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## ORHAN PAMUK'S *MY NAME IS RED* AND *SNOW*: REPRESENTATIONS OF THE CLASH BETWEEN THE EAST AND THE WEST

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### **Abstract**

*The clash between the East and the West, in other words, the East-West dichotomy, has various connotations in numerous of scientific fields like sociology, geography, history, religion, and literary studies. Despite the difference in its practices, it continues to represent this historical division or polarization between the two fractions of the world, namely the East and the West, which is still in existence in this modern world of today. This article sought to explore this polarization from literary perspective. In this regard, Nobel Prize-winning author, Orhan Pamuk's two prominent literary works have been selected for investigating the extent and depth of the clash between two civilizations. Pamuk invited his readers to explore this prevalent conflict between East and West in his novels, *My Name is Red* and *Snow*. Although he declared that he did not believe in this clash, Pamuk skillfully presented this prevalent issue, but approached it from a distinct dimension. The clash is at the heart of the novel, *My Name is Red*, and was clearly reflected in different observations of looking at the world, particularly in Eastern and Western methods of painting. In *Snow*, these two worlds acted as the primary focus and the main source of robust and spirited tension.*

**Keywords:** *clash, East, West, perspective, tension*

## ORHAN PAMUK'UN *BENİM ADIM KIRMIZI VE KAR* ROMANLARI: DOĞU İLE BATI ARASINDAKİ ÇATIŞMANIN TEMSİLİ

### **Öz**

*Doğu ile Batı arasındaki çatışmanın, başka bir deyişle Doğu-Batı bölünmesinin, sosyoloji, coğrafya, tarih, din ve edebî çalışmalar gibi birçok bilimsel*

alanda çeşitli çağrışımları bulunmaktadır. Uygulamadaki farklılığa rağmen, günümüz dünyasında halâ var olan dünyanın iki bölümü, yani Doğu ve Batı arasındaki bu tarihsel bölünmeyi ya da kutuplaşmayı temsil etmeye devam etmektedir. Bu makale kutuplaşmayı edebi bakış açısıyla araştırmaya çalışmıştır. Bu bağlamda, Nobel Ödüllü yazar, Orhan Pamuk'un iki önemli eseri iki uygarlık arasındaki çatışmanın kapsamını ve derinliğini araştırmak için seçilmiştir. Pamuk, okurlarını *Benim Adım Kırmızı* ve *Kar* romanlarında bu yaygın çatışmayı keşfetmeye davet etmektedir. Bu çatışmaya inanmadığını ilan etmesine rağmen, Pamuk yaygın olan bu sorunu ustaca ortaya koymuş, ancak konuya başka bir boyuttan yaklaşmıştır. Çatışma, *Benim Adım Kırmızı* romanının temelindedir ve dünyayı gözlelemedeki farklı bakış açılarında, özellikle Doğu ve Batı resim yapma yöntemlerinde, açıkça yansıtılmıştır. *Kar* romanında, bu iki dünya, güçlü ve ateşli gerginliğin birincil odağı ve ana kaynağı olarak işlev görmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** çatışma, Doğu, Batı, perspektif, gerginlik.

#### Introduction

The clash between the East and the West, conceptually perceived as East-West dichotomy in sociology, has been a perpetual argument made by many art historians, writers, as well as scholars of literary and cultural studies throughout the history. This conflict between East and West has historical, ideological, cultural and religious undertones. Some of most preeminent scholars, who are worth mentioning in this regard, are Samuel Huntington, Edward Said, Alvin and Heidi Toffler, Gerrit W. Gong and Antony Pagden. In his *the Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Samuel Huntington, American political scientist, considered this conflict as "the clash of civilizations." Edward Said is another significant scholar to dwell upon this issue of differences in his highly-acclaimed book *Orientalism*. Alvin and Heidi Toffler approached this clash of civilizations from a different angle and described three types of civilizations that they called waves, i.e.; first wave civilization was based on agriculture revolution that occurred 10,000 years ago. Second wave civilization rested on industrial revolution. Third wave civilization has its basis on the knowledge or information revolution striggered by computer-related technology. Moreover, Gerrit W. Gong discussed the imposition of Europe's standard of 'civilization' on the non-European world that triggered a conflict of cultural systems. Finally, Antony Pagden masterfully portrayed the dispute between East and West by putting emphasis on how nations were formed on common good and bad memories, and why victory and defeat in battles were considered as essential features of nationhood.

Nobel Prize laureate, Orhan Pamuk's literary works have often been characterized by a confusion or loss of personal identity partly triggered by the conflict between Eastern and Western values. In the press release announcing the conferment of the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2006 to Orhan Pamuk, the Swedish Academy celebrated Pamuk as a novelist "who in the quest for the melancholic soul

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of his native city [Pamuk] has discovered new symbols for the clash and interlacing of cultures" (The Nobel Prize in Literature, 2006). The primary focus and the main source of spirited tension in Pamuk's literary works are the conflict between two diverse worlds of East and West, history and modernity, and the love-hate relationship that he shared with his fellow people. In an interview, referring to the bridge that arches through the Bosphorus and unites the European and Asian sides of Istanbul, Pamuk has made use of the bridge metaphor for himself even though it belongs nowhere, but has a foot on both continents. Similarly, like a bridge, he had a unique opportunity to see both civilizations and "knows East and West well." Furthermore, in the same interview, Pamuk highlighted "the eastness of the East and the westernness of the West" and notably maintained a different perspective and warned his readers thus: "let me point out, that I don't believe in this clash, although it's happening. And in my novels I try to say: all generalizations about East and West are generalizations" (Farnsworth, interview 2002). Even though Pamuk did not seem to believe in this clash between the East and the West, and urged his readers that "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 and you can learn this through literature. Pay attention to good literature and novels" (Farnsworth, interview 2002). However, he did not deny the fact that this clash or division has been in existence for quite some time.

The aim of this study is to discuss Pamuk's *My Name is Red and Snow* in the light of the clash between the East and the West. The clash is at the heart of the novel, *My Name is Red*, and was clearly reflected in different perspectives of looking at the world particularly between the Eastern and Western methods of painting. *Snow* dealt with the relationship between the East and West, and with modernity, truth and narration, and, ultimately, cultural identity. In this way, the novel did not only portray the conflict between Islam and the West, but, at the same time, presented an intricate and composite portrait of modern Turkey.

#### **Literature Review**

Samuel Huntington, in his famous *the Clash of Civilizations*, made his contribution to this clash with the use of "the clash of civilizations" and pointed out the differences in Western and non-Western civilizations originated from history, language, culture, tradition, and, most importantly, religion. He argued that these significant differences have been in existence for centuries and constituted the foundations of various civilizations. Since they have been around for long, these characteristics will not disappear any time soon. He observed that "the interactions among peoples of different civilizations enhance the civilization-consciousness of people that, in turn, invigorates differences and animosities stretching of thought to stretch back deep into history" (Huntington, 1993: 26).

On the other hand, Edward Said's *Orientalism* has been extremely valuable and influential in a diverse range of disciplines since its publication in 1978. In fact,

many scholars associated the publication of Said's *Orientalism* with the birth of postcolonial studies in history, literature, philosophy, anthropology, and arts. Said focused his attention on the interplay between the "Occident" and the "Orient." The Occident is the term that he linked with the West namely European countries and the United States and the Orient is the term that referred to Middle and Far East. He disclosed that "*the relationship between Orient and Occident is a relationship of power, of domination of varying degrees of a complex hegemony*" (Said, 2001: 5). He highlighted the fundamental difference between East and West and revealed that "*the essence of the difference between East and West is between modernity and ancient tradition*" (Said, 2001: 269). Elsewhere in his highly-acclaimed book, he asserted that "*...as much as the West itself, the Orient is an idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery, and vocabulary that have given it reality and presence in and for the West. The two geographical entities thus support and to an extent reflect each other*" (Said, 2001: 5).

As indicated, East and West differ from one another in numerous fields. A great deal of such differences may very well be based on culture. They can mainly be reflected in people's attitudes and conducts. In *The Third Wave and War and Anti-War Survival at the Dawn of the 21st Century*, Alvin and Heidi Toffler looked at the conflict of civilizations from a unique viewpoint and portrayed a world metaphorically dissected into waves -each wave giving way to older societies and cultures. They shed more light upon their controversial perspective:

Because massive changes in society cannot occur without conflict, we believe the metaphor of history as "waves" of change in more dynamic and revealing than talk about a transition to "postmodernism". Waves are dynamic. When waves crash in on one another, powerful crosscurrent are unleashed. When waves of history collide, whole civilizations clash. And that sheds light on much that otherwise seems senseless or random in today's world (Toffler - Toffler, 1994: 18).

Furthermore, Gerrit W. Gong, in his book entitled *the Standard of Civilization in International Society*, spoke of the confrontation that ignited with the imposition of European's standards of 'civilization' on the non-European countries which naturally threatened and challenged the traditional standards of 'civilization' in those countries and, hence, it resulted in the confrontation of cultural systems since these hostile and uncompromising standards of 'civilization' persistently clashed with one another. He observed that:

The confrontation that occurred as Europe expanded into the non-European world during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was not merely political or economic, and certainly not only military. It was fundamentally a confrontation of civilizations and their respective cultural systems. At the heart

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of this clash were the standards of civilization by which these different civilizations identified themselves and regulated their international relations (Gong, 1984: 3).

Likewise, the historian Antony Pagden offered an exploration of the clash between East and West in his book *Worlds at War: The 2,500-Year Struggle between East and West*, and argued that the roots of the "clash of civilizations" between East and West have always been a battle over ideas, especially ideas that were religious in nature. He put forward his belief that this conflict will still prevail and asserted that "...the long struggle between East and West is going to end very soon. The battle lines drawn during the Persian Wars more than twenty-three centuries ago are still, in the self same corner of the world, very much where they were then" (Pagden, 2008: 538).

However, since East and West geographically covers a vast area that encompasses various countries and cultures across the globe, it may be convenient only to make a broad generalization in order to initiate a comparative analysis of these two diverse cultures. It is likely that the fundamental difference between Eastern and Western cultures surfaced due to the fact that while the eastern people are more traditional and conservative, open-minded and forthright in the expression of their feelings and emotions, the West is characterized by modernity, advancement, democracy, deep-rooted culture and innovation.

Turkey has geographically and textually been at the center of the discourse around the clash between East and West, alternatively between the West and the Islamic world. Influenced by Ahmet Hamdi Tanpinar, who used Janus, the God of beginnings and endings with two faces, as a metaphor to highlight the mental separation of the modern Turkey during its transition from an Eastern-oriented state to a Western-oriented country, Orhan Pamuk portrayed Turkey as a "*Janus Nation*" that, within itself, accommodated generational contradictions: between East and West, secularism and religion, modernism and tradition. Pamuk did not make a choice and favor one over another, but, on the contrary, asserted that the country must encompass all these contradictions. However, in his book of essays *Other Colors*, he acknowledged the fact that he owed a great deal to Eastern and Western traditions and asserted that "*all my books are made from a mixture of Eastern and Western methods, styles, habits, and histories, and if I am rich it is thanks to these legacies. My comfort, my double happiness, comes from the source: I can, without any guilt, wander between the two worlds, and in both I am at home*" (Pamuk, 2008: 264).

In line with Pamuk's view, Bernard Lewis, an expert in the history of Middle East and Islam, approached this prevalent clash from Turkish perspective as he observed:

In Turkey, as in other Muslim countries, there are those who talk hopefully of achieving 'a synthesis of the best elements

of West and East'. This is a vain hope -the clash of civilizations in history usually culminate in a marriage of selected best elements, but rather in a promiscuous cohabitation of good, bad, and indifferent alike. But a true revival of a religious faith on the level of modern thought and life is within the bounds of possibility. The Turkish people, by the exercise of their practical common sense and powers of improvisation, may yet find a workable compromise between Islam and modernism that will enable them, without conflict, to follow both their fathers' path to freedom and progress and their grandfathers' path to God (Lewis, 1968: 424).

This prevalent clash between East and West in Turkey's perspective can lead to a possible compromise between East and East through the use of practical common sense and powers of improvisation to achieve hopefully a fusion of the best elements of Eastern and Western civilizations. Two of Pamuk's literary masterpieces, *My Name is Red*, which established his international reputation and contributed to his Nobel Prize, and *Snow*, a gripping political thriller that hit the best-selling list in Turkey, were selected for the study even though they have their distinctive settings in time and place, i.e., while the former was set in Istanbul of the late 16th century during the Ottoman period, the latter was set in Kars Province in 20th century contemporary Turkey, they not only masterfully and painstakingly explored the longstanding conflict between East and West, but also provided credible and plausible evidence that this prevalent issue between two distinct geographical hemispheres still persisted as the time went by.

#### **The Clash between the East and West in *My Name is Red* and *Snow***

Pamuk's novel, *My Name is Red*, was published in 1998 in Turkey, but its translation into English language appeared in the West in 2001 only one week before the September 11 attacks, adding a particular intensity to the East-West polarity. Set in the Ottoman Istanbul during the reign of Sultan Murat III, the novel introduced the story of Ottoman and Persian miniaturists and illustrators of the imperial court who were vastly divided between the old and new, Eastern and Western practice of painting, which gave rise to passion, violence, conspiracies and brutal killing; a murder by a fellow artist due to adaption of different theories of art. Sultan Murat III commissions a book "that depicted the thousandth year of the Muslim calendar, which would strike terror into the heart of the Venetian Doge by showing the military strength and pride of Islam, together with the power and wealth of the Exalted House of Osman" (*My Name is Red*, 275<sup>1</sup>) in order to commemorate the thousandth-year anniversary of the Prophet's emigration and orders that the book to be prepared under the influence of the Frankish artists, in

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<sup>1</sup> Pamuk's novel, *My Name is Red*, will be referred to as MNR with its initial letters for convenience from now onwards

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which the use of perspective and shadow generate life-like and realistic portraits that can easily be distinguished from the stylized representations of Islamic tradition. The Sultan's book threatens to introduce changes in Islamic art not only by including Venetian use of perspective and portraiture, but also by reviving the secret desire of Islamic craftsmen to identify themselves as individuals and their wish to see their images reflected in immortal art form. Pamuk underlined the significance of blending the artistic expressions of the conflicting civilizations as:

I tried to tell my story in the manner of these Persian masters. These two distinctive ways of seeing the world and narrating stories [which] 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. All good art comes from mixing things from different roots and culture.... (Knopf, interview, 2003).

This novelty, on the one hand, is symbolized by the mastery and craftsmanship of Venetian painting, which literally dismisses all former styles and methods with its face portraits that claim to achieve immortality through the palette. Islamic tradition, on the other hand, aimed to capture the objective truth as it might replicate the penetrating gaze of Exalted Allah and, therefore, may be a subtle form of blasphemy. Stefan Cole shed light on the issue: "*Portraiture was prohibited for fear that a human likeness would replace Allah as an object of worship-idolatry*" (Stefan-Cole, 2001: 1). The Venetian style of painting, which emerged as the cause of the conflict, instigated trouble in two aspects. First, it generated further problems of dimension and meticulous detail with regard to physical execution. Second, it completely went against the lessons taught by the Great Masters, namely the Persian miniaturists who initiated and brought perfection to the Islam method of drawing.

Pamuk's literary work, *Snow*, set in the border city of Kars in the early 1990s and originally published in Turkey in 2002, explored the prevalent and growing violence and tension between political Islamists, secularists, and Kurdish and Turkish nationalists and, consequently, probed into the conflict between East and West, in other words, the West and Islam in modern Turkey as the narration progresses in the novel. Meltem Ahiska argued that the notions of the East and the West have been used as power strategies to assert hegemony and added that: "*Just as the West always refers to the notion of the East to assert its hegemony, Turkey reproduces the reified images of the West to justify its regime of power in its boundary management of dividing spheres, regions, and people along the axis of East and West*" (Ahiska, 2003: 368). Moreover, Sibel Irzik & Guven Guzeldere stated that Turkey "*is rather a country in which many of the fundamental social divisions have been experienced, articulated, concealed or displaced in a cultural/ideological*

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*vocabulary mobilizing the “West” in different power and justification strategies”* (Irzik - Guzeldere, 2003: 285).

These power strategies, displayed in Pamuk’s *Snow*, in which the tensions represented by the clash between East and West within Turkey, can be considered as a reflection of the tension in Turkey’s age-old and uneasy relations with Europe. Ian Almond regarded the novel as a bit more than national allegory and described it as *“an authentic view of contemporary Turkish society with its current conflicts and problems”* (Almond, 2003: 76).

Pamuk’s commitment to Islamic art, a source of conundrum and fascination in the Western notion, questioned the perceptions that establish Islamic artistic expression as a restricted form repressed by excessive conservatism and resentment towards change and innovation. Emilia Parpala drew attention to the perpetual conflict between East and West in distinct interpretation of art and declared that: *“Beyond its historical and aesthetical significance, the conflict between the Islamic miniature and the Frankish/Venetian art of portraiture suggests two very distinct ways of viewing the world”* (Parpala, 2010: 107). In like manner, Pamuk also stressed this dilemma on the part of artists when he observed:

To be influenced by the western ways of portraiture is a dilemma for the traditional Islamic painter who is devoted to repetition and purification of traditional forms. Beyond this lie two different ways of seeing, painting, and even representing the world. One is that of seeing the world through the eyes of any individual person—looking at things from our humble point of view. The other is seeing the world through God’s eyes, from high above as the Islamic painters did, and perceiving the totality of, say a battle from above. The latter is more like seeing with the mind’s eye, rather than the eye itself (Knopf, interview, 2003).

In *My Name is Red*, religious clerics articulate their sentiment against this concept of realistic representational form of artistic expression and the world of local artists are divided between those who observe the age-old methods of miniature painting influenced by Persian masters, and those who are enchanted by the new Western style of painting adopted from Venice. Black, the protagonist, has been summoned back to Istanbul after a twelve-year of self-exile by his maternal uncle Enishte who is the mastermind of the manuscript, as well as the father of Black's object of affection, Shekure. Black, a failed illustrator by profession, made acquaintances of *“illustrators and calligraphers” of Persia and became an artist in demand by “making books for pashas, wealthy Istanbulites and patrons in the provinces”* (MNR, 27). He initially keeps his distance from Venetian style of painting because of religious reasons when he raises his concern *“as we make use of the methods of the Franks, our painting is becoming less focused on ornamentation and intricate design and more on straightforward representation. This is what the*



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*Glorious Koran forbids and what displeased Our Prophet*" (MNR, 478). While, on one hand, he expresses his caution not to commit sins by imitating the Venetian style, Black, on the other hand, wishes to imitate those Venetian painters in order to win over Shekure's heart as he states *"I longed to be like these newly famed painters solely because Shekure had heard so much about them from her father; illustrators who had earned their renown... on account of a manuscript they'd transcribed or a page they'd illuminated"* (MNR, 141). He only shows interest in famous Venetian illustrators because they could serve his purpose in his quest to win the graces of beautiful Shekure. Elsewhere he observes, *"I tried very hard to imagine the magnificent pictures created by these celebrated illustrators, who were ...inspired by the power of the world's mystery and its visible blackness"* (MNR, 141). As evidenced, the constant battle between Western and Eastern or Ottoman methods of painting came to light in the expression of character and individual style. While the Western painters distinguished themselves with the attainment of individual style, the Ottoman artists attempted to portray the world the way God saw it and to conceal their individuality as they never signed their names.

On the other hand, the main character in Pamuk's *Snow*, Kerim Alakusoglu, who preferred to be known by his initials Ka, enjoys *"a small enigmatic fame ... both in Turkey and in Turkish circles in Germany"* (Snow, 5). Ka spent 12 years of exile in Frankfurt, but returned to Turkey in order to attend his mother's funeral. Then, he was commissioned by a local newspaper based in Istanbul to monitor the municipal elections in Kars and to investigate a wave of suicides by young Turkish girls protesting the official ban on wearing headscarves. He reveals his intent to his travel-mate as such *"I'm interested in the municipal elections—and also the young women who've been committing suicide"* (Snow, 6). Ka conveniently finds himself within East-West dichotomy. His charcoal-colored coat, purchased in Frankfurt, his cultivated Istanbul speech, bourgeois background as well as his Western-style education clearly mark him as a would-be "European". Ka sees himself to be *"an educated, westernized, literary man"* (Snow, 23), who indulges in modernist poetry and considers radical Islam to be backward and outdated. After he arrives in Kars and explores one of the poorest, most neglected and underdeveloped cities in rural Anatolia, Ka begins to worry that *"the westernized world he had known as a child might be coming to an end"* (Snow, 26). Ka also attracts mixed or diverse impressions in residents of Kars Province. Conservative people accused of atheism, the secular Kemalist government did not wish him to conduct his investigation and, thus, he is tailed by police spies everywhere he goes and the common people view him with suspicious and distrustful eyes and think that he has some hidden agenda. In fact, he becomes a symbol of the West and, particularly, of Europe in the eyes of young Islamist men. He is invited to recite his poems during the functions of various kinds before the main event kicks off. Necip, a high school student whom Ka befriended, accuses Ka of being a Western spy, which naturally qualifies him as an atheist in his opinion as he declares: *"People in the intelligentsia never believe in*

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*God. They believe in what Europeans do, and they think they are better than ordinary people” (Snow, 103). However, Ka slowly begins to renounce his secularist faith, starts questioning his own position and allegiances, and nurtures sympathies for the extremist Blue and the young Islamist young men and hopes for peaceful coexistence of peoples of differing ethnic, religious, and political backgrounds. He experiences a paradox: he longs to discover faith and God but considers it quite impossible to accept the backwardness and anti-modernity of Islam. He voices this paradox thus: “I want to believe in the God you believe in and be like you, but because there’s a Westerner inside me, my mind is confused” (Snow, 98).*

Moreover, Elegant Effendi and Enishte Effendi, two of the most acclaimed members of the circle hold opposing views on artistic expression. The former, who is the master gilder and the victim of first murder, warns against this new method of artistic imitation. The latter, who is in charge of the creation of a secret book for the Sultan in the style of the Venetian painters, eagerly welcomes and embraces this artistic innovation. Elegant Effendi, a deeply religious person and a strict follower of a conservative religious leader, regards the use of newly acquired method of painting an act of blasphemy and a conspiracy against religion: “*My death conceals an appalling conspiracy against our religion, our traditions and the way we see the world” (MNR, 6). Elsewhere, he points out his objection and disapproval of this new artistic invention and admonishes the murderer before his: “It’s heresy, a sacrilege that no decent man would have the gall to commit. You’re going to burn in the pits of Hell. Your suffering and pain will never diminish” (MNR, 22). On the other hand, Enishte Effendi maintains a favorable attitude towards this artistic novelty and expresses his enchantment: “Two styles heretofore never brought together have come together to create something new and wondrous” (MNR, 194). However, he does not merely intend to imitate the Venetian style of painting. His use of this technique will manifest a slight difference than the original style and, thus it will not be considered an act of blasphemy: “unlike the Venetians, my work would not merely depict material objects, but naturally the inner riches, the joys and fears of the realm over which Our Sultan rules” (MNR, 29). Here, the centennial clash between East and West manifests itself through different perspectives of two men of art. In the schema of the novel, the West advocates progress, innovation and individualism, whereas, Islam, in contrast, upholds tradition and an impersonal representation of the artist in a visually depicted work of art.*

Pamuk created plausible and credible characters that indicate both parties of that great split and eloquently expressed their resentment and outrage. Principal among these bewildering and perplexing characters are charismatically handsome terrorist who goes by the nickname of Blue and a fascist political activist and an itinerant actor known as Sunay Zaim. The infamous Islamist terrorist Blue, whose sole purpose in life is to endorse the ideological base of political Islam, is quite renegade and radical in the sense that he possesses peculiar individuated and

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modern characteristics. He received training as an electronics engineer and spent a considerable amount of time in Europe. The rebel son of a conservative Muslim, at first he becomes "a godless leftist" (Snow, 347), but, on his own, later rediscovers and embraces Islam. Blue reveals these adverse details of his life as he states: "I was an electronics engineer. Because of the hatred I felt for the West, I admired the revolution in Iran. I returned to Islam" (Snow, 348). Blue refuses to turn his face to the West and openly voices his skepticism and opposition toward it when he observes "democracy, freedom, human rights, don't matter, all the West wants is for the rest of the world to imitate them like monkeys" (Snow, 228). He holds on to his steadfast and unflinching views on the West or Europe and firmly adheres to his Eastern identity, particularly Turkish identity in his statement: "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...To be a true Westerner, a person must first become an individual" (Snow, 324). Unlike Blue, Sunay Zaim, a product of the secularizing policies of the Turkish Republic and a passionate proponent of the Kemalist secular state ideology, sees the future of young Republic in the reforms that merely imitate the West. Sunay informs the people of Turkey that they have "embarked on the road to enlightenment and no one can turn you from this great and noble journey" (Snow, 158). Zaim stages a military coup with the participation of Z. Demirkol, a ruthless figure and leader of a special task force unit of the Turkish secret police with the hope of defeating Islamic fundamentalists who poses an enormous threat to the regime and eradicating the Islamists who "hate everything Europe stands for" (Snow, 355). Elsewhere, Sunay Zaim scoldes Ka for holding state responsible for the violence in Kars as he declares "No one who's even slightly westernized can breathe free in this country unless they have a secular army protecting them, and no one needs this protection more than intellectuals who think they're better than everyone else and look down on other people" (Snow, 203).

The clash between the traditional and innovative Venetian styles of miniature can be demonstrated in the artistic preference of Master Osman. He is the Head Illuminator in the imperial court and the most senior and revered master of the miniaturist. He is a passionate supporter of the traditional style of miniaturist painting and is apprehensive of the influence of the Frankish/Venetian art of portraiture. He hates Enishte Effendi for slavishly imitating Europeans and highly disapproves of him working on the secret book as he asserts when he first lays his eyes on paintings "You all know how disgusted I was when I first laid eyes on the paintings prepared for Enishte Effendi's book" (MNR, 302). Elsewhere, he utters his frustration and annoyance as "I tried to forget that the deceased had at one time caused me unmentionable agony by forcing me to imitate the European masters" (MNR, 282). He dedicates his entire life to art and accumulated vast knowledge on the art of illumination and identifies himself with the devotion and the agony of the artists of the past whose commitment to their profession usually end in blindness. Master Osman stubbornly adheres to tradition and admires the

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works of Bihzad and Siyavush. He issues a warning for astray artists and reminds them of the punishment that they will endure due to misuse of talent *"Each of those disgraceful masters deserves nothing but torture! If we, the society of miniaturists, learn to serve foremost our own talent and art instead of Our Sultan who provides us with work, we shall have earned entry through the Gates of Heaven"* (MNR, 408). However, when he realizes that he will have no power to stop artists to embrace the Frankish/Venetian style of art, he takes a needle in his hand and blinds himself as the great masters of old did.

The great masters of old, Master Osman claimed, would never renounce the styles and methods they cultivated through self-sacrifice to art just for the sake of a new shah's authority, the whims of a new prince or the tastes of a new age; thus, to avoid being forced to alter their styles and methods, they'd heroically blind themselves (MNR, 438).

Meanwhile in *Snow*, Zeki Demirkol, an ex-communist and one of the instigators of the theatrical revolution, is the head of local intelligence service as well as the perpetrator of the theatrical military coup. Having received a special pardon after the military takeover, Z. Demirkol returns to the country with a mission to defend *"the secular state and the Republic against Kurdish separatist guerillas and Islamist fundamentalists"* (Snow, 162). The secular nationalist paramilitary, Z. Demirkol openly reveals his political philosophy to Ka when he and his companions catch with him *"You have got to kill them before they kill you"* (Snow, 163). Ka is detained by the special operations team and is brought in for interrogation. As a lead interrogator, Demirkol pressures Ka into revealing the whereabouts of the extremist Blue. He expresses his contempt and disdain for intellectuals, like Ka, for being hesitant and decisive and declares his preference of Mariana, a heroine of a Mexican telenovela, over them:

Because she knows what she wants. But intellectuals like you, you never have the faintest idea, and that makes me sick. You say you want democracy, and then you enter into alliances with Islamist fundamentalists. You say you want human rights, and then you make deals with terrorist murderers. You say Europe is the answer, but you go around buttering up Islamists who hate everything Europe stands for. You say feminism, and then you help these men wrap their women's heads. You don't follow your own conscience; you just guess what a European would do in the same situation and act accordingly. But you can't even be a proper European! (Snow, 355-356).

However, Demirkol and his companions are quite aware of the imminent danger or the gravity of the issue with the eventual rise of Islamic fundamentalism. They combine forces and devise a military coup that will serve their purpose in

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ensuring their power and position and also in eliminating the potential problem originating from the Islamic front that stands in constant clash with the Western ideals. Therefore, a cooperative coup, instigated by Z. Demirkol, a representative of ultranationalist paramilitary groups, Colonel Osman Nuri Colak, a representative of the military which poses as the protector of Kemalist regime, and Sunay Zaim, a figurehead actor who bears resemblance to the father of Turkish Nation, is staged in Kars in order to forestall the contingency of Islamist political victory in the upcoming elections. Demirkol, together with fellow conspirators, competes against the growing political dominance of Islam symbolized by the Prosperity Party, the religious high school students and the radical extremist Blue. He manages to convince Sunay Zaim, who originally arrives in Kars in order to stage a play, to become the public leader of the military coup. Thus Zaim becomes a puppet in Demirkol's hands and he uses him as a pretext to suppress Islamists with blood together with his soldiers who open fire on the religious high-school students in the audience who come to support the cause of the "headscarf girls". In the end, Z. Demirkol and his special task force accomplish their goal in suppressing the advent of political Islam at the cost of loss of so many innocent lives.

Furthermore, in *My Name is Red*, Olive, Stork, and Butterfly are leading artists in the guild and the ones who are recruited by Enishte Effendi to work secretly on the preparation of the book. They are also under scrutiny and are considered possible suspects in the murder of a master miniaturist. The tales that these miniaturists reveal when Black investigates the murder outlined the current tension between the Ottoman traditional artistic style and the innovative Venetian style of artistic expression. Olive, whose real name is Velijan, is very conceited about his abilities and holds the notion that other artists have grown jealous of him. Even though Master Osman, who is known Olive since his apprentice, considers him as quiet and sensitive, but also crafty and sneaky and the most devious of the master artists. Exhibiting Mongol and Chinese influence in art and being loyal to traditional style of painting, Olive raises his opposition on the use of new artistic representation when confronting Black "...your reliance on the methods of the Venetians as well as your mingling of our own established traditions with that of the infidels will strip us of our purity and reduce us to being their slaves" (MNR, 194). On another occasion, he states completely an adverse view on Frankish style "yet in none of those pieces could I sense anything contrary to religion, any faithlessness, impiety or even the vaguest illicitness" (MNR, 479). However, elsewhere, he reasonably confesses the inevitability of resisting this innovative style when he utters "as this plague spreads, none of us will be able to stand against the methods of the Europeans" (MNR, 483). It was revealed at the end of the novel that Olive is definitely the murderer. He attempts to flee but is captured and murdered by Hasan outside the miniaturist workshop. Another one of the leading miniaturists is Stork. Named as Mustafa Chelebi, Stork is greedy, pretentious and highly ambitious, and hopes to assume the leadership of the

workshop upon Master Osman's death. He manages to attract the hatred and resentment of Master Osman because he embraces the Frankish style of painting. Master Osman equates Stork's aesthetic style to that of Venetian masters because of his attention and zeal to minute details and yet distinguishes him from them "[Stork] paid equal attention to every odd detail, with no basis of discrimination except that it be visible, his aesthetic approach resembled that of the Venetian masters. But unlike them, my ambitious Stork neither saw nor depicted people's faces as individual or distinct" (MNR, 319).

Master Osman is of the opinion that Stork will not mind imitating the Venetian style as long as it brings him more money. Master Osman voices his perception of Stork when he observes, "*in the end Stork would unwittingly become slave to the Venetian style*" (MNR, 316). However, Osman falsely accuses Stork of being the murderer and, yet his innocence is proven when it is revealed that the murderer is in fact Olive. Finally, the last great miniaturist is Butterfly who goes by the name of Hasan Chelebi. He is defined by his selfless desire to please others and his allegiance to great masters and the traditional miniature. Butterfly happens to be Master Osman's favorite and the one to replace him as Head Illuminator after upon his demise. His pride and vanity reveals an astounding aspect of his character: "*I sense this hubris of mine will be a shock to you all, but I am the one who earns the most money, and therefore, I am the best of all miniaturists*" (MNR, 83). Black accuses Butterfly of imitating this new artistic expression as he utters his disappointment with him: "*you've enthusiastically and dishonorably imitated the European masters for the pages of my Enishte's book, with the excuse that it's the will of Our Sultan*" (MNR, 438). However, Butterfly thinks that the artist should be given freedom to choose when he asserts his own stand "*he should simply paint the way he sees fit rather than troubling over East or West*" (MNR, 488).

In like manner, in *Snow*, Turgut Bey, Ipek's father, appears as a solitary father who longs for an enlightened and secular way of life. He used to be a communist in the past and is greatly influenced by the European culture as well. He openly expresses his view on Europe and aligns the faith of the country with its attachment to Europe: "*Europe is our future, and the future of our humanity*" (Snow, 271). Turgut Bey thinks that the country's future as well as quest for democracy can only be achieved when it turns its face towards Europe and commits itself completely to it. He justifies his reason to sign the statement when he is invited to secret meeting held in Hotel Asia with the extremist Blue through the mediation of KA in order to issue a joint statement in the European press. He declares

The question is this: Speaking as the Communist modernizing secularist democratic patriot I now am, what should I put first, the enlightenment or the will of the people? If I believe first and foremost in the European enlightenment, I am obliged to see the Islamists as my enemies and support this military coup. If,

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however, my first commitment is to the will of the people—if, in other words, I've become an unadulterated democrat— I have no choice but to go ahead and sign that statement (*Snow*, 242).

As evidenced, Turgut Bey believes in common sense and rule of democracy and the only way for the country achieves these is through its adherence and embrace of European ideals. He further states *"I wish to prove to the Europeans that in Turkey; too, we have people who believe in common sense and democracy"* (*Snow*, 279). It clearly reflects Turgut Bey's willingness to embrace the European culture. On the other hand, Mukhtar is Ipek's ex-husband as well as a college friend of protagonist Ka from his student days. He is a businessman dealing with household appliances and was used to be linked with the leftist political wing. But he goes through a transformation under the influence of Saadettin, a Kurdish sheikh, and turns to Islam with the aim of adding a purpose in his life. He even advises Ka to meet with these men of religion when he states *"after my years as a leftist atheist, these people came as such a great relief. You should meet them. I'm sure you'd warm to them too"* (*Snow*, 60). Mukhtar believes that traditional Islamic identity is not outmoded or obsolete, but rather, it offers a greater purpose. He is involved in identity politics with the purpose of standing up against the secular state and preserving the traditional Islamic identity. In fact, according to Serdar Bey, the owner of the local newspaper called *Border City Gazette*, Mukhtar has a fair chance in winning the elections. He informs Ka *"Muhtar's not very bright, but he's a Kurd, and the Kurds make up forty percent of our population. The new mayor will belong to God's party"* (*Snow*, 42). The extremist Blue explains Mukhtar's reason to involve in politics as such *"In fact, the reason Muhtar went into politics in the first place was to be able to stand up to those people the way you can. But even if he wins the election, to take office he still has to prove that he's the sort of person who can take a beating from the state"* (*Snow*, 74). Mukhtar himself is very confident that he will become victorious when he states his confidence: *"With God's permission I'm going to win the election in four days' time and become the mayor"* (*Snow*, 62). However, he fails to fulfill his mission because he is forced to step down from the election after the theatrical coup, instigated by the Kemalist secularists, in order to punish the political Islamists.

### **Conclusion**

The discourse on the supposed clash of civilizations between the West and the East, or the Islamic world, still continues to generate passionate and zealous debate. In many ways, Turkey has been at the center of this debate geographically as well as textually. This debate persists in *My Name is Red* on the issue of artistic expression embodied in the confrontation between the Eastern, or rather, Islamic, art of miniature and the Western or Frankish/Venetian artistic style of painting. In *Snow*, Pamuk presented this on-going debate through differences in political perspectives, ideals of democracy and concept of secularism. As previously stated, Pamuk does not approve of this generalized perspectives of the difference between

East and the West and bestows his focus and attention on “*what matters are not civilizations, but human lives.*” He even advises his readers not to pay attention to clashes of any kind, but to believe that people in other continents or civilizations are exactly like them and they can discover more about these other people through literary works. Pamuk used East and West as provisional terms for understanding and representing his real topic of investigation, which was the relationship between similarity and difference. He acknowledged this recognizable difference and regards it as a “*traditional wall*” that is still present in Turkey between East and West as well as between modernity and tradition.

However, Pamuk successfully brings these two vibrant spirits of Turkey together as one and regards this eternal clash between East and West that occurs in Turkey’s spirit, not as a manifestation of weakness but as a form of strength. In doing so, Pamuk discloses himself as a literary figure with double consciousness who does not only cling to the enigmated East, but also the troubled West. He declares that his literary works reveal this hybrid identity, especially the works under examination. Pamuk’s use of a bridge – similar to the one stretching over the Bosphorous and uniting the European and the Asian shores of Istanbul – provides him a unique opportunity to observe both civilizations of East and West and furnishes him with a chance of appreciating these two civilizations and their respective histories. Nevertheless, despite the author’s sincere attempts to move the attention away from this eternal clash between East and West, his works, *My Name is Red* and *Snow*, dexteriously explore the prevalent clash between the two geographical continents of the world. *My Name is Red* projects the issue through adverse styles of artistic expression and *Snow* reflects the argument by means of differences in political perspectives, religious views and perceptions of modernity.

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