow* one feels the presence of all these exiled voices getting attentive listening. Erdag Goknar's observation is valid in this context when he says that "Narrative redemption is the moral of Pamuk's world" ("Orhan Pamuk and the Ottoman" 37). McGaha recounts that Pamuk has taken the idea of the novel from a scene he had imagined years ago about a debate on civilization, in a jail, between a Westernised secularist and an Islamist ( McGaha 157). Later he has placed the story in "the sadness of a city forgotten by the outside world and banished

from history" (*Snow* 290). Though poverty, remoteness and provincial isolation of Kars cannot be denied, political Islam is not much of an issue in Kars as such. Yet he sets his characters in the snow blanketed bitterness of Kars, testifying his statement to Lau that, "Many of my characters hold ideas which run counter to my own. The challenge is to also make the voices representing opinions I find repugnant sound convincing, whether they belong to political Islamists or to the military vindicating a coup"(" Turkish Trauma").

Pamuk bases *Snow* mainly on two defined features of postmodernism, namely, intertextuality and parody. Linda Hutcheon states: "Postmodern parody is both deconstructively critical and constructively creative, paradoxically making us aware of both the limits and the powers of representation—in any medium" (*Politics* 98). *Snow* parodies the political situation where laws that are enforced for general human welfare and place the individual in existential isolation, curbing his choice, his will and his growth. Hutcheon elaborates further that, "As form of ironic representation, parody is doubly coded in political terms: it both legitimizes and subverts that which it parodies . . . Parody can be used as self-reflexive technique that points to art as art, but also to art as inescapably bound to its aesthetic and even social past" (101). Pamuk's merit as an artist lies in his creative imagination and in his art of writing, as is exemplified in *Snow*, the book created by "Orhan" to narrate Ka's political quandary and perhaps to vindicate the confused steps that Ka is compelled to take. The narrative strategy he adopts exhorts him to imagine narratives, dialogues, cultural exchanges and translations which he believes can problematise the dilemma of the individual. Thus art and writing are the tools he employs in the fight against brute political power and blind fanaticism that diminish individual freedom and fosters narrow-minded nationalism.

*Snow* can be understood through a political, cultural and aesthetic

reimagination of Turkey in its existential crisis. The people of Kars who take for granted that Ka is a modern secularist, assume that he is a Westerner in his beliefs and hence an atheist. Ka's genuine wish, "I'd prefer to be a Westerner *and* a believer" (*Snow*145), that is, wanting to be both, is problematised here. The problematisation is one of identity in a secular modern context. The crisis is that of the secular republican intellectual who wavers between faith and secularism and is finally assassinated. The East-West schism is central to Turkish political discourse and though the official history narrates a smooth synthesis and emergence of a Westernised Turkey, Pamuk's works point to the struggles and turmoils that have effected physical and psychological fragmentation in the lives and minds of the people. Representations of coups and conspiracies in Snow expose the confusion between reality and misreadings, thus revealing the ambivalent nature of identity. Pamuk fulfils the role of an analytic political philosopher when he takes the opportunity to engage himself in the task of unveiling the functioning of power relations by discovering what is hidden, "because of …[its] simplicity and familiarity. (One is unable to notice something—because it is always before one's eyes)" (Wittgenstein 129).

The theatre forms the foreground and background of *Snow* and the play to be staged is turned into one on history to show the diversity of the real and the imaginary. The characters on the stage and the audience represent the East and the West as opposing ideologies that can never coexist. Pamuk, through the intertextual background, exposes the hollowness of modernity as well as the rigidity of fundamentalism, at the same time striking poise between the two and the East-West dimensions. In *Snow* Pamuk reimagines the political context of Turkey parodying it with the aim to liberate the people and the politics from an overindulgence of religion and power. Pamuk observes that, "The most political novel is the novel which has no

political themes or motives but that tries to see everything and understand everyone, to construct the largest whole" (*Naive* 145*). Snow* begins with Pamuk painstakingly setting his story in a lonely isolated city northeast of Turkey. Pamuk actually visited the place many a time, making detailed notes on his setting, exploring streets, shops and neighbourhoods, conversing with the locals, the busy folks on the street and the youth. Pamuk did not do this to replicate the city in the novel but he "wanted to project onto Kars… [his] own sense of the city's atmosphere . . ." (*Other Colors* 273). Pamuk adds that his "motive was not to record the stories of Kars…but to situate [his]. . . original idea of the novel in this city" (*Other Colors* 274). While describing Kars, Pamuk has lavishly spent his aesthetic, historic and political knowledge of the place to compare its stature in the past with its present plight. Thus Kars that was once a home for people of various races and tribes including Persians, Greeks, Armenians, Kurds and Circassians, had to become a place where the people have to react homogeneously according to the new found orders of secular Turkey.

In the context of the novel, Kars is lost in snow and cold bitterness prevails everywhere, shutting the people from the world outside and from one another. The snow is not only a backdrop or a setting but on the metaphorical level a political and social comment also. Kars, which had been ravaged and challenged brutally by extreme violence, was further weakened by Kurdish Guerrilla attacks and political disasters. Yet in Pamuk's narration, the real Kars is very often replaced by the Kars of his imagination. Pamuk prefers to reimagine the Kars of his dreams and more than the political violence what matters to him is the deep sense of loneliness on the streets with its tea houses, the old mansions and schools. He says how "it is small changes like these that take the novel out of the realm of 'reality' and … [make] it possible for me to write" (*Other Colors* 277). In an interview given to Skafidas, Pamuk remarks:

> In order to establish a modern and Westernized nation, Ataturk and the whole Turkish establishment decided to forget Islam, traditional culture . . . But what is suppressed comes back. . . in a new way. . . . I am myself that thing that comes back, . . . with my postmodern forms, . . . as someone who not only represents tradition, traditional Sufi literature. . .but also someone who is well versed with what is happening in Western literature. So I put together the experimentalism, I mix modernism with tradition, which makes my work accessible, mysterious, and I suppose charming, to the reader." ("Turkey's Divided Character")

*Snow*, the novel, spans three days of intense action in the life of Ka, the poet protagonist. Ka has come after twelve years of exile from Frankfurt to Istanbul to attend his mother's funeral. Though he has a press card from his newspaper friend and has ostensibly come to cover the story of the suicide girls, and does research on the impending municipal elections, Ka, the poet, is looking forward to a reunion and possible marriage to his beloved Ipek who is recently divorced and who reciprocates his romantic feelings towards her. In such a seemingly innocent and prosaic background of a city which is practically cut off from the rest of the world with the snow, and where nothing faintly adventurous would happen, Ka finds himself in the midst of fast and serious action. His presence is virtually everywhere—as the witness to the murder of the Director, as the star guest whose poem is telecast just before the coup takes place, as the chief political negotiator, and as the scholar who triggers debates on the existence of God. In the final act of cowardice he chooses to reveal the whereabouts of Blue for a safe passage back to Frankfurt. He pays dearly for it with the immediate loss of his beloved Ipek who refuses to accompany him, and four years later, with his life supposed to be taken by the fundamentalists avenging the cause of Blue's murder.

*Snow* as a novel "had something in it to offend just about every political faction in Turkey" (McGaha 167). The worried publishers engaged lawyers who suggested that the book could be published with certain changes, to which Pamuk refused to oblige. Though initially only a hundred thousand copies were published and sold secretly, ultimately the book was well acclaimed. As Pamuk remarked to Angel Gurria-Quintana, "I survived. They all read the book. They may have become angry but it is a sign of growing liberal attitudes that they accepted me and my book as they are" (*Other Colors* 374). In a seemingly simple plot, Pamuk beautifully lays bare the perspectives of political conspiracy and coup and their discourses, and parodies the ideologies of Turkish nationalism, political Islam and leftism. Even as Pamuk critiques the state machinery of the current political Turkey, the shades are universal, pointing at every state-controlled machine where the individual is at a loss set against the odds of state implemented surveillance over him. Kars is a microcosm of Turkey in the early nineties. But current world politics fares no better with social media, sponsored sites, paid channels and advertisements masking the cause of the professed republicans leading to the violent truth that democracy is in no way different from totalitarianism.

*Snow* has Serder Bey's paper, *Border City Gazette*, producing news that materializes as truth the next day. It is an ironic situation that even when the crowd at the theatre has witnessed the death of Sunay happening before them, they wait for confirmation in the next day's paper (and the newspaper has the death story printed hours before its real time situation) because they have forced themselves to believe only and sadly all that the paper has to tell them. In *Snow,* we are informed of the seizure of Kurdish tapes of music and of the ban on every other artistic expression except those sponsored by the state. In the *Border City Gazette*, "Ninety per cent of the news…comes from the Office of the Governor and the Kars Police Headquarters"

(*Snow* 25). The media is powerful and all pervasive because as the editor says "we can predict the future. You should see how amazed they are when things turn out exactly as we've written them" (29). The secret agency MİT has "files on everyone in the city, and employed a tenth of the population as informers" (201). Even history is revised here as Ipek informs Ka of the tourists who came to the museum which "commemorated the Armenian Massacre" (32). However, the museum imparts information sometimes totally removed from the facts and the real happenings. It can be read from her own words: "Naturally, she said, some tourists came expecting to learn of a Turkish massacre of Armenians, so it was always a jolt for them to discover that in this museum the story was the other way around" (32). The MIT has the major telephone lines of the leaders of the Islamist Prosperity Party tapped and the Islamists are under strict surveillance as possible "threat" to freedom.

Pamuk's works extend their reach from the East -West entanglements to the critique of modern political scenario of any state that becomes a mere publicity theatre show, with the alarming technological explosion and freedom of the so-called press. George Orwell, as early as in 1949, foresaw in *1984* how the state /party control will hold a monstrous grip over the individual, leading him to remark: "'Who controls the past […] controls the future: who controls the present controls the past" (37). As Orwell imagines a future when people's memories are deliberately weakened and their minds flooded with false propaganda by Big Brother's party, Pamuk takes the plunge backwards, reimagining and making a mockery of the perpetual coups in the state to hint at a similar fate which the intellectual Ka has to face, with the MIT keeping surveillance over the thoughts and actions of the people. Both Winston Smith in *1984* and Ka, like every other citizen, undergo persecution in the hands of power politics—whether it be leftists, fundamentalists or democrats. As Orwell states in *1984*: "Power is

not a means, it is an end. One does not establish a dictatorship in order to safeguard a revolution; one makes the revolution in order to establish the dictatorship. The object of persecution is persecution. The object of torture is torture. The object of power is power" (276).

*Snow* treats the Turkish coup as a melodrama all of its own and presents it as a farce. In the quasi-surreal world of the coup, characters misread the politics depicted in the theatre, newspapers, and television as reality. Melodrama, parody and irony characterise Pamuk's political argument which pleads for justice and equality. Goknar observes how the coups actually have given the writers the freedom to reclaim the past:

> WRITERS OF THE GENERATION after the last major military coup (September 12,1980)— which affected all aspects of Turkish politics, society, and culture and broadly represented the transition between leftist-socialist and neoliberal worldviews—have been increasingly free to resurrect Ottoman history and "Ottomanesque" language. ("Orhan Pamuk and the Ottoman" 35).

Proclaiming that power is all but theatrics and that theatre is just what power is all about, Pamuk fashions the coup as Sunay Zaim's bizzare play. Sunay Zaim is Pamuk's representation of the Attaturk secular hero who hails modernisation at the cost of eliminating the rich traditional culture of Istanbul. Sunay has a facial resemblance to Attaturk and his greatest ambition is to play the role of Attaturk on stage. Sunay representing Pamuk's use of "melodrama as part of literary pastiche to make a political argument" holds the centre stage in his theatre which intends to capture the fancy of the audience, with the burlesque (Goknar, *Orhan Pamuk, Secularism189*). He represents the state controlled machinery and is party to the military and the secular forces. Sunay's itinerant theatre group which is grounded in Ataturk's ideals performs with a

didactic mission to educate the masses about the new reforms. Sunay is committed to the cause and performs his "Brechtian and Bakhtinian" (*Snow*141) plays, resorting to low comedy to engage the masses.

Fact and fiction merge to parody the conspirational logic of history. Pamuk, with the astounding clarity of gunshots, breaks through the silence of the snow, firing with dramatic polyphonic voices at the shocked audience and the readers. His political imagination conjures a play within a play where in overtly melodramatic nuances, art merges with reality to expose the indispensible role of the theatrics in power play. Sunay Zaim represents the comical mask that violence wears while implementing the radical secularism that has besieged Turkey in its Westernisation process. Sunay Zaim, along with his wife Funda Eser, ravages the stage with plays in which the military stage their seizure on the unsuspecting crowd. Both the plays that Sunay stages are interludes to the military coups which take over, strangling the foothold of Islamist fundamentalism and restoring the so-called peace to Kars. Coups are parodied as relief measures when the people of Kars relax, as all is well in the hands of the military. As Goknar says, "A total of seven times between 1908 and 1997, an average of once every fifteen years, the military (whether late Ottoman or Turkish) intervened in the political process" (*Orhan Pamuk, Secularism*166).

Coups which are central to Turkish history and which occupy the destabilizing role of power politics mark the highlight of Pamuk's political novel. When Sunay performs his play in the centre stage of the snow filled Kars and the hearts of the people, it alienates themselves and the country from reality. The Bakhtinian voices of polyphony speak in the monologic setting of Kars and subvert Pamuk's identity of the silence of the snow which speaks of the confusing, conflicting consciousness of wounded history, current power politics, gender inequality and floundering ideologies.

Pamuk casts the veil of irony on Sunay's remark: "It was Hegel who first noticed that history and theater are made of the same materials . . . 'Remember that, just as in the theatre, history chooses those who play the leading roles. And just as actors put their courage to the test on the stage, so, too, do the chosen few on the stage of history'" (*Snow* 202). Sunay fears that in due course if "the army and the state" are not allowed to deal with "these dangerous fanatics, we'll end up back in the Middle Ages, sliding into anarchy . . ." (207-08). Hence he decides to stage the play titled *My Fatherland or My Head Scarf* which is publicised through the *Border City Gazette* and the local television. In fact the local television for the first time goes live with Sunay's play.

The play professed to be an independent version of the original which used to be staged in the mid-thirties as *My Fatherland or My Scarf*. It was "performed frequently in lycées and town halls all over Anatolia . . . popular with Westernising state officials eager to free women from the scarf and other forms of religious coercion." But in the early nineties the play did not have much importance with the weakened Kemalist stance and people came to witness the staging, presuming that it "it would be a consideration of contemporary politics. . . ." Some of the octogenarians expected a nostalgic revisit of the old days of watching the play but no one really expected to see a woman actually appear on stage donning a headscarf. When the secularists saw the veiled woman on stage, they believed that it was "the type . . . [of head scarf] that has become the respected symbol of political Islam" (150). The audience took for granted that the "veiled" woman had an air of arrogance around her for which even the "radicals" seemed to respect her, little knowing that the mysterious woman on stage was meant to appear sad. There was tension fraught in the audience with the proposed unveiling that, "even the most Westernised secularists in the hall were frightened by the sight of their own dreams coming true". Political Islamists too,

whose worst dream was that of the military forcing the women to uncover their head feared the materializing of their dream. Everyone else in the room too feared that if the woman bared her head, the "spectacle" it would create "might enrage the unemployed men witnessing it, not to mention the youthful horde milling at the back of the hall."

Amidst the apprehensions of the entire crowd present in the hall, the woman finally unveiled her head, and the audience held their breath in sheer disbelief. Even the republicans who "[h]aving expected a bespectacled village girl, pure-hearted, bright-faced, and studious, to emerge from beneath the scarf … were greatly perturbed to see it was the lewd belly-dancer Funda Eser instead." It seemed to mean that, "only whores and fools take off their head scarves. . . " (151). Funda, but unperturbed, went on with the next act of burning the veil amidst the taut silence in the audience. Her provocative act of lighting the veil and throwing it onto the stage was more than what the Islamists could take in. Pandemonium broke out as the Islamists raised cries of protest against the, "enemies of religion" "atheists" and "infidels." Funda, hardly audible above the "booing" and the "angry whistles," continued her dialogue on how "the fez" prevented liberation causing "reactionary darkness in …souls" hindering their joining "the modern nations of the West." This infuriated the Islamists so much that it raised the comment, "So why not take everything off and run to Europe stark naked?"(155). In the furore this comment created, the play advanced to the point where the woman was dragged on the stage by "religious fanatics" (156).

In the power struggle between the secular force headed by the military and the Islamists, the latter knew that they were being led into a trap and this knowledge angered them more than the actual event:

> It was not just the play's affront to covered women that bothered the school boys; nor was it simply the caricature of fanatics as ugly, dirty

> dolts. They also suspected the whole thing had been staged to provoke them. So every time they heckled the players . . . helplessness . . . made them even angrier. . . (156-57)

So even as some of them tried to pacify the religious school boys who were wild with rage, Sunay made his grand appearance on the stage and with his electrifying presence wooed the audience with words that were provocative and true to his genius, unscripted. He gave the ironic message loud and clear, of imposing military suppression to implement freedom: "Those who seek to meddle with the Republic, with freedom, with enlightenment, will see their hands crushed"(158). At this stage, the military rushed in from all corners of the stage and took over the scene, even as the audience, mesmerized by Sunay's theatrics, believed that it was part of the play. Sunay, provocatively announced on stage the death of the Director of the Education Institute and warned that "This lowly murder will be the last assault on the Republic and the secular future of Turkey" (159). Theatre took on the real life drama as the Force opened fire at the people and especially at the Islamists and students of the religious high school, including Nicep who had risen from his seat to plead for non violence. Even as most of the crowd failed to understand that the scene enacted before them was real, many got killed and many were left mute spectators and escaped death only because they feared to rise in protest. The military fired five rounds of shots and the play ended with Sunay and Funda thanking the military and walking over the dead bodies proclaiming: "This is not a play — it is the beginning of a revolution,'…. 'We are prepared to go to any lengths to protect our fatherland. Put your faith in the great and honorable Turkish army! Soldiers! Bring them over" (163).

Sunay Zaim dramatises history by staging a play with all its theatrics to make the coup real. The play within the play and the coup showcase Pamuk's crisis in *Snow*.

The proclaimed freedom of the modernists which is unlimited and meaningless and the Islamists' notion of a community based on identity without any freedom are represented in the gestures and screams of the audience which show that a reasonable communication between these two ideas is not possible. The coup strangely brings peace and Ka thinks "[a] small part of him was secretly relieved that the military had taken charge and the country wasn't bending to the will of the Islamists" (185). Coups have been so much a part of the Turkish modernising scenario that Pamuk ironises the average Turkish stance that coups restore peace. "Pamuk here amply exposes the hypocrisy of the [secular] Turkish public, who on the one hand criticize any military coup as a loss of democracy while on the other hand want the status quo guaranteed " (Erol 414). Emboldened by the success of his first play, Sunay's theatrical skills compel him to stage the next play within two days. The people of Kars are to witness, "Once again, life and art . . . merge in a bewitching historical tale of unparalleled beauty." But this time they are assured that they have nothing to fear as "the Central Police Station and the Martial Law Command had taken every conceivable precaution" (*Snow* 373). Sunay's swansong is an adaptation of "Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* but which in its final form showed many other influences" (399) and it has been referred to as *A Tragedy in Kars*, with its sole script being Kadife's hair. However the general public has feared massive bloodshed and many of them have preferred to stay indoors and watch the play telecast live. But the "religious high-school students had already reported to the Central Police Station to promise decorous attendance. . . " (373).

Sunay's theatrics gives him his huge share of admirers who occupy the front rows to watch "the most powerful man in the city . . . unafraid to stride onto the stage and bare his soul to the teeming multitudes" (401). Even as the audience watch the initial burlesque which Funda and Sunay perform, they wait in anxiety knowing that

something is on the way and there is "silence in the hall. It was as if the audience had left behind the struggles that defined them—the tussle of fathers and sons, the skirmishes between the guilty and the powerful—to sink into a collective terror . . ." (401). As the play progresses with its unscripted dialogues between Kadife and Sunay, highlighting the "two important decisions" Kadife has to take— "about baring her head, and about committing suicide . . . [the audiences'] admiration for her grew" (403). Kadife has been negotiated into the play by Ka in exchange for Blue's release and yet when the play actually takes place, she comes to know that Blue is no more and that she is on her free will to do the play or not. Yet, a determined Kadife stages her part, where she reasons out why women commit suicide, and differentiates the logic between men and women on the suicide issue, and when the play reaches its irrevocable, larger than life climax she removes her headscarf. Kadife, with face flushed with "anguish," "with a clean, single stroke… lifted her hand and pulled off her scarf." The audience stand stunned and in the dead silence of the hall, "For a moment [even] Sunay stared stupidly at Kadife, as if she had just done the utterly unexpected. Both of them then turned to the audience and gaped like acting students who'd forgotten their lines" (412). She then grabs hold of the gun and as decided earlier she fires the gun which is presumably unloaded. "A gunshot sounded in the hall. All of Kars watched in wonder as Sunay shuddered violently—as if he'd really been shot—and then fell to the floor" (412).Even when Kadife fires repeatedly four times and Sunay's body shudders in death, it is only much later that the audience realise that Sunay is dead—his death is as real as Kadife baring her head in public. In stupefied silence, the play closes with the soldiers arresting Kadife "for her own safety."

The play which turns out to be a coup in disguise ends by "restoring" the feeling of normality to the existing state of affairs, with the roads to Kars being reopened and

the people offering little resistance to the military operations to end the coup. "The governor . . . and a number of other officials were dismissed for dereliction of duty; the small band of conspirators . . . were arrested, along with a number of soldiers and MİT agents, who protested that they'd done it all 'for the people and the state' " (414). Dramatisation reaches its core in the staging of the second play *A Tragedy in Kars*. The play is the culmination of all the preoccupations in the novel. In the burlesque mixed with horror, characters perform in an unscripted unrehearsed plot that beats realism. Political Islam, secularism, veil, modernity, all are represented in a strange surreal stage performance that surprises, surpasses and establishes itself as real. As Kadife opens her veil and fires at Sunay, ending in his death, her imprisonment and the coup, Pamuk merges fiction with reality to underscore that theatrical representation has significant impact in the world of Turkish politics. In *Snow* multiple conspirational narratives and the tussle between secular-military alliances and Islamic terrorists expose the hypocrisy of the ideological positions. Blue, as the Islamist extremist, is a powerful character who convinces and subverts the conviction. Blue, handsome, charismatic and appealing, announces his pride to be a Turk and quotes at length from the Koran and romanticises the local tales and culture. "I refuse to be a European, and I won't ape their ways. I'm going to live out my own history and be no one but myself." Blue professes to believe that "it's possible to be happy without becoming a mock- European, without becoming their slave" and feels that the word "Europhiles" is denigrating.

Blue also believes that what is primarily important is to be an individual, which he feels a Westerner can never be, and his odium is towards the Westerners for not being individuals. It is because he is "an individual that . . . [he] refuse[s] to imitate them." (331). His admirers address Blue as "the Master" (71) while the secularists call him "infamous Islamist terrorist" (27). Ka describes him as "extraordinarily handsome"

with “midnight blue” eyes and “breathtakingly pale skin,” in whose “manner, expression, and appearance there was nothing of the truculent, bearded, provincial fundamentalist whom the secularist press had depicted with a gun in one hand and a string of prayer beads in the other” (74-75). He becomes famous after threatening to kill an “effeminate” Istanbul TV personality after the latter had “uttered an inappropriate remark about the Prophet Mohammed” (71). The TV personality is killed soon after this threat but Blue, the natural suspect of the murder, has an alibi in Necip who claims Blue has not killed anyone. Sunay and Blue, ideologically opposites, are charismatic political extremists who understand the power of culture as a political weapon in the hands of those who want to remake the world. Both Sunay and Blue are convinced that they know how secular mystery is to be solved, and work towards it, unlike Ka who remains fluctuating in his political and religious beliefs, and personal attitudes. Turkey has faced repeated ordeals at the hands of the European armies and later in the hands of the young Turks who had an “ultimate aim…to create a country that is richer, happier, and more powerful . . .” (*Other Colors* 230). Ironically, in the process, they seem to have sadly neglected the imaginative, creative part.

Pamuk, the artist, believes that “[n]ovelists wishing to put themselves in others’ shoes and identify with their pains and troubles will draw first and foremost from their imaginations.” The author brings in a variety of interactions in the text that open the imaginative possibilities of a dialogue happening between the divided selves of a Turkish native who is trapped between the Western Other and the traditional Other. Pamuk imagines the Other as a “creature who is nothing like us [and] addresses our most primitive hatreds, fears, and anxieties.” The novelist identifies with this Other by imagining and thinking of it and by transforming his skills into writing about the Other. The thoughts of the Other who is believed to be his opposite, “liberate[s]” him from the

"confines" of his own self (228). He warns about not only the blind Westernisation but also the fanatic fundamentalism. Pamuk equates shame and humiliation with pride and accounts for his "proud nationalism" as the result of deep humiliation. Hence in keeping with his Turkish spirit Pamuk elaborates on "the dark materials" his novels are made of:

> this shame, this pride, this anger, and this sense of defeat. Because I come from a nation that is knocking on Europe's door, I am only too well aware of how easily these emotions of fragility can. . . . take flame and rage unchecked. . . . For it is by sharing our secret shames that we bring about our liberation: This is what the art of the novel has taught me. (231)

Pamuk feels the need to use the medium of the novel to speak of his imaginations and fears for he believes that keeping this reality a secret will only shame one to further silence. The novelist uses his imaginative power "to transform that same reality, to fashion it into a parallel world demanding notice" (231). Thus novels belong to a world which is both imaginary and real, and the reader in the process of grasping the novel "confront[s] both its author's imagination and [that of] the real world whose surface we have been scratching with such fretful curiosity" (232). Hence Pamuk's political representation of his imagination creates metanarratives which parody history and showcases a dismal future of hapless individuals caught in the state machinery which seems to control everything. Pamuk sketches on his wide canvas the imaginative nuances of the power of politics on human fate, encroaching into his personal, cultural and political and artistic spheres. Ka, who is a journalist, a poet and a lover, finds his poems, his love, and his credibility as a journalist pushed to political ends by the state. Pamuk's imagination in the use of form, technique and content becomes spaces where

history, politics and culture meet to dialogise their differences, extremities and hopes. Goknar states:

> Pamuk's "Ottoman" theme has little to do with Ottoman history or historical problems per se but, rather, creates a liberating or triangulating discourse with respect to nationalist and Orientalist representations. The "Ottoman" theme, in short, is a space of opportunity, a meeting place of the real and the imaginary, self and other, a space of negotiation, transgression, and even "the sublime". ("Orhan Pamuk and the Ottoman" 37)

By projecting the headscarf as the centre of contention in the play, and the issue of suicide girls' as the converging point where the fundamentalists, the secularists and the leftists are left in a quandary, *Snow* intensifies in its representation the bitterness of the fate of women trapped in the patriarchal violence that religion, culture and politics place on their freedom and will. In *Snow,* the headscarf becomes an exploration into the misrepresentation of women in a society in which religion and politics play havoc raising dissident voices of identity struggle. As Kadife explains, "To play the rebel heroine in Turkey, you don't pull off your scarf, you put it on" (*Snow* 319). Following the State official orders, the Director of the Institute of Education, Prof. Nuri Yilmaz, issues orders to debar and expel all the girls wearing the headscarf from the premises. Teslime, the first of the "headscarf girls" believes that "the headscarf did not just stand for God's love; it also proclaimed her faith and preserved her honour" (121). Predictably therefore, Teslime is deeply shocked by the compulsion to remove her headscarf to avail herself of the facility of education at the government institute. Even though her mother continues to wear the veil, her family tries to convince her to part with it, like her friends who are worried that she would be expelled from the institution

if she fails to follow the order. Teslime is a religious and studious girl who wants to be educated above all, but she wants to be allowed to wear her headscarf and without the headscarf, she feels that "life had no meaning" (17). Even though her friends are urging her not to give up her headscarf and "taught her to think of the headscarf girls as a symbol of 'political Islam'" (16), under pressure they all slowly decide to change their stance and surrender the veil. Teslime, however, persists in her stubborn refusal to give up the veil, resulting in an eventual expulsion from the Institute. When she commits suicide, however, the shock waves unsettle both sides of the camp. They are unable to fathom how a deeply devout girl like Teslime could commit suicide, despite being aware that suicide is blasphemy in Islam. Teslime, as a woman and an individual, wants to be allowed to wear the veil not as a symbol of protest, but as a way of proclaiming her identity.

The political scenario of Turkey, a complex mix of the cultural and religious factors, affects the weakest at all times, and the headscarf issues and the unending suffering it created in the lives of women who were already burdened by poverty, misery and hardships in Kars, is tragic. The wearing of the headscarf is following the Court orders in the Kemalist Republic, and it is viewed as a political symbol in the hands of the Islamists and not a mere expression of the freedom to choose one's dress. Ka recollects how during his childhood days "a covered woman" has been a rare sight, especially in his "Westernised upper middle class circles" (22). But the situation is different now, as Muzaffer Bey tells Ka, "But now the streets of Kars are filled with women in headscarves of every kind'…. And now, because they've been barred from their classes for brandishing this symbol of political Islam, they've begun committing suicides" (21-22).The debates on the headscarf land the secularists and the Islamists in a difficult paradox. Islamists are, according to the Director, causing undue suffering to

their womenfolk "by turning headscarves into symbols and using women as pawns in a political game." This becomes an ironic comment considering that it is the State, with its newfound reforms, that has brought the ban (43). The Director also tries to target an external agency which, according to him, administers all the trouble: "Don't you see how they might have politicised the head-scarf issue so that they can turn Turkey into a weak and divided nation?" (43-44). The assassin retorts that "[h]ead scarves protect women from harassment, rape, and degradation. . . . The veil saves women from the animal instincts of men in the street" (46). The religious assassin's words are highly ironic for he attempts murder for the cause of religion and calls upon religion to save his womenfolk.

The Turkish Islamist context upholds the headscarf as an important Islamic symbol in terms of female modesty and piety. But as *Snow* tells us, it is the politics attached to the wearing of headscarves that makes the situation complicated. As Ka ruminates over the "nondescript headscarves . . . [on] . . . thousands of women . . . now the symbol of political Islam" (112), he also conveys that liberals are of the view that headscarves are a matter of personal choice as in the case of the Director who tells the assassin, "My dear child, I have a daughter myself. She doesn't wear a headscarf. I don't interfere with her decision, just as I don't interfere with my wife's decision to wear a headscarf" (44-45). Though the liberals aren't against the wearing of the headscarf as long it is of one's own will, free will itself is a matter of contention in Islam when it gets politicised and used in the power game. The state is on the defence, as the suicide epidemic is the least expected and they devise all measures to stop it. The Islamists too are at a loss as suicides are anti-Islamic. The Department of Religious Affairs ironically comes up with posters announcing, "Human beings are God's masterpieces and suicide is blasphemy" (113-14). We find that even when Ka makes

the enquiry into the suicide cases, the readers are taken to the postmodern reality that suicides are the individual and collective protests and searches for Self and identity in a patriarchal tyrannical scenario that rules politics, culture and society. Apart from the suicide of the famous headscarf girls on being denied the right to education, there are cases of girls committing suicides in protest against forced marriages, domestic violence, and rumours of ruined chastity. Though both the Director and Blue view a broken heart as the reason for the girls' suicides and try to justify it as their liberal/secular attitude permits, Ka is baffled over the whole issue while the sad truth settles on the readers that women are the worst hit in all disputes, be it political, religious or social. They have to pay with their lives in a world where their identity is at stake. As Teslime's last minute confusions reveal, after a lifetime of being brought up as religiously inclined to keep their heads covered, "suddenly" the women are told to obey the state and uncover their heads as the state wants them to take their headscarves off (115).

Thus Teslime is thoroughly disillusioned and nurses the feeling that the whole world has conspired to have her headscarf removed. "When she saw some of her friends giving up and uncovering their heads and others foregoing their headscarves to wear wigs instead . . . [she felt] that life had no meaning and she no longer wanted to live " (17). Bereft of all faith and hence hope, she decides to take her life. Elise P. Garrison's observations on suicide as representations are relevant in this context: "Though one has no control *in* death, suicide gives one control *over* death and hence the repercussions of suicide can be diverse and sometimes ironic. Suicide can be used to punish, release, coerce, end . . . or create curses and pollution . . . save communities or destroy them, save face or lose face, and so on" (178). To have control over death means to have control over life; even though it sounds a paradox it works and *Snow*

somehow becomes a discourse on representing suicides as expressions against the patriarchal constructions of the society like the state and religion which always dictate and control individuals. The state and religion after having driven women to the extent of suicide ultimately decide to combat together the menace of suicide, though for different political reasons. "But as the state-run Department of Religious Affairs and the Islamists had joined forces by now to condemn suicide as one of the greatest sins, and there were posters all over Kars proclaiming the same truth, no one expected a girl of such piety to take her own life" (*Snow* 17). Yet even as measures are taken, including the setting up of state committees, the Director is shot dead, presumably by an Islamist assassin and the actual conversation between the two before the assassination is taped and it is found on the Director's body. The death of the Director itself has opened a space of multiple expressions related to religion and politics. It is ironic that people get killed not only for the cause of religion but also for peace, let alone war. Yet Blue, "the wild-eyed scimitar-wielding Islamist" (71) disclaims the whole episode saying that it "is a state plot. First they used this poor director to enforce their cruel measures; and then they incited some madman to try to kill him so that they could pin the blame on the Muslims" (78). It works as an intricate plot, with one accusing the other at the risk of taking people's faith, lives and identity. Blue, a leftist turned Islamist, voices the nature of power that connives with every other agency to keep itself in power.

Even when Pamuk represents the hopes and fears of the Other, he also voices the fierce need for the privacy of the Other who would rather not have his vulnerabilities exposed, especially to the supposedly elite intellectuals who profess to take care of the underprivileged. In the concluding part of the novel when the author Orhan says goodbye to the people of Kars and asks Fazil whether he has anything to

say to the readers, the latter's answer is a determined, "Nothing." Fazil later relents to the author's request to address the readers but he clarifies his attitude by asking the readers not to believe anything that is written about the people of Kars. He is sure that, "No one could understand us from so far away" (435). The stern, unaltered voice of Fazil even satirises the context of the urban/modern construct. Thus the perspectives narrated in *Snow* exhibit a discourse on socio-cultural analysis. The discourse of the novelist on identity puts forward a non-linear approach where the possibilities of plurality in Turkish identity are explored. There is an appeal for dialogue focusing on the notions of particularity instead of the uniformity that usually pertains to the urban elites.

Kadife's political role as the leader of the headscarf girls is personal. Kadife, the daughter of an ex-communist Turget Bey, casually puts on the "headscarf one day to make a political statement . . . for a laugh . . ." (115). She says that being "the daughter of a [communist], who has been an enemy of the state since the beginning of time" (115-16), prompted her to act so. Kadife, "intended it to last for only one day; it was one of those 'revolutionary gestures' that you laugh about years later, when you're remembering the good old days when you were political" (116). But the following events of arrest, publicity and media, make it crucial for her. The extent of the seriousness of the act becomes such that if on her release the next day she were to say, "'Forget the veil! I never really meant it anyway!' the whole of Kars would have spat in my face." Once a professed atheist, she now chooses to believe that it is God's will that she endures all the suffering so that it would lead her to the "true path" (116). She knows that Teslime, being God-fearing and pious could never have brought herself to commit suicide. She also refuses to accept that Teslime, by committing suicide has offended her faith. She has infinite faith in the Koran and believes that if Teslime, a

devout believer committed suicide, it must have been again God's Will. "The Holy Koran is the Word of God, and when God makes a clear and definite command, it's not a matter for ordinary mortals to question" (114). She reflects how when she had first gone out in the headscarf, her father was so proud of her new rebellion, acknowledging it "not as a defence of Islam but as a defiance of the state" (116).

The headscarf as part of Turkish identity politics and feminist politics is best represented in *Snow* by Kadife who exhibits, as the novel unfolds, renewed faith in herself rather than in the State or God. She goes on to bare her head on stage, and eventually, she does it not for the sake of Blue but for her own cause as a woman. She lays bare the complex predicament of the men folk in her community when she says, "It's not my intelligence that frightens you. You fear me because I'm my own person" (409). She ends up shooting Sunay but that the bullets are loaded and that he would die is something she could have known beforehand, as the newspaper has already printed the news of death on stage. After making her political statement by baring her head on stage and shooting Sunay and serving her jail sentence, she is seen four years later leading a normal life as a busy wife, mother and a practising Muslim. Just before baring her head she says, "I *am* going to bare my head now . . . And then, to prove that I'm motivated by neither your coercion nor by any wish to be a European, I'm going to hang myself" (410). Ipek, her sister also exhibits strong individualistic traits. She gets divorced over the headscarf issue, has an affair with Blue, makes up her mind to marry Ka but when she realises that he has betrayed Blue, changes her mind.

Despite all the controversies regarding the political stance of Pamuk, *Snow* reflects some blatant truths which the author reveals by his multi perspective and double-edged narration. The views of Teslime, Kadlife and Hande on the headscarf issue are but expressions of women in the political context. Kadife and Ipek reflect the

freedom of women which is beyond the restrictions of the veil, the state, or patriarchal beliefs. Just as Ipek chooses to remain single, Kadife marries and leads a life committed to her social causes and religion. That both had been enamoured of Blue and were his mistresses and that both decided to lead lives on their own terms, thinking out of the confining frames of religion or politics to free will and thinking, ratifies Pamuk's political stand which upholds equal rights to a person, gender notwithstanding. Hande is distraught about baring her head, be it for any reason, personal or religious: "The true reason is that I can't concentrate, I can't imagine myself without a head scarf. Whenever I try to concentrate, I turn into either an evil stranger like the 'agent of persuasion' or a woman who can't stop thinking about sex" (125).

In the larger political context, the headscarf has been an issue of much debate. Even as the wearing of headscarf finds its place today more often as vogue than as part of religious practices, headscarves are also worn both as defence and defiance. It is treated both with reverence and suspicion. In the context of religion being related to politics and religious customs being politicised by men who assume power, the questions of female identity and her space for expression have to be defined. More often, rather than finding a space, a woman's efforts are wasted trying to make herself understood in a predominantly male centred sphere where rules, laws and concerns are totally different. Women need to focus on their sphere of action and go by the decrees of their faith — their faith in themselves as individuals with rights and freedom in this world. Religion and politics should not be detrimental to their work space. Pamuk's representation of women in the context of political Islam needs to be taken seriously.

Characters of Pamuk's *Snow,* put through the kaleidoscope of the American literary critic and feminist Elaine Showalter's theory, project as representations of the "models of difference" envisaged by Showalter. Showalter talks about four models of

difference in her article titled, "Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness." The four models, biological, linguistic, psychoanalytic and cultural try to portray the rebellion and the identity of female consciousness which is the result of the female experience of the paradigms put forward by male constructs that occupy the social, political, cultural and economical space, as part of male domination. The debate on the headscarf issue can be related to the biological model identified by Showalter as the "extreme statement of gender difference, of a text indelibly marked by the body. . ." (187). When Pamuk's *Snow* opens up numerous readings of the possible texts, headscarf issue somehow gathers the position of the epicentre.

One cannot help asking the question whether the fate of a country is determined by the wearing or *covering* or *not wearing* or *not covering* of a woman's body. State and religion, elitists and the marginalized, fundamentalists and the rationalists, controlled by the male dominated system fight by taking different positions where they view woman as a body and an anatomy, in Showalter's terms, "biological." Hande's remarks on the headscarf and the words of the assassin are cases in point. The assassin regards the headscarf as a symbol of protection saving women from "the animal instincts of the men in the street" (*Snow* 46). The expression of the assassin is a vehicle of "crude essentialism," very much patriarchal as it portrays women as feeble and inferior to men. A similar perspective is shared by Hande when she says that she can only think about her sex when she doesn't wear headscarf, confirming the stance of the patriarchal society that "women [are] inferior in intelligence." Hande's remarks thus become a representation that elaborate the expanse of how intimately and deeply the "phallic authority" (Showalter 187) has culturally oozed into the social fabric of human existence to cater to the existing notions of womanhood where woman is an inferior, fragile and a weaker sex, to be controlled and protected by the state or religion.

*Snow* becomes a further discourse on feminist politics when the other characters like Funda Eser talk against the male dominant establishments:

> Marriages, divorces, the covering of heads or the baring of them—these were all means to the same ordinary end: to reduce the heroine to such a state of helplessness that no man could resist her. However, although it is impossible to say whether she fully understood her roles in dramas celebrating the republican enlightenment, it must be allowed that the male dramatists who invented these stereotypes could not see a heroine expressing a notion any deeper or more refined than eroticism or social duty. (352)

Eser's words stand comparison with Showalter's linguistic model of difference where we can see a woman on stage using men's language as a foreign tongue and it suggests " a political gesture that also carries tremendous emotional force " (Showalter 192).

Showalter observes: "Psychoanalytically oriented feminist criticism locates the difference of women's writing in the author's psyche and in the relation of gender to the creative process" (193). Kadife exemplifies the "psychoanalytic model" in *Snow* many times when she makes a rebellion against the patriarchal notions of the state. She defies the main criterion established culturally and socially in the minds of the people regarding leadership which is usually a male dominated space. As the leader of the "suicide girls," she reproaches those who try to argue with her: "In a city where men are killing each other like animals just to make it a happier place, who has the right to stop me killing myself?" (*Snow* 402). Her stance is bold and clear when she says, "[A] woman doesn't commit suicide because she's *lost* her pride; she does it to *show* her pride" (405). As an independent woman she claims, "[M]en don't fear their women's intelligence; they fear their independence." (409). Ipek and Teslime too can be

considered examples of Showalter's psychoanalytic model. Ipek stays single as an independent woman and Teslime, through her act of suicide, expresses her independent and revolutionary spirit. As Huey P Newton, the African-American political activist and revolutionary leader, observes:

> The concept of … suicide is not defeatist or fatalistic. . . it conveys an awareness of reality in combination with the possibility of hope-reality because the revolutionary must always be prepared to face death, and hope because it symbolizes a resolute determination to bring about change. . . it demands that the revolutionary see his death and his life as one piece. (7)

Showalter regards the "model of women's culture … [as] a theory of culture [that] incorporates ideas about woman's body, language, and psyche but interprets them in relation to the social contexts in which they occur" (197). While discussing the headscarf issue as a core cultural marker and trend in Turkey, the signified meanings related to the head cover may blur the positions occupied by the old socio-cultural signifiers. Pamuk's portrait of Kadife resonates with the "cultural model" too.In many instances Kadife is seen taking her opportunity as the leader of headscarf girls to "focus on a *woman-centered* inquiry, considering the possibility of the existence of a female culture *within* the general culture shared by men and women" (Lerner 178). Pamuk's work *Snow* thus gives the reader the chance to politically imagine the various texts within. The headscarf girls and their suicide issue is the central argument around which the plot revolves. Suicide becomes the centre of contention between the secularists and Islamists, and protests and demands over its claims are held at the risk of the individual's life. Pamuk satirises, parodies and critiques the political context, and in the novel, snow symbolises the unstable aspects of human life. The author figure going

through Ka's notes finds that it is snow which has finally held Ka's fascination. Snow in its individual form is a snowflake and a crystallised snowflake in eight or ten minutes falls through the sky, loses its shape and vanishes. He observes that Ka has sketched the diagram of a snowflake and given each of his nineteen poems, written in the span of his three day visit, their specific position on the snowflake. Taking inspiration from Sir Francis Bacon's, "tree of knowledge," Ka assigns the three axes—"Imagination," "Memory" and "Logic" to his snowflake image and classifies his poems under them. Just as the form of each snowflake is shaped by natural and even mysterious forces, "Ka . . . [is] convinced that every life is like a snowflake: individual existences might look identical from afar, but to understand one's own eternally mysterious uniqueness one had only to plot the mysteries of one's own snowflake" (*Snow* 383). Snow symbolises silence, purity, divinity as well as terror, hopelessness and misery. Yet in the course of Ka's journey, it reminds him of Allah and becomes the title of a poem, a collection of poems and the novel itself.

The writing figure who appears in *The White Castle to* redeem the lost text and the boy Orhan who tells the tale in *My Name is Red* mature in *Snow* to "Orhan," the famous writer who redeems the text. The fragile and unstable Ka who declares that this snowflake is his life writ large is silenced against the collective form of the snow in its whiteness. *Snow* appears to be the transition from the material to the spiritual, the book to the novel, and the absent to the present. "Orhan" emerges as the paradoxical figure who comments critically on the socio-economic and political scenario of which he is a participant as well as a critic. His only redemption is the literary medium of text and metafiction, having a mystical intervention. "Orhan" remembers Ka explaining to him of this presence, this imagination. He recollects:

> [H]e had told me . . . that the emerging book had a 'deep and mysterious' underlying structure. He had spent his last four years in Frankfurt 'filling in the blanks' in this hidden design . . . In Kars, he had felt like a medium, as if someone were whispering the poems into his ear . . .
>
> Still he labored to reveal what he had become convinced was the hidden logic of this testament to the visions and inspirations he'd had in Kars. (263)

Pamuk's political imagination uses the objective correlative of fragmentation where every fragmented narration gives a lead to the political expression of the state: the race, the religion and the gender. Thus every narration, be it that of Ka, Orhan, Blue, Kadife, or Sunay, becomes a representation and even the headscarf takes on a similar note. Ambivalences are the natural by-products where reality is constructed again and again as the effort of a genuine artist who intends to seek nothing but the truth which in turn manifests itself in representations that foresee ambivalences as meanings are generated. The representations in the texts of Pamuk never stop; rather communications within the texts generate endless meanings that create new imaginative landscapes to the political, artistic and cultural frames of the living world.

The political imagination of the artist thus journeys through the differences of race, culture and gender and the novelistic imagination becomes a text, a tool and above all the power to rise above the limitations of one's stifling identities. Through his political novel *Snow,* Pamuk exposes the hypocrisy of every political and religious ideology by satirizing and ridiculing his characters, including the author figure as figures of compromise. His novelistic imagination explores the extensions and possibilities of borderlines and the ambivalence the ideologies create while

communicating complexities and ambiguities involved in the question of identity, nation, gender and displacement. Pamuk's imagination in the use of form, technique and content becomes spaces where history, politics and culture meet to dialogise their differences, extremities and hopes. The next chapter discusses how the spaces of artistic cultural and political imagination in the literary texts of Pamuk, in the flow of fragmented narratives, shifting identities and reimagined histories, move in and out of their defined and undefined trajectories of space and time to point to a space of transcendence where the imaginative artist becomes a responsible artist too to convey the message of the objectivity of the human being as an appearance among other appearances. The chapter leads to the conclusion on how texts become spaces of transcendence where imagination questions, problematizes and hybridizes.

# CHAPTER 5

## CONCLUSION: TRANSCENDING SPACES

In the unparalleled unconfined space that Pamuk's imaginative genius chooses to dialogize, there is an urgent and constant demand to transcend the horizons of cultural, political and artistic borders where countless projections of imagination vie with one another to represent the already represented. In hybrid, ambivalent and non linear expressions of the projections, the space becomes a problematised dialogue of the artist's narratives, rendering familiarity to territories hitherto unknown, by making spaces for negotiation. Pamuk's imagination gives a non-temporal /non-spatial element to his texts as he engages with a kind of top to bottom narratives of shuffling identities. When his narratives speak of the Self as the Other or as the dialoguing of the Self with the larger human consciousness or as a multiple mix of confused ideologies, Pamuk conveys the message of the objectivity of the human being as an appearance among other appearances. Ideologies and nationalism stand exposed and cultures are embraced as aesthetic expressions of political and cultural differences bridging ontological barriers. The imaginative journey transcends itself when the enquiry about the Self and the Other gets communicated to the readers and the task becomes a shared one, as those exposed to the same political artistic or cultural scenario or imaginative spaces would articulate similar imaginings. Yet the transcendence, this seeing differently beyond horizons, is not an amalgamation of theoretical gestures; it is a flow of narratives, shifting identities, structured stories, rewritten histories, documents, incidents, to name a few. The artist engages his power of imagination deliberately, wishfully and authentically whereby identities are problematised, questioned, hybridized, expanded and even transformed.

As Pamuk imagines the cultural, artistic and political spaces into being, the nuances of narration translate Darvinoglu's archives, the Sultan's unrealised book and Ka's poems into texts, serving as the in-between Iserian blanks which connect the reader to the text, rendering imagination its final surge into the collective human consciousness. The polyphonic voices, the dialogues between the Self and the Other and the parodic interconnections to the past, all serve as gaps between the artistic and the aesthetic, where the reader wanders from one perspective to another, from one gap to another, from one voice to another, thus imagining and reimagining the texts in the multitudinous readings. The entity of a text is not a finite, fixed one but an ever evolving network of traces that ultimately become a lived space, enlivened by relationships, histories, dreams and memories. As Pamuk narrates his texts in the form of novels, he unwinds the faculty of imagination with all its strength, beauty and sensibility to depict empathetically the truest expression of human spirit, that is, humanity. Imagination which unfurls in the form of novels, gathers its momentum in written signs that form the virtual world of spoken forms where narrations become fictionalized and get layered in the realms of the author's presence as a character in his work. Thus the written sign represents the spoken sign, and in a linear fashion spreads out that which follows one another consecutively in the order of time. The result is a spatialisation of the presence of the imagined: the whole of experience is spread out before the presence. The mirroring between space and time results in time, in its turn, being spatialised as well: this is the origin of history as a bound-together whole with a past, present and future. Imagination is all about this presencing of the absence and the in-between spaces of its infinite meaning.

Pamuk's imagination journeys through the subtle ruptures and nuances in understanding, and portrays the Self and the Other as similar or as distinct as they are

from each other. His artistic gaze ponders appreciatively over the Eastern and the Western artistic representations and his political portraitures anguish in ambivalence probing on whether spatial and physical traits determine one's identity. History, dreams, memories and hopes place no specific demarcation between the established boundaries of East /West, secular/sacred, Self/Other, traditional/modern, fundamental/secular. Attempts at creativity or imagination are but forms of addressing the same through the difference, and the different through the Other. Thus in Pamuk, narratives open up the space for dialogue between cultures, art and politics, and the imagination explores it to endless extents. The novelist's imagination creates the space where effective dialogues are communicated and connects this world to the lived experience of the readers whereby Others become us and we become Others. The representation of the unrepresented and the unexpressed brings forth meanings with many connotations.

Kars and Istanbul are the familiar grounds on which Pamuk bases his narratives to probe into the issues of identity in the context of a crisis generated by the clash of the binaries. Within the textualities of Orhan Pamuk's work, the representation of imagination transcends individual, national and imagined identities to reach beyond the conventional metaphysical binaries such as same/different, word/image, history/fiction, secular/sacred, original/copy, and man/woman to spaces of transcendence. Pamuk's imagination connects the readers to a space of understanding which transcends the binaries and the space itself to give a political, cultural and artistic context to identities which in turn connects humanity in the broader global perspective. Pamuk's creative imagination, journeying through the Ottoman archives and the secular republican notions, deconstructs the binary logics of opposites like the East /West, religious/secular, and the modern/traditional, critiquing

their role and existence with relation to each other and their place in Turkish modernity. In opening and experimenting with areas in literary modernity, Pamuk problematises the paradoxical inner conflicts of opposites in an individual and represents them in the "antinominal" space which "defines the dynamic of the individual's quest for wholeness and individuation" (Harmon 76). This new space created out of narratives, in a writing and re-writing process, imagines a historical present where ambivalences but naturally coexist. Pamuk, the author, has projected the process of his continued imagination in *Other Colors* and *The Naïve and the Sentimental Novelist,* texts that project not only the author and his finished projects but are extended reflections on his other literary texts as the author and the reader. Both the texts are amalgamations of recollections, personal memoirs, stories and observations about the art of novel making which provide the reader with his insights into the imaginative space of the transcendent, emphasizing strongly his observations on the Self. These texts are as much the essence of Pamuk's politics as they are texts freed from the author, for the reader to interpret, and yet central to any meaningful study of the works of Pamuk.

Defining the creative role that imagination plays in the process of novel making, Pamuk says, "Our mind constantly searches for motive, idea, purpose, a secret center." In the process "[w]e transform words into images in our mind." Pamuk elaborates further that though novels tell stories, "the novel is not only a story. The story slowly emerges out of many objects, descriptions, sounds, conversations, fantasies, memories, bits of information, thoughts, events, scenes, and moments" (*Naive* 20). Pamuk's imagination shapes the present from history and the archives of the past and by reintroducing cultural relics and everyday objects. The central point of his narratives revises the attitude and transforms, and "[a]s we picture in our

imagination what the words are telling us (what they want to tell us), we readers complete the story" (*Naive* 21). Pamuk exposes the binaries of secular-Oriental contradiction by critiquing them to culturally raise, redefine and deconstruct the concept of Turkish identity. He places his texts on the metaphysical level so that meanings emerge to spaces beyond. Pamuk makes use of the presence and the absence of the textual space to achieve this transcendence. The virtual, ambivalent space of transcendence projects the reader, the text and the author to an indefinite and unlimited existence that spurs the reader-writer to invade his own texts using virtual manifestations sometimes in the form of a narrator. Thus the narrator in *Snow* is both the object and character in the narratives. This structure, by creating ambiguity about the narrator, enables Pamuk to establish a position of freeing himself from the existential crisis. *The White Castle, My Name is Red* and *Snow s*hare the common thread of a text which is physically absent to introduce the text that the author overwrites. The technique of an absent text in *The White Castle, My Name is Red* and *Snow* further allows political critique and self-reflexivity.

When Pamuk chooses to reveal the excess of Turkish secularism, his political imagination reassesses Ottoman history and its cultural diversity, deconstructing and destabilizing fixed identities to bring about post secular and transnational perspectives. In Ka's attempts to create his book of poems in *Snow* and Black's mission of writing the manuscript in *My Name is Red,* though the texts themselves fail, they are redeemed by the presence of the author narrator who creates his version of the texts recreating the bond by providing the missing link and filling in the gaps. This again is a redemptive act of the author to convey that extensions and representations of creativity and imagination cannot be confined to verbal, visual or virtual tones or to hues of black and white but exist in the ambivalence of

transcending spaces. Pamuk's texts lead not to "beautiful and unattainable thing[s]" (*White Castle* 128) but journeys to the process of how to read and understand a cultural history caught between the contradictory forces that define as well as delimit it. Through dissident notes of historiographical and archival writings and techniques of political parody, Pamuk's novels maintain a secular modernist vision, familiarising literary modernity, especially in the Turkish literary scenario, and translating his imagination to the reader and taking him to a familiar horizon which borders on literary and mystical transformations. As he remarks, "One day I'll write a book that's made only from fragments too . . . This is that book, set inside a frame to suggest a centre that I have tried to hide: I hope that readers will enjoy imagining that centre into being" (*Other Colors* xi).

Pamuk reaches beyond the determined spaces of cultural and political contexts to attain transcendence through literary representations of the ambivalences and of the representations of the fixities and authentic historic voices, by reimagining his narratives from the very space which they seek to transcend. Hence the Turkish culture and Ottoman past render astounding hues to his narrative pen which seeks its final redemption in the art of storytelling. Vassanji's comment on the postcolonial diaspora can be taken as an appropriate remark on Pamuk's writing: " reclamation of the past is the first serious act of writing. Having reclaimed it, having given himself a history, he liberates himself to write about the present" (63). Reclamation is brought about by narratives in the form of fragments, memories, dreams and representations. Defying common views on what a text is and what the author means, Pamuk entrusts the narrative to the author, the narrator, the characters themselves and even the epochal storyteller, to tell the tale which represents the indeterminate. As Goknar comments:

> The motif of the incomplete, failed, or "absent text" of the Pamuk novel, for example, is redeemed by the very text Pamuk has written. Read together, these narratives identify, critique, and subvert the processes of overdetermination articulated by discourses of orientalism and nationalism. The "Ottoman" theme is none other than this, a process of hermeneutic triangulation (Goknar, "Orhan Pamuk and the Ottoman" 38).

Pamuk employs both the top-down and the bottom-up approaches while imagining history in a manner that questions the existence of a structured centre providing space for the marginalized through fragmented narratives thus creating a new structure that collides with its old representations, both in origin and cause. In *Snow* we can see the multilayered flow of events that create ruptures to undermine and subvert a structured centre to split into fragments and then problematise the liminal spaces formed in between. In *Snow* instead of focusing on solving the binary conflict between the secular /sacred, Pamuk problematises it and puts forward a bold suggestion of embracing the present redefined Turkish identity with all its ambivalences and an unbiased approach to Islamism. Multiple perspectives and standpoints of professed enthusiasts in the novel, like Turget Bey, Muhtar and Saadettin Sheikh, who voice a mix of Communisim, Islamism and Sufism present their stances from the Other's point of view. Even if it is not a third space, views are grasped from a liberal imaginary boundary, with an appeal for negotiation and cultural continuity.

In *The White Castle* the archive is the space for reimagination. Just as Darvinoglu picks up the manuscript from the archive, and out of curiosity translates it, Pamuk begins his new literary experimentation of postmodern narratives by

reverting to the Ottoman archival past through which he makes a non-linear reading. In a reassessment of the Ottoman past he makes an intervention into the secular republicanism. Darvinoglu is a representation of the Turkish dilemma of the republican modernity in clash with the Ottoman past. Pamuk, by writing and rewriting, reconnects to the Ottoman past, defining Turkishness as a literary transformation transcending suppression. There is a quiet birth of a novel of hybrid authority— one that is secular and sacred. Darvinoglu's "inspired translation" (Goknar, *Orhan Pamuk,Secularism* 100) once again gives life to the Ottoman culture and script forcibly forgotten by the Language and Reforms Act implemented by Attaturk in 1924. The texts of Pamuk become the centre to document the impact of the cultural revolution and the question of identity. Darvinoglu writes, and in the text of the novel, Hoja and the slave write, and in the end the writing matter is taken over by the writer subject. Pamuk's statement is that of transcendence by blurring the binary logic through literary modes of translations, autobiographies, critiques and discourses. Conversion and counter conversion are central in representing the possibility of a new iteration of Self. There is an absent text in the novel as in the case of many of Pamuk's novels and this absence is assertive by its presence. The absence or rather the presence is mystical, secretive and unknown. *The White Castle* introduces the author figure or the writing subject in Pamuk's novels. In *The White Castle* he is represented as a character of hybrid identification, free from the ethno-religious and national confines. The use of the pronoun "He" by the narrator (134), referring to the one who has left, Hoja or the Venetian, is significant. It is an othering of the self, a looking at oneself from the vantage point of the Other. "He" is as much the very element of the narrator himself as also an allusion to the divine mystic presence.

Even as Hoja and the Venetian merge into "Him" or invent a super power of a machine, Pamuk merges the Self and the Other with the tool of imagination. They become two compartmentalized spaces of the Self that evolve into a fluid, open, endless and proliferating Self. The physical image of the white castle, pure and unattainable, is symbolic of the Self, the truth or the original text which can never be real but can be represented in spaces of ambivalence to suggest a lack. The original has meaning only in relation to the Other and the Other and the Self are but "identical twins changing places" (*Other Colors* 249). The white castle could also be a symbol of the false, the unreal— a different text as the imagination propagates and hence unattainable. As Pamuk draws us to the final chapter of *The White Castle*, drawing the reader in and out, intermittently, into the consciousness of Hoja and the Venetian, his voice becomes the voice of the narrator who philosophises: " Of what importance is it who a man is?. . . The important thing is what we have done and will do" (*White Castle* 134).

The final chapter has the traveller from Italy approaching the narrator, having heard about the narrator from "Him." The narrator gives him the book which is also the story of *The White Castle* to read, and watches him read, from a distance. He smiles at the wonder on the visitor's face as he reads and simultaneously looks out of the window to find that the scenes back home in Italy, as described in the book, are actually in front of him in his house in Gezbe. The scenes are identical, yet representations vary as the cultural imagination extends itself to embrace spatial differences as well:

> Then he looked again at the view from that window overlooking the garden behind my house. I knew exactly what he saw. Peaches and cherries lay on a tray inlaid with mother-of-pearl upon a table, behind

> the table was a divan upholstered with straw matting, strewn with feather cushions the same colour as the green window frame. I was sitting there, nearly seventy now. (*145*)

As Bhabha remarks, "The demand of identification — that is, to be *for* an Other — entails the representation of the subject in the differentiating order of otherness" (*Location* 45). Pamuk brings about the disruption of the stability of the ego to look at the Self and the Other from spaces which speak of coexisting contradictions. Self inevitably becomes a search within as much as a search for the Other. Cultural imagination widens this quest to the search of the identity of the self which does not delimit itself to any ontological barrier but widens its horizons to embrace the Other through understanding its art, politics and culture. Dialogues open up these spaces of enunciation. Even as Hoja and the slave, with all their differences despite their initial physical resemblances, finally merge into "Him" or the narrator, the fragmented narratives of their realisation of each other emerge as the in-between spaces which convey the non-temporal, non-spatial problematic search for the ambivalence, the lack or the excess. The nuances of the shifting identities undergo a process wherein the similarities and differences manifest as gaps and continuity. The Self can be defined, in Hegelian terms as "an *infinite*, *self-reflected and self-moving being"* (Ferro 3). Self and consciousness are in perpetual motion where "consciousness steps out of itself . . . and returns to itself continuously" (3-4). In this continued infinite process, "*self* and *other* are both moments of self-consciousness and are both completely dependent upon each other . . . [and] consciousness can only acknowledge itself as self-consciousness by putting an *other* in front of itself. . . " (4).

Self-consciousness finally emerges as a mode of consciousness which is ultimately recognized and transformed in its transit through cultural imagination.

Cultural differences indeterminately constitute identities and in the journey from the symbol to the sign *I* are articulated, the cultural, political and artistic differences. It is the imagination of the artist which draws them into dialogues and opens spaces for transformation. Dialogues are continued processes and must exist in the world order, for even if they do not provide all the answers there is continuity. In Bakhtinian terms, "consciousness never gravitates towards itself but is always found in intense relationship with another consciousness" (*Problems* 32). Self is as much a probe within as much as a probe into the Other. Hence "Every experience, every thought of a character is internally dialogic, adorned with polemic, filled with struggle, or is on the contrary open to inspiration from outside itself – but it is not in any case concentrated simply on its own object, it is accompanied by a continuous sideways glance at another person" (32). *The White Castle* exhibits the external completeness of an individual novel but the characters and dialogue continue with their conflicting binaries. As Bhabha states, "[T]he problem of outside/inside must always itself be a process of hybridity" that results in negotiating the political and cultural meanings generated from the "*in-between* spaces". This in-between ambivalent space becomes "the crossroads to a new transnational culture . . . [where] [t]he 'other' is never outside or beyond . . . [but] emerges forcefully, within cultural discourse . . . 'between ourselves'" (Bhabha, *Nation* 4).

Pamuk describes the novel as "a way of thinking, understanding, and imagining and also as a way of imagining oneself as someone else" (*Other Colors* 233). When he describes the novelist's politics (229) as rising from his own imagination, Pamuk says that the writer "must have the artistry to tell his own stories as if they were other people's stories, and to tell other people's stories as if they were his own. . . " (409). The Pamukian frames achieve a sort of transformation whereby

the gaps created in the text transform the reader to the lived world of the narrators who speak as characters. Pamuk's imagination engages the Self of the reader into a dialogue with the polyphonic voices of the Other and the multifarious narrators from different perspectives, leaving the reader, as in the Iserian model, to fill in the lacunae. Imagination renders a perfect give and take between the author, the reader and the text where the interplay of textual gaps and ruptures takes the process of communication to its unrivalled heights. Pamuk frees himself from the authorial dilemma through his narratives which flow on to the reader through his imagination. As Pamuk remarks:

> [T]he world is a place that is in the process of becoming; unfinished, it is somehow lacking. It resembles our own world, which is also in the process of becoming, so we want to dig deep: to understand the rules that govern this world, to find inside it a corner wherein we might live by our own ideas of right and wrong.

He proceeds further saying that as we go through the half finished world of the book we are imagined into the "half-finished world that the book is trying to fathom." This awakens in the reader not only an awareness of "the terror and uncertainty of this world still in progress. . ." but also makes him "feel almost responsible for it. . . " (*Other Colors* 149). Thus narratives are the sole redemption whereby a free play of imagination can be instilled in the readers to make them understand the nuances of cultural, artistic and political differences. Imagination as represented in fragmented narratives makes space for fresher perspectives that look at the Self and identity from unimaginable borders so that borders remain mute and exchanges flow in, facilitating a deeper understanding of the human race.

Barthes declares that the author is dead and sets on to prove that texts get into the stature of a linguistic process thus attaining the ultimate scope of the text getting opened to other texts. He affirms that the text is "a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture" (*Death* 146). *The White Castle* could have been written by Pamuk, the narrator, Darvinoglu, Hoja or the Venetian and the poems in *Snow* are just not written at all, the reader or the writing figure hardly gets to see more than one poem. *My Name is Red* has all its narrators recounting their perspectives, with no central authorial figure except Orhan who could as well be lying. Red ceases to be just a name. The borders between the author and the reader diminish whereby the reader is taken into confidence by offering him to become part of the events of the story as a narrator, a spectator or even a character. Foucault, speaking on the author fixity elaborates, "I seem to call for a form of culture in which fiction would not be limited by the figure of the author." Foucault emphasises his concept of what an author is, as he states: "And behind all these questions, we would hear hardly anything but the stirring of an indifference: What difference does it make who is speaking?" (Foucault, *Aesthetics* 222)

The concept of the implied author behind an implied reader throws light on Pamuk's *Other Colours*. Pamuk quietly believes in the dual role of the author and the reader and he says: "For every unwritten but dreamed and planned novel . . . there must be an implied author." This notion has always been with him like an obsession as he confides how "for thirty years, I have devoted all my strength to becoming the implied author of the books I long to write" (*Other Colors* 10). When Pamuk mentions the implied author he reflects on his own writing and anticipates playing the twin role of the implied author and the implied reader. Pamuk puts into practice the

Bakhtinian concept of an author who has many authorial voices. Just as his name is Red, he is also the corpse and the murderer as much as the Hoja /Darvinoglu or the narrator. The storyteller in *My Name is Red* cuts across as the dissident authorial voice which becomes intertextual as well. The space for the author as an identity of authority or fixity is thus nullified. "The removal of the Author . . . is not merely an historical fact or an act of writing; it utterly transforms the modern text . . ." (Barthes, *Death* 145). The virtuality projected in the ambivalent space of transcendence portrays the objective and subjective realms of the text, the author and the reader. In Turkey, a country whose national identity is constantly questioned, binaries have opened up sites of dialogue. According to Pamuk, a novelist's politics engages imagination as a space for dialogue, cultural understanding, artistic expression and political presencing, with the aim to understand, express and transcend the differences through hybridization, consensus and the realisation that the Other is as much me as I am the Other. In the cultural, artistic and political exercise of imagination, literary texts serve as the imaginative links to bridge borders and provide the mutually inspiring spaces for expressing the ambivalence that can never fully be realised but only represented in its many representations.

Darvinoglu's manuscript finds its aesthetic extension in *My Name is Red* in which one final manuscript is the focus. This incomplete manuscript, the failed text in the novel, is the secret book commissioned by the Sultan to commemorate the first Islamic millennium. This innovative book that proposes to illustrate objects and portraits in an individualistic style, independent of the narrative, once when materialized would defy the norms of traditional Islam, and the murderer, as an artist, fears this sacrilege in his internal conflict. Once again the text or the book fails until the writing subject redeems it. The author figure who appears in *My Name is Red* is

Orhan, the representation of the author intellectual who alone can, through literary modes, transform and transcend the binary poles of the pre-modern and the modern, the secular and the sacred, and the image and the text. The "two pens" representing the sacred and the profane are blended by the writing subject Orhan who represents a "third pen" of the secular/sacred, and the text/image. The cultural and aesthetic imagination synthesizes the image and the text through a literary innovative novelisation, as Enishte Effendi remarks on the third space:

> In the realm of book arts, whenever a masterpiece is made, whenever a splendid picture makes my eyes water out of joy and causes a chill to run down my spine, I can be certain of the following: Two styles heretofore never brought together have come together to create something new and wondrous. (*My Name* 194)

The "two pens," those of the miniaturist and the portraitist, extend from image and text to the pre-modern Ottoman past and the secular modern to redefine Turkishness not as something definite but as one which takes meaning in its representations and spaces from its origin, its past and its progression as denoted in the novel by the colour red. The forms in which the colour appears give it a transcendental space where it is constantly reviewed. The colour red talks of its importance: "Wherever I'm spread . . ." Red says, "I see eyes shine, passions increase, eyebrows rise and heartbeats quicken … Behold: Living is seeing" ( 226). Red explains itself to the blind miniaturist, "the meaning of color is that it is there before us and we see it… Red cannot be explained to he who cannot see" (228). The colour red strikes its potent appeal in the murder scene where the red rug depicts the inescapable loneliness of the dying man. The very same red in the form of ink in a heavy Mongolian inkpot is a gift from Black to Enishte Effendi. Yet in the murder

scene the red ink carried in the pot merges with the background and the scene of the murder and becomes the blood of Enishte Effendi. “I could see no one color and realised that all colors had become red. What I thought was my blood was red ink; what I thought was ink on his hands was my flowing blood” (210). The artist’s hand and the murderer’s hand are linked by the same red which is blood. Creation and destruction are denoted by red just as red is also the symbol of tradition and illumination passed down from the Mongol to Ottoman. Finally *My Name is Red* treats red as something that speaks in a life giving voice, and Red says that life commences and returns with it as it is everywhere (226). Red is a name for everything from imagination to violence to artistic expression and divinity. It is a fluid process of the reconstitution of narratives symbolised by the “third pen” suffused with red ink.

Pamuk’s cultural synthesis is the artistic process of the merging of the “two pens” of text and image into a “third pen” which is novelisation, to represent his politics. Images are reassembled and dissembled to produce texts and vice versa. Traditional stories are rewritten by literary texts as in the case of the Shirin-Husrev love story rewritten by the Shekure-Black story. In the novel, Pamuk makes an intricate mix of traditional images to communicate a literary innovation in which the text overwrites the image. In a framed “third pen,” the author figure, Orhan, takes over as the liberated narrative presence to deliver a story of liberation, redemption and deliverance. But again, Orhan is only a representation used to make the space of ambivalence abundant, as Shekure explains: “In the hopes that he might pen this story, which is beyond depiction, I’ve told it to my son Orhan. …” (503). She is certain that Orhan wouldn’t hesitate to fabricate a story of conviction.

*My Name is Red,* as a text which showcases the representation of perspectives, makes a classic example of Bakhtin's argument that a “novel must represent all the

social and ideological voices of its era, that is, all the era's languages that have any claim to being significant; the novel must be a microcosm of heteroglossia" (*Dialogic* 411). The reader becomes an active participant in the heteroglossia thus diminishing the role of the author. As observed by Barthes: " a text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not, as was hitherto said, the author" (*Death* 148). In *My Name is Red*, ruptures and nuances add dimensions to Pamuk's engagement with postmodern imagination. Death, violence and rupture represent different perspectives. The text itself is open to rupture and to new ways of connecting the reader and the text when death brutally brings life to a multiplicity of voices. The corpse, that is, the dead forewarns imminent death of the living: "let me caution you . . . one day they might do the same to you" (*My Name* 6). The murderer, even when he contemplates killing and death, ponders over his instinct to kill bringing out his dilemma of being traditional or modern which in turn is the conflict of the artist, the nation Turkey and the author Pamuk. Death opens up the space for dialogue, similar to the "death of the author," which removes the authorial presence and spells the birth of the novel opening new perspectives to interpreting the text. Narrators take over as the authorial voices and in the process the reader (the implied reader) finds himself engaging with the narrators and the dialogues the text carries. Murder kills the voice of the traditionally bound as well as the blasphemous, leaving behind a flat imitation of the portraiture which fails to impress. The Sultan's book too, in the larger context fails, thus opening up possibilities of seeing beyond to the inevitable space of agreement.

The coffee house and the storyteller are Pamuk's verbal spaces for change and transition. The storyteller speaks out the heart of the tree which yearns to be its

meaning, as the dog which "do[es] speak, but only to those who know how to listen" ( 12). Dervishes, ghosts and Satan narrate their celebration of tales and the storyteller becomes the vocal space of expression, especially of the unrepresented, the marginalized, and the inanimate. Even as the murderer tries to transcend the poles of both the Eastern tradition and the Western innovation, he tries to redefine himself in terms of a mixed identity. His portraitures fail but is taken over by the narrator who becomes a hybrid figure between a historian, an artist and an author, voicing the central problematic of the self, identity and narration, and translates culture, art and texts in a process of writing and rewriting. This is similar to Bhabha's third space where in the clash between the coloniser and the colonised, the subject which itself is decentered articulates resistance of an unstable kind. Identities and their definitions are constantly shifting and texts are spaces of ambivalence in the very act of their translation by discourse.

The storyteller epitomizes the process of becoming what he is by presenting himself as an "Other." While taking the reader to the perspectives of the victimised through his narratives, the storyteller himself becomes a victim in the process and gets killed. Tradition speaks of the Turkish storyteller, the "Meddah," who was found particularly in Turkish courts, and similarly wandered through the early Ottoman empires singing or reciting poems about love and heroism. They were also found telling tales in coffee-houses using a wand and a handkerchief as props. Satire and humour made the voice of the storyteller powerful and dreaded in the Turkish political, cultural and artistic scenario. The storyteller in *My Name is Red* is resurrected from his Ottoman past to narrate with his double-voiced tongue at the risk of laying down his life. His is the voice of stark truth: "Men frequent these places, become besotted with coffee and lose control of their mental faculties to the point that

they actually listen to and believe what dogs and mongrels have to say. But those who curse me and our religion, it is they who are the true mongrels" (*My Name* 14).

The storyteller's voice, which thus brazenly voices the unvoiced, is silenced by the orthodox Islamic authority he satirizes as his expression of disagreement. He reaches the limits of his expression when he sings a poem:

> *My fickle heart longs for the West when I'm in the East*
> *and for the East when I'm in the West.*
> *My other parts insist I be a woman when I'm a man and*
> *a man when I'm a woman.*
> *How difficult it is being human, even worse is living a*
> *human's life.*
> *I only want to amuse myself frontside and backside, to be*
> *Eastern and Western both.* (431)

The enraged fundamentalists echo their war cry, "Cut out his tongue so he never again slanders his Excellency the Preacher . . ." (434). Thus even though the storyteller gets silenced forever, his death makes room for the written to take over the oral form of narration and for the author himself to be the storyteller. Thus narratives continue and novels flow and continue in the written tradition and as novels of memory. Pamuk sets out to redefine representations to woo the spaces of sustained literary revisions. Painting is replaced with oral storytelling which however is silenced to give birth to the novel. Pamuk writes *My Name is Red* as a narrative ostensibly written by Orhan, the little boy, who might as well be lying, *Snow* as written by Orhan the famous novelist, and *The White Castle* as written by any one of the narrators in the novel.

Pamuk's imaginative politics positions his novels in the transcending space of the beyond, for which he revisits the past by placing identities in an overlapping of

the cultural and the socio political contexts of race, class, and gender, allowing space for indeterminacy in the cultural politics of the present. His narratives are spaces of the boundary where he begins his presencing which looks to the beyond. But this future, this beyond, is present at the heart of experience. It is perhaps with this intention that the writing author is reinvented as a paradoxical author figure Orhan to reconstruct the absent text in *Snow* and to represent the Turkish dilemma and redemption in the form of conspiracies, coups and unrequited love. In the guise of the author figure, Pamuk leads the reader to assess the virtual projections of transcendence like the author; the text and God are but rhizomatic associations of multiple expressions which themselves point to the transcendence of the transcendent. Hence when the author figure walks into Kars to recreate the context that Ka was in, it seems that almost everyone is waiting for such a representation:

> It seemed that almost everyone I met on my walks around Kars was waiting for just such a hero, some one ready now to make the large sacrifices that would deliver them all from poverty, unemployment, confusion, and murder. Perhaps because I was a novelist of some repute, the whole city, it seems, had been hoping that I might be that great man for whom they'd been waiting. (*Snow* 431)

It becomes a journey which the reader, the author and the text make jointly to place the fragments of Ka's story together with the aim to unveil the "hidden symmetries" (89) of human existence. The search is not a conditional one and moreover, the reader not only accepts the meanings realised but creates, understands, and evaluates multitudes of meanings to reach a status when the moments of unreadability occur due to aporia (the logical or rhetorical perplexities) and the text gets into the task of deconstructing itself undermining the unity and meanings established or anticipated.

The journey of Ka's self discovery lays bare the irreconcilable cynical Westernised perspective of secularism and a religious desire for local authenticity by fictionalizing Ka who says that he would prefer to be a Westerner as well as a believer (145). This questions his identity in the face of the tumultuous Turkish landscapes of coups and conspiracies, and the hollowness of the fundamentalists and the insincerity of the secularists, culminating in an individual who is confused and disordered in a dazed world. He turns to snow and to God but his deliverance lies beyond. The author figure conveys how Ka tried to be at peace with the snow even when the whole political scenario around Kars was crumbling: "As he watched the snow outside his window fall, as slowly and silently as the snow in his dream, the traveller fell into a long-desired, long-awaited reverie; cleansed by memories of innocence, he succumbed to optimism and dared to believe himself at home in this world" (4).

Ka even finds the Muses inspiring him to write poems, nineteen in number, the contents of which are yet to be revealed to the readers, hinting at a strange mystical quality as if written by an unknown third pen. The author going through Ka's poems says, "A careful reading reveals that Ka did not believe himself to be the true author of any of the poems that came to him in Kars" (384). The narrator finds the poems and the writings of Ka to be of a mystical quality in contrast to the everyday happenings around. It seems that Ka does not really understand his poems but believes that they form an important part of his life. Just as Ka received his poems, the narrator presents himself as a reporter of received information. Ka finds a strange solace in the mysticism of the silence that snow offers and yet he is never sure whether he is an atheist or a believer in God. He attributes this irresolution to his upbringing "in a secular, republican family" (19). Moreover, he has never taken any

religious tuition anywhere other than in school. Yet he finds himself disagreeing with the fundamentalists' approach as is revealed when İpek asks Ka to meet Sheikh Saadettin who influences Muhtar to join political Islam. Ka becomes irritated and says, "Am I supposed to pay my respects to every lunatic in Kars?" (92). At the same time he reveals his inner thought: "I'm very happy right now. I have no need for religion" (93). But the conflict in Ka is evident in his conversation with Fazil and Nicep who worry whether Westernisation would lead to atheism. They question Ka on his stance regarding atheism and God to which Ka says that he doesn't know whether he is an atheist and adds that the snow reminds him of God. He further chooses to remain silent when Mesut asks whether he believes that it is God who created the snow.

Ka's search for the religious "Other" and the mystical "Him" seems unresolved and his confusion increases when confronted with the quiet but firm belief the Sheikh has in God. A reticent and drunk Ka, in conversation with the Sheikh, expresses his doubt whether his religion is against this country's prosperity. He admits that he grew up in a society where he wanted "to be like the Europeans." It is only because of this wish to be like a European that he has kept religion out of his life. "I couldn't see how I could reconcile my becoming a European with a God who required women to wrap themselves up in scarves, I kept religion out of my life." Yet once he visits Europe he "realize[s] there could be a God who was different from the God of the bearded provincial reactionaries" (98). The Sheik asks him jokingly whether "they have a different God in Europe," to which Ka replies:

> "I want a God who doesn't ask me to take off my shoes in His presence, and who doesn't make me fall to my knees to kiss people's hands. I want a God who understands my need for solitude."

> "There is only one God," said the sheikh. "He sees everything, understands everyone. Even your need for solitude. If you believed in Him, if you knew He understood your need for solitude, you wouldn't feel so alone." (99)

Ka tries to balance his Westernised beliefs with the innate urge to surrender to a divine Him, God, or nature. His religious awakenings merging with his poetic inspiration are but representations only. He is finally controlled by the republican nationalism and the outside forces until he is finally exiled from the internal space of Kars. Ka tries to return again and again to the quasi-divine presence of the snow which he finds temporarily soothing. Whenever he witnessed it, "[the snow] seemed to have swept everything off to another world, a world beyond time. When it occurred to him that he might be the only person who had noticed, his eyes filled with tears." These are also the times of self revelation when "the desolation and remoteness of the place hit him with such force that he felt God inside him" (19).

The medium of snow inspires the divine and the creative in Ka and it comes as solace and redemption to a figure marginalized and alienated from society, politics and religion. It is most ironic that the coup brings about this transformation. The author figure says how Ka has referred many times to the entry about snow in the encyclopedia. Ka's obsession with the snowflake is revealed when Orhan reads Ka's diary. Orhan is really overwhelmed to find the diagrammatic impressions of a snowflake made by Ka and wonders: "How many times Ka may have read this entry during his stay in Kars, to what degree he internalized its illustration of a snow crystal, is impossible for me to say" (219). Ka, the simple mystical poet who suddenly finds himself placed as the chief negotiator in the country's politics and finally gets pulled into the conspiracies and coups which endanger and kill him, is also the alter ego of Pamuk who too, because of his political comments, was dragged into the

politics of the country and had to face trial. Ka has nothing much to do with organised Islam as he sarcastically says, "If I were an author and Ka were a character in a book, I'd say, 'Snow reminds Ka of God!' But I'm not sure that would be accurate. What brings me close to God is the silence of snow" (62).

In the power game that politics plays, Ka who had earlier been attributed a key role in the political negotiations of Kars, is ultimately seen as the unwanted Other. *The Border City Gazette* carried the news:

> Many readers . . . have voiced particular concern about the way in which he has wandered through the shanty towns, knocking on the doors of the most wretched dwellings to incite rebellion against our state, and indeed even in our own presence vainly attempting to stick out his tongue at our country, and even at the great Atatürk, Father of our Republic. The youth of Kars know how to deal with blasphemers who deny God and the Prophet Mohammed! . . . (*Snow* 302)

Pamuk's third space of existence is in the state of transition from the author to the narrator to the merging of the three—author, narrator and Self, with the Self undergoing all the transition. He looks at Turkey's political transformations from his exilic world. As Ka, he becomes part of it and as Orhan, reflects upon and sympathises with as well as envies his Other, Ka. Pamuk, in the identity of the "double-voiced narrator" expresses his torment of self-expression: "It was as if I'd discovered yet another weakness in myself. It was a painful reminder that, while Ka had lived his life in the way that came naturally to him, as a true poet, I was a lesser being, a simple-hearted novelist who, like a clerk, sat down to work at the same time every day" (422).

Pamuk's seemingly pluralistic stance on the question of secularists and

fundamentalists in *Snow* where he equates narrow minded secularism to fundamentalism, has drawn a lot of criticism. Wendy Smith, in her article, quotes Pamuk's defence of himself:

> Our secularists, who are always relying on the army and who are destroying Turkey's democracy, hated this book because here you have a deliberate attempt by a person who was never religious in his life to understand why someone ends up being what we or the Western world calls an Islamic fundamentalist terrorist. It is a challenge and a duty of literature to understand the passions of anyone. . .
>
> ("Outspoken Turk")

As the narrator sympathises with Ka and considers his death as the failure to understand "the love and pain in another's heart," one hears the empathetic voice of the author narrator who transcends spaces of time to create and recreate. He remarks that every attempt at defining or understanding transcends itself as representations vary and no representation can accurately capture the "deeper anguish, greater deprivation and more crushing disappointments" of the "wretched millions suffering" (*Snow* 266).

Pamuk reserves the vital space in his political imagination for the anguish of the gendered world, in clash with the current socio-cultural and historical contexts. The link between gender and the nation is a central problematic and is underlined in feminist criticism and showcased in the female characters especially in the suicide girls of *Snow*. In the nation already at war in its secular fundamentalist state, women are further relegated to positions of stark oppression for here the oppressed nation in turn oppresses its women. Feminism or feminine activism gets silenced in a nation that itself is an instrument of patriarchy. In Pamuk's quest for self-identity and

national identity, with reference to the female representation, community, religion, politics and tradition become contested sites of reference. Be it secularism which urges to keep the veil out or fundamentalism which demands that the veil be put on, the woman's body is the heated site of contest. Cultural practices all over have depicted women as stereotypes of virtue and tradition— stable, meek and objects to be controlled. Pamuk deconstructs this male centered construct of the woman and the nation by unveiling the veiled stances. Spaces of literary dialogues are opened when his suicide girls, oppressed with all forms of torture, mental and physical, with regard to their religious and political stature, come to terms with their plight of being exploited by the institutional manifestations of their times. As no change in status in the near future is assured, they claim almost the whole space of the novel *Snow* and the discourse by silencing themselves with their suicides. Suicide becomes for them the only viable form of self-expression and their stories become representations of political suffering arising from their inability to make their voices heard. In the gaps and ruptures created by the silence of the suicides, Pamuk gives strong voice to his female characters like Kadife and Ipek who contest bravely with the religiosity and political stance of the state, to form the basic structure of female resistance. It becomes the trauma of the suppressed womanhood finding its expression in the voices of the liberated womanhood represented by Ipek and Kadife. Pamuk's female representation interpreted in Showalter's feminist theoretical discourse transcends the models of difference to a point where to be human means to be expressive.

In *My Name is Red*, Shekure is placed within the traditional spaces bestowed on her gendered existence, glorifying all the patriarchal concepts by familiarizing her in all familial contexts as the iconic mother, wife and daughter-in-law. Yet Shekure is the first of her kind to introduce the gender issues and female representation with

reference to their many roles in Pamuk's oeuvre and remains a "powerful" figure "that exercise[s] significant agency in patriarchal domains" (Goknar, *Orhan Pamuk*, *Secularism* 149). It is Shekure who finally places the text in order by narrating the tale to Orhan. She is "the mother of the author-figure and of Turkish literary transformation" (*155*). Pamuk's amalgamation of personalised history with fiction, leaving the parenthesis of fixities of history, opens a new possibility of personal imagination in the text. This is not a mere metaphysical conceptualisation of transcendental meanings tied to a spiritual novelty of the text but an experience in which the reader, the writer and the text itself get transcended at every stage. When the artist in Pamuk mixes the real with the imaginary, Turkish life and history coincide within the possibilities of the imaginative spectrum. Depersonalised and objective narration takes place in a new realm of cultural syntheses of many sorts, and in the textual element of history it promotes authenticity and cultural hegemony in many ways. Hence ambivalence finds the fixities with narrations making spaces within. Pamuk's life story inevitably merges in and out of his texts and characters merge in and out of themselves. While representing the coloniser/colonised relationship between the slave and Hoja and their mutual distrust of each other which borders on love and hatred, Pamuk relates how the Venetian-Hoja sadomasochistic relationship has similarity to his relation with his brother, his "alter ego," "Freudian father" and "the representation of authority" (*Other Colors* 368). He also points out that Shekure in *My Name is Red* has many traits of his mother. But except for the scenes in *My Name is Red* where he portrays his mother, he states, "there the similarity ends. It is . . . a postmodern sort of similarity: acting as if she is the same but actually different" (268). Pamuk translates this anxiety of being influenced by someone else as Turkey's internal conflict when looking at the West, in his novels.

The differences spring from the similarities and the problematising gives different disseminations of meaning.

Just as how the Venetian and Hoja create an identity using their personal memories, and just as how history could be a reinvention of all possible constitution, Pamuk implies at the inevitable possibility of fiction in all attempts of representation. Memory plays a vital role in organising fragments in a represented whole. In the varying modes of representation both reality and fiction are created and hence its ambivalences are portrayed. Like the genre of the narrative that Pamuk uses, fragments of personal history and memories are placed together to form a whole which can be deconstructed many times for multiple representations. The aesthetic creativity of imagination deals in presencing absences, and narratives occupy spaces of unrepresented possibilities. This in turn connects to other unexpressed possibilities, exchanges and understanding, reinforcing the fact that the self, history and identity are dynamic, ever changing and flexible. The texts celebrate the actualities in a world dominated by pseudorevolutions and myth proliferation. The appropriation and accommodation of authentic history get problematised in these texts. Transcendence here never leads to pseudospiritualism. It makes possibilities for interpretations in a world of fixed identities of homogenation. The rhizomatic development of these personal histories is one of the striking features of these texts. Texts generate multiple meanings, interpretations and possibilities which are open to more discourses and discussions.

Transcendence in imagination is the looking beyond of the Self to horizons where meaning lies in ambivalences—infinite and indeterminate. Pamuk's texts imagine their way out of the authorial confines to the transcendental realms of the reader taking the reader to the ambivalent space where he is freed of the barriers of

the Self, the text and its politics, to seek the infinite Other which is as unique and diverse as himself. Texts overflow as textualities which, freed of the human constructs of race, creed, gender, national and geopolitical contexts, emerge as spaces of dialogue and creativity. Transcendence is the text itself as much as it becomes textuality; it also becomes the reader himself who travels with the author and takes off from him in gaps to arrive at narrations and meanings which are as manifold as they are in number, lifting the very text out of its transcendental space to become the journey of transcendence. Texts liberate the reader, the author and the texts themselves to arrive at a space beyond, where multivalent meanings emerge exactly and paradoxically from the pluralities and diversities. Meanings emerge when perspectives merge in their multitudes into the infinite, the beyond, that is, the transcendent. Transcending the spaces is a cultural accommodation in tune with the personal histories. It is the result of the cultural and historical problematisation of texts which thereby liberate themselves from the temporal association of the ideological values.

Arriving at a conclusion about Pamuk one could begin by saying, "The writer has arrived at the heart of the space of literature when he has established a relationship with the incessant murmur, during which he first listens silently to it. Eventually he interrupts it, reducing it to silence by breaking his own silence"(Gregg 30). Pamuk's imaginative quest gains prominence in the aftermath of a Kemalist Turkey where political, cultural and artistic expressions have become stilted, where dialogues verge on silence, and the past becomes a mere nostalgic remembrance. Even though writers of his times have expressed this rising anguish, Pamuk's writings earmark the change from modernism to postmodernism where his imagination makes use of the literary spaces to project Turkey's past and its history in the perspective of

a reimagined context so that the self, identity and the nation attain renewed representations where dialogues are active. Even as Hoja and the Venetian are understood as cultural translators who make the East understood to the West better and vice versa, meanings are generated with every expression leading to improving the relationship that humanity makes across the borders of cultural, political and artistic spaces. The past, the present and the future hold fresh synthesis in the overlapping of cultural understanding and harmony, and binaries cease to remain as contradictory spaces.

The Turkish identity crisis is about the choice between the East and the West, Self and Other, secularism and fanaticism. In *My Name is Red* and *The White Castle*, Pamuk probematises this context to suggest that the choice is not of the one over the other but an understanding of each other through a deeper understanding of the cultural, artistic and political imaginations and their representations. There is never a resolved crisis or a clear cut path, but the journey along the path is the answer. In *Snow* when Pamuk openly critiques the ruthlessness of power politics, the patriarchal nature of society and the fanatic religiosity, he talks of the excesses so that they can be removed. In the present day world, where all these questions about power, religion and the after effects of colonisation are pertinent, leaving deep wounds on nations and the individual, the scope of this study is its focus on understanding and assimilating the phenomenology and psychology of Pamuk's writings which reach out across delimiting spaces to open spaces of deliberations, exchanges and change. Pamuk's appeal is to accept the past and move on, to speak of the fear, hurt and grief in order to overcome them, to dialogise for better understanding and to keep the politics of power free from the intrusions of religion and democracy. Even in the context of a Turkish Muslim patriarchal background, his advice is to treat women as free-willed

people and he places infinite trust in people, culture, art and humanism. Pamuk's use of narratives, metahistory, irony and parody are aimed to define culture, art and politics so that they serve as platforms where identities are better expressed and defined.

Pamuk's imagination produces narratives which make the reader familiarise himself with the cultural and symbolic world of the Other. The intention of Pamuk's art of the novel, as he explains, is this familiarization that fosters sharing, thereby leading to expansions of imaginative and cultural horizons. Hoja and the slave are his exemplifications of this enrichment, and through a mutual process of sharing everything, even their fears and hatreds, they come to a relationship of love and respect, fully realising the Self in each others's possibilities. Pamuk's imaginative journey in the form of dialogues, narratives and screen writing makes space for reflection, exchanges and dialogues that reveal the core of the Self and the Other. Imagination becomes in Pamuk's works spaces of intelligibility where one can recreate the events of the past with a renewed understanding. It can enter into the sensibilities of the Other so that new possibilities of understanding can be envisaged. Pamuk's novelistic imagination enables him to imagine himself as someone else. His imagination requires his reader too to engage in the same novelist's politics as the author. Thus the reader becomes part of the book which itself is unfinalised and eventually the book becomes central to the reader who tries to find his Self and identity from the author's dialogic representation of the imagination.

Pamuk's imaginative pursuits have far reaching goals especially in the political scenario of the modern day Turkey where politics is deeply correlated to culture. Culture and art forms ought to play a meaningful role in the political reforms of the modern day world where dialogues and excesses are largely silenced. Theatres,

storytelling and narratives achieve the role of cultural and political reform through aesthetics which is shaped by imagination. Novelistic imagination thus plays a vital part in transforming "us" to "them" in the understanding of the Other within the parameters of one's nation, origin and borders. Novels become transcending spaces where the borderlines of differences converge in an ambivalence that comes from the understanding and acceptance of the Other, after having journeyed into the intricacies of his culture, his politics, and his myths. Novelistic imagination while becoming a space for dialogues is also a space for responsible creativity where the novelist and the reader are able to approach the Other from impartial angles. Open-ended dialogues and candid/truthful communication which make the unfamiliar and the absent, familiar and present, should be the rationale for the creative and judicious use of imagination. Pamuk relies on his novelistic imagination to ensure harmony and understanding in a world order where people from different corners of the world, in the realisation of the Self, will continue to interact with one another, transcending their differences in the cultural, artistic and political imaginations.

The representations of identity, nation and Self have been problematised in this study which sketches and interprets Pamuk's representation of power politics especially with reference to the conspiracy of silence in the cultural and artistic scenario. It lays emphasis on the treatment of politics and religion as affairs of power and men, aimed at silencing the voices of the women, the weak and the marginalized. Similar areas of study with emphasis on blurring of territories, imagined nations and gender differences are a further scope for research. A further line of enquiry may be conducted in this regard to probe the identities and reverberations involved in the representations. Pamuk's writings are rich in narratives and the techniques involved in the narration, and hence a creative study may be conducted on the narrative structure

employed in Pamuk's fictional world, giving thrust to applied narratology. Pamuk being a Turkish author, has authored his books in Turkish language, and the scope of translating his works can always be an interest of research for scholars, and moreover, a variety of parameters like the extension of meanings and interpretations conveyed in translations are yet to be analysed. Intertextuality and polyphonic voices in Pamuk's novels have been discussed in detail in this study, and these may be used for further extended, alternative lines of investigation. Imaginative insights into the entity of the author-text-reader trio offer great possibilities for further study as the writings of Pamuk have such unending and diverse range that meanings signified can be interpreted to signify other meanings. These meanings/representations can be further interpreted and the process continues to infinity, laying open the unfinalised nature of texts to the reader who is again not a fixed entity having a particular perspective but an involved reader who perceives the text from infinite points and angles to construct and deconstruct meanings in multitudes. The author-text- reader trio and its unfinalised status that Pamuk explores in his writings has been one of the topics of this study but it can still have many extensions as it holds the potential for further research.

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