

Identity Formation in the Novel: Orientalism, Modernity, and Orhan Pamuk

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## **Abstract**

The novelist Orhan Pamuk rose to prominence as a writer in the midst of the westernized, secular Turkish community in the late twentieth century. Pamuk has insisted that he has attempted to depart from the overtly political style of other writers in his generation. Instead, he strives for his work to appear more poetic and personal. Pamuk's fiction is widely categorized by his experimental, sometimes postmodernist literary techniques. Pamuk's style is a stark departure from the more typical socio-political motifs that have characterized much of contemporary Turkish literature.

Edward Said's critique in *Orientalism* and his later theory that the relationship between culture and empire is depicted in the novel in *Culture and Imperialism* forms one portion of the theoretical model which is used in this dissertation to analyze Pamuk's literature. Said's theory is appropriate because Pamuk's search for identity is strongly characterized by concepts of "East" and "West." Importantly, these concepts are often inextricably linked to other binaries such as "religious/secular" and "traditional/modern."

The second portion of the theoretical model used for exploring Pamuk's literature is taken from Charles Taylor's essay *Two Theories of Modernity*, and his book *Sources of the Self*. Alternative, or multiple modernities, in his view are inextricably linked to culture. Taylor also claims that the novel is a modern cultural form which relies on individual experiences in order to locate notions of the self. This forms an appropriate framework for exploring the way in which the concept of modernity influences Pamuk's identity project in his novels. In a Turkish context, the ideology of equating "West" with "Modernity" has had a profound effect on the way Turks view the process of modernization, which can be traced in the history of the novel in Turkey.

The idea that the novel is a modern cultural form used to narrate identity is the common ground that Said and Taylor's theories share. Two of Pamuk's novels, namely *The Black Book* and *The Museum of Innocence* are analyzed in this dissertation in order to illustrate Pamuk's inclusion of religious/spiritual experiences as a central aspect in his search for identity. The ultimate conclusion is that the writing of novels for Pamuk is a kind of unique spiritual experience which is brought about by his use of Sufi motifs.

## Introduction

The novelist Orhan Pamuk was born in the midst of Turkey's pursuit of a secular ethno-nationalist identity, and rose to prominence as a writer in the epicenter of the westernized, secular Turkish community. Despite being considered a writer of political novels, or one who deals with politicized subjects, Pamuk has insisted that he has attempted to depart from the "openly political" style of other writers in his generation (Pamuk, *New Republic* interview, 2013). Instead, he strives for his work to appear more poetic and personal. Pamuk's fiction is widely categorized by his experimental, sometimes postmodernist literary techniques, very much in the tradition of Salman Rushdie, Gabriel García Márquez, Samuel Beckett, and José Saramago. Pamuk's style is a stark departure from the more typical socio-political motifs that have characterized much of contemporary Turkish literature. Writers of the latter often deal with openly political right-wing issues, and are sometimes imprisoned and even tortured as a result (Pamuk *New Republic* interview, 2013). Instead, Pamuk attempts to use his novels to explore a particular notion of Turkish identity which is more intimate than the sometimes draconian themes that often characterize contemporary Turkish literature.

Edward Said's critique of Orientalism, and his claims regarding the relationship between culture and empire mainly drawn from his books *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism*, will be helpful in framing a theoretical model for exploring Pamuk's literature, since his search for identity is strongly characterized by concepts of "East" and "West." Because these concepts are often inextricably linked to other binaries such as "traditional/modern" and "religious/secular," Said's theory regarding the relationship between culture and empire is also essential in this discussion, since Orientalism is intimately linked to both culture and empire.

In conjunction with Said, Charles Taylor's theory from his essay *Two Theories of Modernity*, of alternative, or multiple modernities, which in his view are inextricably linked to culture, forms an appropriate framework for exploring the way in which concepts of "modern" influence Pamuk's identity project in his novels. Taylor proposes that dominant explanations of modernity are related to reason, and that social transformations influence traditional habits and beliefs, but transitions that might result in what are largely recognized as "modernity" will ultimately produce different results that reflect the origins of each transition. Taylor's claim in relation to specific notions of "East" and "West" can be contextualized with the idea that societies have been guilty of defining their culture and society from elements largely recognized as "modern," thus suggesting that these elements were invented in the "West," which makes the

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society where it was invented somehow superior. In this way, identifying “West” with “Modernity” has had a serious effect on the way people view the process of modernization. In a Turkish context, Atatürk believed that in order for a nation to advance, it must align with a “universal norm of civilization,” which he understood to be Western (Çınar 2005: 5). Part of his official state ideology was the expectation that Turks would develop a strong national identity based on this ideology, which would come to replace their identification with or attachment to a religious community. As a result of these beliefs, this ideology has had a profound effect on the way Turks view the process of modernization, which can be traced in the history of the novel in Turkey.

While their wider definitions of culture ultimately differ, both Said and Taylor seem to agree that the novel is a modern form which is used to assert identity. This is evident in the way the novel relies on subjective experience and constant flux, as opposed to static modes of thinking-- such as the kind Said has identified in his critique of classical Orientalism-- that encompass notions of self in order to articulate a narrative of identity.

This study will explore the idea that the novel is a tool used to narrate identity. This will be achieved by locating Orhan Pamuk’s identity making in his novels. The first chapter will trace Said’s critique of Orientalism, and his continuation of this critique in his later theory on the novel and its role in deconstructing a binary logic in *Culture and Imperialism*. In order to more fully assess the notion of modernity and its implications in relation to identity, this chapter will also investigate Taylor’s theory of multiple modernities in his essay *Two Theories of Modernity*, in addition to his earlier theories on the novel as a modern cultural form in *Sources of the Self*.

The second chapter will assess the idea that the Turkish novel has largely come to terms with the binary logic in Orientalist ideology, and, according to Said, not through ingrained cultural ideas. Also considered will be the idea that the novel’s main criterion for depicting a modern version of self, according to Taylor, is that identity is found through self-narration. More simply, this chapter will consider whether Turkish identity in the novel has moved on from the hegemony of Western cultural ideologies to an authentic notion of self which is not bound to the kind of binary logic which has characterized the modernization process in Turkey since the introduction of the novel. This will be achieved by surveying the claims made by a selection of Turkish literary critics who have traced the history and formation of the novel since its introduction during the late Ottoman period, namely; Ahmet Evin, Nurdan Gürbelik, and Erdağ

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Göknaç.

In order to better address these claims about whether the Turkish novel as a tool for asserting identity has come to terms with Western cultural hegemony and the binary logic characteristic of classical Orientalism, the third chapter will contextualize these claims in a particular case, by tracing them in relation to Orhan Pamuk. This chapter will briefly outline a chronology of Pamuk's life, his professional achievements, and how these can be analyzed via Erdağ Göknaç's theory that he is both nationalized and Orientalized in his identity, which is demonstrated in his novels.

The fourth and final chapter will analyze two of Pamuk's novels, namely *The Black Book* and *The Museum of Innocence*. This chapter will illustrate a sense of "void" evident in Pamuk's novels. A unique aspect of Pamuk's use of the novel is that he utilizes Sufi narratives to locate his identity. Pamuk's inclusion of religious/spiritual experiences mirror Taylor's claim that spiritual nourishment can be achieved via creativity and imagination which is underpinned by instrumental reason. It is also reflective of Said's notion that identity is not only subjective, but cannot be understood in static terms-- not unlike religious or spiritual ideas, since these are also subjective and not bound by static ideas. In this way, the ultimate conclusion is that the writing of novels for Pamuk is in and of itself is a kind of spiritual experience which is brought about by his use of Sufi motifs.

## Chapter I

This chapter will lay the groundwork for exploring the notion that the novel is a cultural tool used to assert individual identity. By exploring Edward Said's critique of Orientalism and Charles Taylor's theory of multiple modernities, it will be possible to evaluate the relevance of the novel in relation to how the binary logic of Orientalism affects the development of individual identity in the context of modernity. This will be achieved by paying special attention to the understanding of culture within each theory, and how these affect the persistence of cultural hegemony when coming to terms with modernity. Said's critique and Taylor's theory of multiple modernities both include critical definitions of culture. It will become apparent in the following sections that Said's definition ultimately differs from Taylor's, but their explanations of the concept coincide in one significant feature: the novel. The novel has been widely interpreted as instrumental in the process of deconstructing the "myth" of the Orient, and in this way has played a central role in various trajectories of postcolonial theory in general. This view of the novel largely forms the basis of Said's theory. Although Taylor doesn't deal directly with the notion of Orientalism, he sees the rise of the novel as a manifestation of consciousness which has included the affirmation of ordinary life (Taylor 1989: 286); this is not unlike the goal of deconstructing the "myth" of the Orient, insofar as the purpose of deconstructing this myth is a way of coming to terms with individual identity on a more equal basis.

The aim of this chapter is to explore the idea that the reinforcement of Orientalism via perceived cultural hegemony ultimately results in its related ideas and ideologies—such as the belief that everything "modern" issues from a single Enlightenment package-- acquire a kind of authority, truth, and even normality. The discussion will begin with an exploration of Said's critique, and then move on to Taylor's theory of multiple modernities. The common epithet that "modern-equals-western" is a major way to form a connection between these two theories. A significant feature that these two theories share is the role of the novel in asserting identity. In spite of this, it will become clear that Said and Taylor ultimately differ in their approach to the novel as a cultural form. Together, they contribute to an understanding of the novel in post-colonial contexts.

### **Orientalism**

In general terms, the "Orient" is a broad designation for "the East," for anything belonging to the Eastern world, Near East, or Far East in relation to Europe. Orientalism is a

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representation of European-Atlantic hegemony over designated geographical regions known collectively as the "Orient." Said, in *Orientalism*, theorizes that the concept of the Orient and the structure of Orientalism derives from a particular closeness borne out of dominant-subordinate relations experienced between Britain, France, (and much later the United States) and the Orient. In the process of articulating the concept of the Orient and of Orientalism, it is imperative to remember that geographical concepts in general are man-made, and that concepts such as "Oriental" and "Occidental" are not inherent facts of nature. As Said points out, "It [the Orient] is not just *there* just as the Occident itself is not just *there* either" (Said 1978: 4). In the same way, Orientalism is a structure that is not an inherent fact, but a constructed hegemonic cultural system.

Orientalism rests on the foundation of the binary logic which has historically characterized notions of "East" and "West." Under the heterogeneous pattern of colonization, the view that the West was *the* place of history, modernity, and even destiny was pervasive. The notion that the so-called "Orient" was a "cultural enterprise" during the colonial age; the claim that the entire structure of Orientalism has been the depiction of a strong and weak partner; the Enlightenment notion that the "Orient" is a region advanced in age and would benefit from aligning itself with the so-called "Occident;" and finally; the structure of "us" and an "other" are all aspects of Said's critique, which are largely informed by extensive inquiries into culture. Surprisingly, Said offers no solution to or displacement for structural Orientalism in his original critique, but rather suggests that the best way to begin deconstructing this ideology is to explore those elements of culture—such as the novel-- which depict or reproduce this ideology. From there, it is possible, according to Said, to develop a kind of critical consciousness which challenges the "old ideological straightjacket" of Orientalism (Said 1978: 326).

### **Said's Critique**

The notion of the so-called "Orient" is what Said calls a "cultural enterprise" for former [British and French] colonial powers, "...a project whose dimensions take in such disparate realms as the imagination itself, the whole of India and the Levant, the Biblical texts and the Biblical lands, ...a complex array of 'Oriental' ideas, ...domesticated for local European use" (Said 1978: 4). Since World War II, the United States has largely taken over the management of this "cultural enterprise." This relationship has been a persistent reality

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since the concepts of Orient and Occident were constructed. The cultural enterprise is what Said describes as:

...a whole series of 'interests' which... is above all, a discourse that is by no means in direct, corresponding relationship... but rather is produced and exists in an uneven exchange with various kinds of power, shaped to a degree by the exchange with power political, ...power cultural, ...power moral (as with ideas about what 'we' do and what 'they' cannot do or understand as 'we' do) (Said 1978: 12).

The essential relationship between the "Occident" and "Orient" on religious, political, and cultural grounds has been depicted as one between a strong and a weak partner, respectively (Said 1978: 40). It is not necessary to delve into a detailed history of Orientalism here, but rather to fundamentally understand that categories like "Oriental" and "Occidental," "Eastern" and "Western," etc., divide human reality into categories that, as Said puts it, "polarize the distinction." In other words, by framing human understanding in terms of concepts such as "Oriental" and "Occidental," "Oriental" becomes more Oriental, and "Occidental" becomes more Occidental. This polarization leads to restrictions which often limit human encounters between different cultures, traditions, and societies (Said 1978:46). Once these limitations are in place, categorical structures begin to develop—for instance, if a particular tradition is not "ours," it is necessarily "theirs," and is therefore unfamiliar and "other."

Said theorizes that "...the Orient, and in particular the Near Orient, became known in the West as its great complementary opposite since antiquity" (Said 1978: 58). Said's theory traces European exposure to non-European cultures from Marco Polo's expeditions, the Crusades, to the Middle Ages, when Europeans were increasingly exposed to Islam. Often, when a mind is exposed to a profoundly different form of life, as Europe was to Islam in the early Middle ages, the response is largely "conservative and defensive" (Said 1978: 59). The conclusion reached from this response is that "Islam is judged to be a fraudulent new version of some previous experience, in this case Christianity" (Said 1978: 59). To add to this assumption of some sort of "fraud" was the notion that "...Mohammed was to Islam as Christ was to Christianity...and the automatic epithet 'imposter' applied to Mohammed" (Said 1978: 60). It becomes apparent that constructions of "Orient" and "Occident" also have clear religious implications, in this case "Islam" and "Christianity." The unfamiliar "other" (i.e. Muhammad, Islam, the East, etc.) is also what Said describes as the "...pseudo-incarnation of some great original (Christ, Europe, the West)" (Said 1978: 62). Thus, Europe has long

articulated its "opposite" and perceived of an "Other" in cultural and religious terms in the "East."

Oriental history from the perspective of many Enlightenment thinkers portrayed a region advanced in age, and that there were many things in its history that should be left behind. In other words, the Enlightenment view was that the "Orient" would do well to relinquish its expansive and remarkable history, and "move" westwards away from Asia and towards Europe (Said 94: 1985). For this reason, "the Orient" has been one of Europe's (and perhaps more recently the United States') deepest, most recurring images of the Other, based on a perceived hegemony of European (and American) identity.

The structure of Orientalism arises from concepts of a "we" and a "they," or an "us" and an "other." The assumption can be made that in concepts of "we/us" and "they/other," "we" occupy a central space, whereas "they" occupy a periphery, or an exterior space. Said points out that within the structure of Orientalism, it is the non-Oriental (i.e. Western, Occidental, etc.) scholar or writer who "...makes the Orient speak, describes the Orient, renders its mysteries plain for and to the West... What he says and writes... is meant to indicate that the Orientalist is outside the Orient" (Said 1978: 21). This "exteriority of representation" is what often leads to notions of an Other— that "we" occupy the center, whereas the "other" occupies the periphery-- and ultimately, unnatural or artificial depictions of the Orient (Said 1978: 22). Said summarizes this in his claim that "Orientalism responded more to the culture that produced it than to its putative object, which was also produced by the West" (Said 1978: 22).

Apart from problems of artificial representation resulting from structures of a center and a periphery, a significant portion of Orientalist scholarship since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century has conceived of humanity either in sweeping generalities or monolithic terms (Said 1978: 154). In this way, the Orient is *represented* by the Western writer, scholar, poet, etc. An aspect of this representation is the tendency to portray concepts of the Orient and so-called Orientals as unchanging, static features. As the Orient is crystalized in these representations, it becomes easier to categorize and thus criticize "the Oriental." If the Orient and its people are static and unchanging, criticism is of course easier to articulate. In the same way, an unchanging culture, religion, land, etc. is undeniably easier to classify, since there is no fluidity in their existence, and thus no changes to progressively observe. Thus, through static representation, it has been possible to construct a binary logic which leads to monolithic categories such as "East" and "West."

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Said identifies “absolute and systematic” differences between East and West in classical Orientalism, in which the West is rational, developed, and superior, while the Orient is aberrant, undeveloped, and inferior (Said 1978: 300). A crucial key factor of this thinking is rooted in the language of Orientalism which brings opposites together as “natural,” and, as mentioned, relies on static imagery in order to create systematic classifications that construct a constituted entity which can be defined on the basis of religion, culture, or racial essence specific to a particular geographical area (i.e. “the Orient”). (Said 1978: 321-322). It is this kind of classification which allows the Orientalist to “manage” the Orientalist system.

The structures upon which the binaries of “Occident” and “Orient” lie have largely yet to be broken down, and for that reason the problematic of representation persists. “Western” and “Eastern” are still common categories for classification, even when considering the individual. By designating an individual, a religion, a culture, etc., as “Oriental” or “Eastern,” an evaluative judgement is being made about the attributes of these things, and the individual is *represented* in a particular way. Evaluative judgements like these may lead to strong opposition of one against the other; if something is classified as “Eastern,” it is necessarily less “Western” because of it. This view, that the West was *the* place of history, modernity, and even destiny, has been pervasive under the heterogeneous pattern of colonization, and within the ideology of classical Orientalism.

As mentioned, Orientalism was a culture of hegemony. This is enforced by the failure to identify with human experience (Said 1978: 328), which is largely characterized by the idea that Western identity is superior in comparison with all non-Western people and cultures (Said 1978: 7). This notion of superior identity extends to any ideas which reiterate Western superiority over Oriental “backwardness,” which often override the possibility of independent, sceptical thinking which might produce different views on the matter (Said 1978: 7). Significantly, Said points out that this homogenization in thinking reinforces the notion of “the Orient,” not only for so-called Occidentals, but for their Oriental counterparts as well. In other words; the notions of Western superiority and Oriental “backwardness” are enforced by ideological constructions which result from the uneven economic, political, and social exchanges between the “Occident” and the “Orient.” In short, the so-called modern Orient participates in its own Orientalizing (Said 1978: 325).

A significant part of the self-Orientalizing reinforcement is a result of economic relations, mainly between the United States and the oil-rich Arab world-- which by extension includes almost any “non-Western” country that holds economic interest. It is beside the

point to delve into a detailed explanation of this economic relationship here, but it is sufficient enough to use this as an example by which to assess the relationship as a one-sided one, with the United States—and often other Western countries -- as the dominant partner, who is not only in control of [the oil] trade, but who has successfully established the fact of consumerism within “the Orient,” which results in an additional dimension of dominance. This dominant Western consumerist orientation has produced, as Said explains:

...a class of educated people whose intellectual formation is directed to satisfying market needs... Its role has been prescribed and set for it as a ‘modernizing’ one [giving] legitimacy and authority to ideas about modernization, progress, and culture that it [the Orient] receives from the United States for the most part (Said 1978: 3).

### **Culture**

What is culture, or a cultural system? Said only provides a strong definition of culture long after his original critique of Orientalism, in *Culture and Imperialism*. Nevertheless, his definition is closely linked with his original critique. Said cites two main definitions of culture. First, “...it means all those practices, like the arts of description, communication, and representation, that have relative autonomy from the economic, social, and political realms that often exist in aesthetic forms, one of whose principal aims is pleasure” (Said 1994: xii). Said is specifically framing this definition in terms of what he describes as the modern Western empires of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Said 1994: xii). In this context, Said is particularly concerned with such “cultural forms” as the novel, which has strongly contributed to the formation of imperial attitudes, references, and experiences, and is “...*the* aesthetic object whose connection to the expanding societies... is particularly interesting to study” (Said 1994: xii).

Said suggests that the power of narration is important to culture and imperialism, and in fact constitutes one of the main connections between these two concepts; since novels have been “manifestly and unconcealedly a part” of the imperial process (Said 1994: xv). For this reason, it is important to include novels in the assessment of culture, due to their unquestionable participation in the reality of the societies of which they are or have been a part. The same reasoning which proposes that novels are part of the imperial process suggests that novels are “...the method colonized people use to assert their own identity and the existence of their own history” (Said 1994: xiii). In other words, the novel is, and has been, a method by which people express their opposing counter-narratives.

Said goes on to suggest that the identity of an author is not determined by ideology, class, or economic history, but is instead shaped by personal history and social experiences in

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varying degrees (Said 1994: xxiv). In the same way that the self cannot be determined in static terms, experience cannot be grasped by studying lists or catalogues, as Said discovered in his original critique of Orientalism. Instead, the power of narrative is what drives assertions of identity through experience, since history is infinitely more inclusive and dynamic than mere speculation (Said 1994: xv).

In Said's second definition of culture, he suggests that it is a concept that includes a refining and elevating element, which mitigates, if not neutralizes, the ravages of a modern, aggressive, mercantile and brutalizing urban existence (Said 1994: xiii). In terms of literature, and novels in particular, Said suggests that people, society, and the self are in their "best lights" in this context. In this way, culture is increasingly associated with the nation or the state, which in turn differentiates an "us" from a "them," which, according to Said, often results in some degree of xenophobia (Said 1994: xiii). In this way, culture can become a source for identity.

This second concept of culture is a sort of "...theatre where various political and ideological causes engage one another... students who read *their* national classics before they read others are expected to appreciate and belong loyally, often uncritically, to their nations and traditions while denigrating or fighting against others" (Said 1994: xvi). The issue with this concept of culture is not only that a given culture is more highly venerated [than others], but also that said culture is also somehow separate from the everyday world (Said 1994: xvi).

This notion of "separateness" of culture involves the reverence of one culture above that of others, and in the process the revered culture becomes what Said describes as "a protective enclosure... which is antiseptically quarantined from its worldly affiliations" (Said 1994: xv). By including novels in an assessment of culture, it is possible to understand them as a way of exploring this previously unquestioned reality and notion of separateness. As mentioned, novels have been part of the imperial process due to their input regarding imperial attitudes, references, and experiences. To the extent that novels reproduce, yet may criticize the ideology of the time and place in which they are written, it is possible to explore the novel's contributions to and assessments of the imperial process (Said 1994: xx-xxii).

Paradoxically, the process of globalization originally set in motion by modern imperialism (Said 1994: xxii), is precisely the reason that history and culture can finally be explored in terms that are not monolithic, reductively compartmentalized, separate, or placed into distinct categories (Said 1994: xxii, xxiii). The world has changed considerably since the end of colonialism, and part of this change has yielded new forms of individual agency

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articulated in contemporary narratives; since the novel reproduces the ideology of the time and place in which it is written, it is a unique cultural form in which assertions of identity and individual histories can be explored. Since the events of history—such as colonialism-- have permanently altered human consciousness, attention should be paid to what Said calls “epistemological mutation(s)” caused by historical events when assessing notions of culture (Said 1994: xxii). In other words, the idea that a particular culture is somehow separate and thus superior to another can be evaluated by examining the ways in which these epistemological mutations are represented in a cultural form such as the novel.

Mihaela Czobor-Lupp's critical discussion of culture suggests that it becomes relevant to politics because dialogue, as opposed to violence, is “...still the aim of an enlightened form of politics... [because of this,] ‘intercultural understanding’ becomes a political task” (Czobor-Lupp 2008: 430). Here, she is making specific reference to cultural divides between “East” and “West.” She argues that imagination may play a decisive role in providing the language that makes this kind of intercultural understanding possible, *vis-à-vis* imaginative engagement of literature with aspects of the public sphere—such as politics—which can be seen as an attempt to “...limit and even replace nationalism” (Czobor-Lupp 2008: 432). A writer is able achieve this by illustrating how private lives are affected by cultural spaces and memories that, similar to Said's suggestion that the history and culture of imperialism can be explored in literature in terms that are not monolithic, nor reductively compartmentalized, separate, or distinct; “...are not monolithic, authentic, and sovereign, but already dialogically penetrated by other voices” (Czobor-Lupp 2008: 433). Thus, the novel is a profound source for not only detecting social problems and other systematic or political deficiencies, but can also be one where the “...imaginative cultural horizon of a society can be transformed and expanded” (Czobor-Lupp 2008: 433). By transforming a particular cultural horizon-- such as the life of an individual in a particular cultural setting-- into a story, the novel marks the intensification of its uniqueness and outsidership. In this way, it becomes possible to view one's own life more wholly and aesthetically (Czobor-Lupp 2008: 433). Thus, only considering what is “normative” within a particular cultural identity is an incomplete approach to intersubjectivity. In other words, deciding what is “normal” within a particular cultural space often results in a binary logic, similar to what Said describes in the context of Orientalism, when interaction with different particular lives is limited due to a binary distinction. The use of imaginative engagement with aspects of culture, such as the writing of a novel, creates a platform on which dialogue between a “self” and an “other” is possible

because one sees the self from the outside, *through the other's story*. In a constructed hegemonic cultural system such as Orientalism, this kind of dialogue is often reduced to an uneven exchange which is largely characterized by monolithic and reductive concepts of culture.

### **Taylor and Modernity: Culturally Appropriate Alternatives**

Similar to Said's notion that engagement with certain aspects of culture creates a space for a more even exchange between a self and an Other, Charles Taylor suggests that an alternative tradition of cultural egalitarianism is accomplished in the modern novel. For Taylor, this form of narration relates to the particulars of life and places all events and lives on the same stylistic footing (Taylor 1989: 287). In this way, it may be possible to gain what Taylor suggests in his theory of alternative modernities, which is an innovative understanding of our place among others (Taylor 1999: 172). By extension, this could be applied to the possibility of viewing culture as one among others, which is only possible by understanding that "we" are not a viable category without an explicit connection to a "they." In other words, "we" can only define ourselves by engaging in an ongoing exchange with "they."

Taylor's general definition of culture is "...a plurality...each of which has a language and a set of practices that define specific understandings of personhood, social relations, states of mind/soul, goods and bads, virtues and vices, and the like" (Taylor 1999: 153). This definition of culture is especially useful because he argues that in the *cultural* theory of modernity, modernity is itself a new form of culture, which can be contrasted with all others, including its own predecessor cultures or civilizations (Taylor 1999: 154). In this theory of modernity, a culture might be viewed as one among others, which may be a recent acquisition among civilizations. Because of this, it is not surprising that the first accounts of the process of modernity, or "revolutionary change" as Taylor puts it, were of the *cultural* sort, for the reason that "...our ancestors looked on other civilizations as made up of barbarians, infidels, or savages" (Taylor 1999: 158). If, as in Said's theory, culture is often associated with the nation or the state, which can lead to a differentiation between "us" and "them," it is possible to see how the culture of modernity is not seen as one among others, but it is somehow separate and thus more highly venerated; "we" are modern whereas "they" are not. Taylor, however, argues that modernity is glorified in the context of evaluative explanations of culture, because of the tendency to want to glorify or vilify the notion of modernity (Taylor 1999: 158).

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The novel, according to Taylor, is an essentially “modern” cultural form due to its structure of self-narration drawn from personal events or experiences, as opposed to more traditional models of existence (Taylor 1989). In other words, the novel as a mode of self-narration is quintessentially modern, because the story is drawn from events experienced by individuals, as opposed to traditional models of existence (Taylor 1989: 288-289). In this reasoning, people are made what they are by events, and as self-narrators, individuals live these through a meaning which the events come to manifest or illustrate, and they are constructing a “modern” version of self, due to the method by which they are asserting their identity. According to Taylor, this fits the experience of the disengaged, individual self (Taylor 1989: 289).

For Taylor, the tradition of narrating egalitarianism definitively triumphs over other modes of self-expression in the modern novel because all events and lives are placed on the same stylistic footing (Taylor 1989: 287). An important dimension of narration within the novel, which is related to this idea of egalitarianism, is that it allows for readers to “...envisage unconnected events as occurring simultaneously in the same story-space” (Taylor 1989: 288). In this way, the notion of the subject (usually the main character) changes, and the individual, particular “self” is created. The story in a novel is drawn from the particular events and circumstances of the characters' lives. Thus, in this way, the characters find identity in self-narration—by articulating or re-constructing memories of particular events and circumstances.

Taylor argues that many modern writers turn to a retrieval of experience or interiority (Taylor 1989: 461). Interestingly, Taylor believes that this turn inward towards experience or subjectivity doesn't mean a search for the articulation of a self. Instead, he argues that this inward turn takes one *beyond* the self as customarily understood, to a “...fragmentation of experience which calls our ordinary notions of identity into question... or beyond that to a new kind of unity, a new way of inhabiting time” (Taylor 1989: 462). This idea of identity beyond the traditional notion of self is predicated on the notion of a retrieval of lived experience, which is characterized by a constant flux of time and absence of integration of any kind of definitive unity; in other words, the lack of a singular or static notion of self. This concept of a fluid notion of self will be explored in more detail in Chapters Three and Four.

### **Conventional Ideas of Modernity**

## Edward Said's Orientalist Critique and Charles Taylor's Modernity: Theories of the Modern Novel

According to Taylor, a common Enlightenment view of modernity has been that certain social transformations bring about intellectual and spiritual changes because they shake people loose from "old habits" such as religion and morality. Part of this reasoning contends that religion and morality become unsustainable because they lack the independent rational grounding by which individualism and instrumental reason are characterized. As long as it is believed that everything modern (notions of individual identity included) has issued from a single Enlightenment package, and that all cultures have to undergo certain changes, such as secularization, or what Taylor calls "the growth of atomistic forms of self-identification" (Taylor 1999) we will fail to see how other cultures differ and how this difference crucially conditions the way in which they integrate the truly universal features of modernity.

Taylor's argument proposes that dominant explanations of modernity are related to reason, in that social transformations such as industrialization and mobility bring about intellectual and spiritual changes which influence traditional habits and beliefs, namely; religion and traditional morality. According to Taylor, a popular theory of modernity is that these habits and beliefs become obsolete due to a lack of independent rational ideas, such as individualism and instrumental reason—both of which are theoretically integral to modernity (Taylor 1999: 155). Taylor is critical of this popular conception, arguing that:

The view that modernity arises through the dissipation of certain unsupported religious and metaphysical beliefs seems to imply that the paths of different civilizations are bound to converge. As they lose their traditional illusions, they will come together on the 'rationally grounded' outlook which has resisted the challenge. The march of modernity will end up making all cultures look the same. This means, of course, that we expect they will end up looking Western (Taylor 1999: 161).

This theory of modernity is strongly indicative of the logic of what Taylor refers to as an *acultural* theory, which attributes the transformations of modernity to a culture-neutral operation. In other words; transformations towards modernity are not defined in terms of specific cultures, but are viewed as something that any traditional culture could undergo (Taylor 1999: 154). Specifically, features of modernization such as industrialization, democracy, capitalism, and even philosophical ideas, are elements not generally defined in terms of specific cultures. In contrast, Taylor supports a *cultural* theory of modernity that empirically originated in the modern "West," which he defines as the "contemporary Atlantic world." The West in this case is seen as having its own *culture*, or its own understandings of the individual, good and bad; etc. (Taylor 1999: 153).

Since it is unavoidable that different cultures have different understandings of the self, social relations, goods and bads, virtues and vices, sacred and profane, etc.; transitions that might result in what are largely recognized as “modernity” will ultimately produce different results that reflect the origins of each transition (Taylor 1999: 162). Taylor believes that the best way to address this variety is to rather speak of “modernities” instead of “modernity” in the singular; the latter won't be identical across the globe, so relying on a singular term is inadequate. In the same way, the transition to modernities in no way requires the construction of identical institutions, but perhaps culturally appropriate and functionally equivalent ones (Taylor 1999: 162).

### **Western-Equals-Modern**

Taylor's theory of modernity in terms of *cultural* and *acultural* ideas of the phenomenon is useful for demonstrating the problems associated with the concept of a single “wave” of modernity that accompanied European colonialism. As mentioned earlier, Said describes the concept of the Orient as a “cultural enterprise,” or a series of interests of former colonial powers. In essence, this cultural enterprise is an uneven exchange underpinned by various kinds of power which dictates ideas about what “...‘we’ do and what ‘they’ cannot” (Said 1979: 12). The perceived hegemony of European identity and the presupposition that modernity issued from a single Enlightenment package enforced the portrayal of the Orient as a region advanced in age, which would benefit from “moving” westward towards Europe and adopting a homogenous “culture of modernity.” However, according to Taylor in *Two Theories of Modernity*, a successful transition to modernity is not a single wave, but instead involves people finding resources within their own culture and traditions which enable them to take on new practices which result in a different experience of modernization (Taylor 1989).

In order to better understand the connection between coming to terms with the possibility of multiple modernities, and a critique of the ideology of classical Orientalism, it is important to briefly address the problem of equating “modern” with “Western,” since there is often a mistakenly inextricable link between these two when attributing features to the former.

In his essay, “Islam, Europe, and the West: Meanings-at-Stake and the Will-to-Power,” Mohammad Arkoun argues that it is impossible to ignore the significant gains in scientific, technological, and philosophical thought which were made in Europe since the 16<sup>th</sup>

century. While these elements of what conventionally comprise "modernity" are certainly significant aspects of the concept, the issue is not whether the legitimacy of these components as elements of a modern society should be brought into question (Arkoun 1998:170). In other words, scientific, technological, and even philosophical ideas are not elements that define a culture or a society. Nevertheless, so-called "Western" societies have been guilty of defining their culture and society from these acultural elements, thus suggesting that, for instance; since democracy was invented in the "West," and is widely viewed as an ideal method of politics throughout much of the world, this makes the society where it was invented somehow superior.

This notion of superiority is comparable to Said's assessment of it within classical Orientalism, which "...tries to see the Orient as an imitation West which ...can only improve itself when [it] ... is prepared to come to terms with the West" (Said 1979: 321). This notion of improvement presupposes the crystallization of Oriental representation. If Oriental features are unchanging, then there are no changes to progressively observe; the region, the culture-- all of these things-- are constituted entities which can be defined in absolute terms. A common feature of this logic also unilaterally equates change with Westernized modernization. Correspondingly, the same logic maintains that an essential difference between East and West is between modernity and tradition (Said 1979: 269, 304). Arkoun suggests that arriving at a "utopian" conception where "modern" and "traditional" are not engaged in a competition of superior versus inferior requires "...a constant mobility of thought, necessary if we are to keep the same critical eye on all sites, modalities, frameworks, and tools of a production of meaning which is in a constant state of change" (Arkoun 1998:173). In other words, Arkoun advocates an ongoing dialogue that evolves constantly to meet the need for new ideas and concepts of modernity.

Taylor identifies a similar error in the kind of logic that ascribes superiority to modernization. In his criticism of the notion that modernization occurs in a single wave; he argues that "...traditions impede development... [and] development occurs through modernization" (Taylor 1999: 161). This logic suggests that traditions are illusions which dissipate as the paths of civilizations converge in a result which makes all cultures look the same. As mentioned earlier, the reasoning which results in a single homogenous "culture of modernity" frequently includes the expectation that this sameness is Western in appearance, based on the notion that modernity has issued from a single original Enlightenment package.

In his essay, "The Mistaken Identification of 'The West' with 'Modernity,'" John Voll points out that identifying "West" with "modernity" has a serious effect on the way people view the process of modernization. He contextualizes this claim by focusing on the Islamic world, as well as the way the relationship between Islam and the West is viewed in today's world (Voll 1995: 2). The first aspect of the mistake of equating "modernity" with "The West" is that these concepts are in fact two different concepts and historical entities entirely, and to use them interchangeably invites confusion and provokes the possibility for conflict and inconsistency. In part, his argument is reminiscent of Taylor and Arkoun in that he points out the undeniable fact of certain achievements that benefitted humanity on a global scale that originated in western European societies, such as the Industrial Revolution. He points out, however, that events such as the Industrial Revolution were not perpetuated exclusively by local [western European] forces, but were set into motion by influences on a global scale (Voll 1995:6).

Voll's argument is similar to Taylor's theory of modernity and modernization, in that the origin of events such as the Industrial Revolution may have been in a "Western" region, but its influence was entirely separate from any cultural implications—Western Europe was simply the "pioneering test case" (Voll 1995) for the development of modern industrial society. As a result of this, Western civilization was the first traditional civilization to be affected by the process of modernization. Therefore, concepts of "West" and "modern" are in reference to two different concepts that are only related because of the origins of events like the Industrial Revolution. In Taylor's terms, the "West" is a cultural idea, whereas "modern" is acultural. Thus, once modernization became globalized, a western approach to modernity was rendered obsolete, because western society ceased to become the source or the only method by which to become modern (Voll 8: 1995). Cultural mimicry in applying concepts of modernity became unnecessary in the wake of globalization. Theoretically, this should have resulted in a collective ethos, (i.e. a new "culture of modernity") but the idea that "west" and "modern" are analogous concepts has persisted.

### **The Novel as a Converging Feature**

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Said suggests that the novel has contributed to the formation of imperial attitudes, references, and experiences, and actually constitutes one of the main connections between culture and imperialism. Since imperialism has been one of the decisive factors in the enforcement of Orientalism—whether cultural,

## Edward Said's Orientalist Critique and Charles Taylor's Modernity: Theories of the Modern Novel

economic, or social—the notion that the novel has participated in the reality of ideologies such as Orientalism is a viable option for exploring how an ideology such as this has acquired the level of authority, conventionality, and truth that it has.

As discussed, the modern novel in Taylor's view creates a space where the particulars of life are all placed on the same stylistic footing, and helps to reconcile the mistaken notion that modernity has issued from a single cultural (Enlightenment) package. Ultimately, Taylor wishes to use the notion of culture to understand the rise of modernity, insofar as the "culture of modernity" is one which can be differentiated from other cultures, yet is one among others in a kind of multiplicity of modernities. His argument culminates with the claim that modernity comes down to the individual, which finds self-realization against the backdrop of coming to terms with the world and with others. This reasoning includes the notion that self-understanding is ultimately a myth in the sense that individual identity is not built up as a result of one's background or history, but is dependent on one's instrumental individuality. In other words, identity is not dependent on tradition or traditional features of a culture.

In contrast, Said's notion that culture and its forms are precisely what determine individual identity, in the sense that the backdrop of coming to terms with the world and with others is specifically what comprises individual identity. The problem with this is that the individual fails to realize this because of representative structures such as Orientalism. In this ideology, one's culture is a tool for self-identification, but this can lead to differentiation between "I/we" and "other/they," which can lead to binary distinctions and thus limits the individual's ability to come to terms with the self via the other. By adopting a critical consciousness, however, the individual may be able to overcome these binary distinctions and realize a stream of consciousness which is in constant flux. For Said, the novel is a way of adopting this critical consciousness.

Despite these differences, Said and Taylor's explanations of culture coincide in their definition of the novel, in terms of its power for asserting individual identity via a cultural form. By extension, the importance of this cultural form for assessing the way culture has an effect on individual identity is of similar significance in each theory, despite its differing role in the idiosyncrasies of each. Crucially, the novel for Taylor is a self-narration affected by events which take on meaning in the process of self-identification during which individual identity is instrumental. For Said, the novel is a tool used to explore the relationship between culture and empire and how this affects the particulars of life (and thus, identity), which have

been historically characterized by cultural structures such as Orientalism, but which may be overcome by engaging in a dialogue between the self and an other.

## **Conclusion**

The novel as a converging feature of Said and Taylor's explanations of culture will be explored in more detail in the next chapter. This will be starting from the fact that both Said and Taylor recognize the value of the novel for placing culture on similar stylistic footing in order to come to terms with it in relation to the individual, and thus the development of the self and individual identity.

This chapter has laid the groundwork for assessing the value of the novel in cultural terms, by exploring the idea that Orientalism is an ideology which has been reinforced by a perceived hegemony. This has been related to the logic that "modernity" has issued from a heterogeneous cultural pattern, via a single Enlightenment package which originated in the so-called West. This chapter has explored how the association of the West with modernity has acquired a kind of conventional authority, and even a level of truth which affects the way modernity is viewed on the whole.

The next chapter will contextualize the novel specifically in terms of its introduction in Turkey, in order to assess the novel's participation in the kind of cultural hegemony characteristic in classical Orientalism, which has been present during Turkey's modernization process. The idea that cultural hegemony has affected the development of a modern version of the self via the Turkish novel, which can largely be attributed to the binary logic which characterizes Orientalism, will also be interrogated.

## Chapter II

This chapter will look at the Turkish novel in order to interrogate the notion that the novel is a modern cultural form which depicts a relationship between culture and empire. This chapter will assess how the novel in Turkey has participated in the development of the kind of cultural hegemony that Said identifies in classical Orientalism. Taylor's claim that the novel depicts a "modern" version of the self, because the novelist finds identity in self-narration, supports Ahmet Evin's critique that the Turkish novel has largely come to terms with the kind of binary logic characteristic of classical Orientalism, and moved on from the hegemony of Western cultural ideologies to an authentic notion of identity. Other literary critics, such as Nurdan Gürbelik, have argued that this search for the self has resulted in an over-emphasis on authenticity in the Turkish novel, which ultimately allows for the persistence of a binary logic. In this argument, Turkish literature still reiterates the binary logic of being "Eastern" and "Western." This would suggest that Said's notion of the persistence of a structural binary, or what he refers to as the "old ideological straightjacket" of thinking in terms of East and West, is still evident in the Turkish novel. Still other critics, such as Erdağ Gökner, argue that Turkish literature is characterized by narratives which are *both* nationalized and orientalized. The former can be generally understood as an identity shaped as a result of the Young Turk Revolution, and persisting via Anatolianism, Kemalism, and state-implemented secularization measures.

By tracing the history of the Turkish novel, including the conditions surrounding its introduction in the late Ottoman era, this chapter will briefly outline the above-mentioned critiques of the Turkish novel. The aim of this chapter is to assess whether the Turkish novel is representative of an authentic Turkish modern identity which has largely come to terms with the duality between an indigenous Ottoman-Islamic cultural legacy and the dominance of Western culture on the one hand, or indicates the persistence of the "empire" of western cultural hegemony which has characterized the history of Turkey, on the other.

### The History of the Turkish Novel

The history of the novel in general is difficult to trace. Many sources place the development of the novel in 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe, but there are plenty of examples of works of literature which are considered novels, that were written much earlier, and not in Europe. Regardless of its origins, since its rise, this literary form has been a means of narration which conveys the particulars of ordinary life as in Taylor's theory. In a Turkish context, Said's

suggestion that the novel depicts a relationship between culture and empire is helpful for assessing the relationship between modernization and the Ottoman-Islamic legacy. In this way, the novel is useful for assessing how individual narratives of identity depict how an ideology such as Orientalism acquires the level of conventionality that it has.

The Turkish novel from the time of its introduction until the republican era demonstrates that the genre was largely used as a didactic tool meant to familiarize Turks with the values of Western modernity. It thereby perpetuated the attitude that borrowing from the West was necessary for progress (Göknaç 2013; Turan 1995). In contrast, the Ottoman literary traditions of *divan* and *kaside* poetry which preceded the novel were largely characterized by a rigorous precedent of religious and/or otherwise spiritual themes. The history of the novel in Turkey illustrates Taylor's assessment of the common Enlightenment view of modernity that certain social transformations are thought to bring about intellectual and spiritual changes because they shake people loose from "old habits" such as religion and traditional morality. This was one way of moving away from the "old habits" of literary traditions which dealt mainly with religious ideas. This was a move away from an Eastern, traditional culture to a modern Western one. In this way, the Turkish novel was an instrument in the drive towards a "culture of modernity" (Taylor 1999). The novel was also a reflection of the growing hegemony of Western cultural elements which were perceived to be superior in comparison with Eastern forms of literature. This was because of the new preference for discarding religious ideas and themes in favor of ones which Erdağ Göknaç describes as "...secular masterplot[s] of Turkish ethno-nationalism" (Göknaç 2013: 25, 27). Said's notion of the relationship between culture and empire illustrates this feature.

Early modernization efforts during the *Tanzimat* era in Turkey mimicked European methods. This was a period of Ottoman history characterized by various attempts at "modernizing" the Ottoman Empire, when the material benefits of modernization were initiated using European methods. Turkish intellectuals beginning in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century were obsessed with the idea of progress. It was in this setting, especially under the pretence of integrating socio-political ideas regarding modernization of the Ottoman Empire, that the novel was introduced (Evin 1983; Turan 1995). Like democracy, technology, and other political and industrial innovations, the novel was considered to be an integral part of modern civilization that was adamantly imitated by the Ottoman intelligentsia. Many writers of the time employed fiction to advocate certain social and political ideas tied to the process of modernization. As a result, literature, and the novel in particular, came to be viewed as a

vehicle to serve the cause of progress as well as an index of the state of progress attained (Ertuğrul 2009; Göknaç 2013).

The main problem that the intelligentsia had with the Ottoman, or the “old literature,” was that it had never developed the acute rhetorical means to convey ideas in the same way that a novel could. Ottoman poetry, for instance, adhered to strict traditions regarding content and form, and therefore was not a realistic means for conveying political or social commentary specific to the issues faced by Ottoman society at the time. For the intelligentsia, this was the most problematic aspect of Ottoman literature; a tradition which fed on aloofness from social reality could not possibly be compatible with the notion of progress (Evin 1983). This attack on the classical literary tradition was mirrored by the perceived need to modernize based on the Western example. Because of this, the transformation of Turkish literature from the end of the *Tanzimat* onwards came to be viewed as literary Westernization (Evin 1983; Turan 1995).

The classical Ottoman literary tradition was not altogether rejected. It was widely believed that reformist thinking could face “both directions” at the same time (East and West), and in this way ultimately restore the former grandeur of the Ottoman golden age (Evin 1983, Göknaç 2006). Early Turkish reformism was inspired by nostalgia for the days of the Ottoman apogee. It was deemed necessary to trim those elements of culture which may have led to the decay of the former strength of Ottoman power and influence. Therefore, the nature of the literary engagement of the late Ottoman period was largely determined by socio-political ideas and molded by the search for a solution that would combine the moral values of Ottoman-Islamic culture with the material benefits of progress that they observed in the West (Evin 1983; Turan 1995). The novel in the Ottoman Empire provided one opportunity to fulfil a number of these functions for the intelligentsia. Publishing fiction in the form of novels was a way of attracting a new demographic of readers, especially among the literate middle class. The novel could thus be an advantageous means through which ideas could be disseminated to wider audiences in a more popular, charismatic format.

The infinite possibilities that the novel offered as an informative or otherwise instructive tool were especially appealing to the idealism of the post-*Tanzimat* thinkers (Evin 1983). The appeal of this method for utilizing the novel was so strong that later generations of Turkish writers would increasingly employ fiction novels for the purpose of advocating their agenda of social and political ideas, which continued to persist even long after Atatürk’s republican revolution (Evin 1983; Göknaç 2013).

During the republican era, Mustapha Kemal Atatürk introduced a series of reforms largely drawn from a French model. Part of these reforms included Atatürk's belief that modernity issued strictly from Western sources, which perpetuated the tradition of mimicking Western models of modernity and modernization. Because Atatürk associated Western ideas with all things modern, things that were considered "old habits," such as religion and traditional values, were categorized as belonging to the "East," and as such were concepts which hindered the progress of Turkey's modernization.

The original purpose of the novel in Turkey was to contribute to what could be called the "imperial process" of *Tanzimat* reforms. In the same way, the genre was later used to advocate a secular teleology which upheld Kemalist ideology, which, as mentioned employed the knowledge of the Enlightenment as a means of achieving the transition from an Islamic Empire to a secular republic that separated religion from the state. The result of Kemalist ideology was not a clean break from Islam. Under Atatürk's reforms, Islam was politicized in the nation, and eventually became viewed as a force at odds with the Turkish conception of secularism and ultimately the idea of modernity. In this way, the binary logic of "East" and "West," and by extension, the rise of Western cultural hegemony, persisted in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Evin points out that the history of Turkish literature from the republican era to the present has followed a path which parallels Turkish political history (Evin 1993: 98), which has revealed a kind of dichotomy between Turkish culture and the Western example (Evin 1993: 95). This illustrates Said's assessment of the Orientalist notion that the Orient is an imitation of the West, when the former can only improve by either coming to terms with or by imitating the latter. It was punctuated by the marked preference of Turkish novelists for narratives which fit the requirements of ideologies popular in Europe, while at the same time largely ignoring the aesthetics of their native tradition in a kind of "...blind adoration of everything Western" (Evin 1993: 100, 101). Within this scenario, the Turkish novel became a product of elitist concerns which were a result of the particular cultural milieu which revered a European model, which further endorsed the growing hegemony of Western cultural forms. As a result, the cultural gap between the ruling elite and the average Turkish citizen began to widen as literature increasingly failed to capture the imagination of the majority of Turks, who, according to Evin, were "...characteristically suspicious of any change that might be imposed on them as a result of the elite's decision to do so" (Evin 1993: 103). This illustrates the way in which the Turkish novel has participated as a cultural ideological tool of the Turkish state and its elites. In other words, as a product of elitist concerns, the Turkish novel

embodied European/Western culture which was imposed – in a hegemonic manner-- as a result of official state ideology. In this way, the Turkish novel represented the state of Turkish culture which, especially during the republican era, was characterized by a preference for European values in elitist circles on the one hand, and the rejection of or indifference to these values in the Turkish middle and lower classes on the other.

The Turkish novel saw a decisive turning point after the military coups of 1971 and 1980. The changes in social climate led to the diversification of themes within the genre as part of an effort to accommodate new social issues and situations. This was largely a result of a growing middle class which began to take on the characteristics of what Evin describes as "...a virtually modern bourgeoisie" (Evin 1993: 107). More specifically, the Turkish novel began to focus increasingly on the world of the individual. This focus on the individual was largely a result of political events. As elements of modernity increasingly took hold in Turkish society, the novelist began to explore in more detail and reflect more meaningfully on these changes in human terms (Evin 1993: 106, 107).

Evin argues that the construct of the West in the Turkish novel has virtually disappeared in recent decades, because the West is no longer "uncharted territory," especially among Turkish elites (Evin 1993: 112). Instead, the Turkish novel has become an engaging piece of contemporary writing, without "admitting a cultural or ideological burden," and as such does not express a cultural struggle between East and West (Evin 1993: 113). In this way, the contemporary Turkish novel "...reverses the issue of looking at oneself in a Western mirror" by calling into question the constructs of East and West that have been built up since the introduction of the novel in Turkey (Evin 1993: 115). While several critics of contemporary Turkish literature seem to agree with this assertion in so many words, does this mean that Said's notion of the "old ideological straightjacket" (Said 1978: 326) in terms of European literary tropes, has been removed, and replaced with an authentically Turkish novel?

Nurdan Gürbelik, in her essay on Authenticity, Belatedness, and the Turkish Novel, makes a thought-provoking claim in reference to these questions: not only that Turkish literary criticism itself is "...torn between a detached observation reproaching its object for its inadequacy and an ardent search for an authentic localness... between an unconditional admiration of the stranger and an unconditional hostility to it" (Gürbelik 2003: 601), but also that the drive for participation in the reality of an authentic Turkish modernity as expressed in the novel exhibits what Gürbelik describes as "...overemphasis on originality and the obsessive attempt to create an authentically Turkish novel [which is] ...part of the

...obsession with authenticity itself [which] is the outcome of the very divide that compulsorily made some of us snobs and the rest unrefined provincialists” (Gürbelik 2003: 605). This divide is what Gürbelik refers to as the “dual identity called Turkishness” (Gürbelik 2003: 621). This could be understood as the movement towards a foreign ideal -- European ideology— on the one hand, and the effort to return to an original self—the Ottoman-Islamic legacy—on the other.

The effort to go back to an original self has been linked with the invention of a so-called belated national literature in Turkey. Ironically, the history of the novel since Don Quixote is full of borrowed ideals and copies of characters from other literature. According to Gürbelik, in order to be original, the novel only has to be loyal to an experience that is locally or individually unique. However, in the “epoch of contagious ideas and contaminative desires,” local or individual experience is always faced with that problem of belatedness, or what Gürbelik describes as a kind of infantile role when confronted by foreign, modern ideals (Gürbelik 2003: 599). As a result, there is a kind of “irremovable tension” between Western ideals and the reality of the Turkish novel, between “alien concepts and the native cultural scene” (Gürbelik 2003: 600).

This idea of a tension between the ideal and reality in the Turkish novel would suggest that Said’s notion of the “old ideological straightjacket” of a binary notion between Western ideals and Turkish cultural reality remains largely intact. In spite of this, the suggestion that the only criteria for authenticity is that the novel only need be loyal to an experience which is locally or individually unique would suggest that the Turkish novel most definitely participates in an authentic Turkish modernity. This is not only in terms of a structure of self-narration drawn from individual or unique events or experiences as Taylor suggests, but also that the genre has largely come to terms with the duality between indigenous Ottoman-Islamic cultural legacy, and the empire of Western cultural ideals which has characterized the genre since its introduction in Turkey.

Göknaar suggests that the Turkish novel has *engaged* with the duality of the Ottoman-Islamic cultural legacy and the Western cultural ideas imbued in Turkish nationalist movements such as Kemalism, by moving away from social issues and realism, via experimentation with content and form (Göknaar 2006: 34). Usually this method of experimenting with content and form in the novel is referred to simply as post-modernism, but Göknaar attributes this experimenting to a more specific Turkish context of post-Kemalism and neo-Ottomanism. According to Göknaar, this experimentation has not signalled a failure of projects of modernization associated with early Turkish nationalist movements, but instead

has introduced diversity to a historically rigid, universal, and largely Eurocentric “...hierarchy of progress and development” (Göknar 2006: 35). In this scenario, the relationship between culture and empire in the Turkish novel might be articulated as an exercise in navigating discourses between nationalism and orientalism. In other words; the relationship between culture and empire in this case is expressed as a reconciliation process between the two.

### **Conclusion**

This brief evaluation of the Turkish novel has shown that this cultural form was originally introduced as part of an imperial process of modernization during the late Ottoman period, and served a similar function at least until the republican era in Turkey. As the Turkish novel progressed, it is clear that the genre struggled to come to terms with the polarization between the empire of Western cultural ideals, and the Ottoman-Islamic cultural legacy. Some critics have argued that the construct of the “the West” in the Turkish novel has largely disappeared, since it is no longer uncharted territory. In this way, the Turkish novel has been freed from ideological or cultural burdens of Western hegemony. Interestingly, some critics believe that this has resulted in an overemphasis on authenticity, which demonstrates that Turkish literature remains torn between a reproach for Western ideals of the novel and a search for Turkish authenticity, which would suggest that the binary logic of constructing narratives in terms of “East” and “West” persists. Still others have assessed the Turkish novel as a method for engaging with this duality by experimenting with postmodernist literary techniques, thus reconciling the Ottoman-Islamic legacy and Western cultural imperialism.

In order to contextualize these claims about the Turkish novel and whether the genre actually has come to terms with the binary logic of classical Orientalism by narrating egalitarian concepts of identity which engage with the categories of “East” and “West” in a dynamic, fluid way, it is prudent to assess these claims in a particular case. Thus, the next chapters will expound on the claims made here, by situating them in relation to the Turkish novelist Orhan Pamuk. This will be done by surveying his personal development as a novelist, and subsequently his novels, in accordance with Said’s claim that the identity of an author is shaped by personal history and social experiences (Said 1994: xxiv). Also taken into account will be Taylor’s theory that the self cannot be grasped in static terms such as “Eastern” or “Western,” but is instead determined by articulating or re-constructing memories of particular events and circumstances in self-narration. Pamuk is an ideal candidate to use as

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a case for contextualizing critiques of the Turkish novel. Arguably known as a literary and cultural icon of modern Turkey, his body of work is a rich example of an author who navigates between the West, the Ottoman-Islamic legacy, and the modern self in his narratives.

### Chapter III

This chapter will contextualize the Turkish novel in the previous chapter in relation to a particular Turkish novelist, Orhan Pamuk, in accordance with the idea that the identity of an author is shaped by personal history and social experiences (Said 1994). This will take into account the notion that the self cannot be grasped in static terms, but is instead determined by events and circumstances which can be reproduced via narration (Taylor 1989). By situating the various studies of the Turkish novel in relation to a particular author, it is possible to evaluate the claims made about this genre and its role in coming to terms with Western cultural hegemony and modernity in the Turkish context. Thus, this chapter will briefly explore Pamuk's personal life, his professional achievements and how these reflect the significance of what he tries to achieve as a writer (i.e. his message[s] in his novels). These details of Pamuk's personal history and social experiences will demonstrate that he is an author who is *both* nationalized and Orientalized, but who also engages with the binary logic of classical Orientalism in his search for identity.

Orhan Pamuk was born in İstanbul in 1952, in the affluent district of *Nişantaşı*. Pamuk studied architecture for three years at Istanbul Technical University, which he abandoned for a degree in Journalism from İstanbul University, which he never used to pursue a career as a journalist. At the age of 23, Pamuk made the decision to become a novelist, retreating into his flat to write.

His first novel, *Cevdet Bey ve Oğulları* (*Cevdet Bey and His Sons*), was published in 1982. Since then, he has received numerous awards for his writing, such as the International Dublin Literary Award in 2003, and the Nobel Prize for literature in 2006. He has also been a visiting scholar at Columbia University in the U.S. He holds an honorary doctorate from several universities in Turkey, the U.S., Europe and the Middle East. Pamuk currently resides in Istanbul, in the apartment building where he grew up.

#### “Two Souls”

While the majority of Pamuk's writing falls under the genre of literary fiction, he writes regularly for *New Perspectives Quarterly*, an international journal of political and social thought published semi-annually in the U.S. One of his many articles for the publication entitled “The Two Souls of Turkey” illustrates his view of how Turkey functions as a bridge between Islam and the West, as well as between Europe and Asia. In the article, Pamuk demonstrates his firm belief that the definition of democracy as it exists in Turkey is

the country's dialogue between its "two souls." In the article, Pamuk writes, "The idea of incompatibility of Islam with modernity or with secularism is an argument that adopts the fundamentalist logic" (Pamuk 11: 2007). Pamuk defines "the fundamentalist logic" as one that rejects prescriptive innovation that may better align [Turkish] society with the modern, global world. Pamuk's definition of "fundamentalist logic" refers to the concept of fundamentalism in an Islamic context. This broadly refers to the notion that the Qur'an is the literal word of God, and any deviation from it, or perceived "innovation" of its principles, is considered incompatible with Islamic practice.

Pamuk is also known for his critical stance on human rights and freedom of thought in the Turkish state. Several interviews with widely-known publications such as the Swiss publication *Das Magazin* and *CNNTurk* have showcased, often with controversy, his sentiments over the "Armenian question."<sup>1</sup> It is under this premise that Pamuk has been formally charged with violating the law against "insulting Turkishness." Among other things, this law prohibits discrediting the honor of the Turkish state, including such things as the accusation of the Ottoman genocide of Armenians during World War I. This law is one of the major factors barring Turkey from admission to the European Union. Pamuk, among others, views this as a symbol of Turkey's ongoing struggle between the traditional and the modern. For many Turkish intellectuals, the republic's refusal to acknowledge this genocide calls into question Turkey's true commitment to civil and human rights.

In an interview with *New Republic* in 2013, Pamuk openly articulated his desire to draw upon Turkey's Ottoman legacy in order to explore the dynamic of Turkish identity in his novels. In several of his works, Pamuk cites an agenda that includes "...coming to terms with Islamic culture, not seeing all aspects of it as a negative thing, but accepting its peculiarities" (Pamuk *New Republic* interview, 2013). This type of agenda is especially true in his novel *Snow*. When asked to comment on whether *Snow* portrays Turkish Muslims (especially the devout, and those with a political agenda) in a sympathetic light, given that he is often considered to be a "modern, Western writer," Pamuk responds by saying that it is "The duty of the novelist... to see the world through a character's point of view rather than obeying some theoretical inevitability" (Pamuk *New Republic* interview, 2013). Pamuk adds that one

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<sup>1</sup> This phrase historically refers to the Ottoman involvement with Armenian subjects from 1877-1914. However, it has become synonymous with the systematic deportation of Armenians by the Ottomans during World War I. The deportation, most commonly cited to have begun in 1915, was the first of two main phases in dealing with the Armenian population within the Ottoman Empire. The second phase was the alleged genocide of between 800,000 to 1.5 million Armenians. Modern-day Turkey has faced pressure to officially recognize the atrocities as genocide, but has repeatedly denied these allegations on the grounds that the massacre was a result of war-time casualties. As of 2014, 23 countries have officially recognized the mass killings as genocide.

of his reasons for approaching novel-writing in this way is because he has attempted to move away from the “openly political way” in which other writers of his generation have written about individuals fighting right-wing government forces, only to end up in prison and suffer torture. Pamuk also believes that Turkish novels which follow this formula fall into the category of journalism, which he strives to avoid, under the premise that he wants his work to appear more poetic and personal (Pamuk *New Republic* interview, 2013).

Pamuk’s wish for his work to appear poetic and personal an example of the quintessentially modern novel, as in Taylor’s model, in that Pamuk’s novels feature a turn inward towards an experience of subjectivity. In addition to this, his refusal to obey “theoretical inevitability” suggests that Pamuk is interested in reconciling the Ottoman-Islamic cultural legacy and Western cultural imperialism by allowing personal history and social experiences to shape his formation of identity. In Pamuk’s attempt to see the world through his characters’ points of view, he is also demonstrating Said’s notion that experience cannot be grasped simply by studying lists or catalogues, but it can be narrated as part of an attempt to assert individual identity (Said 1994).

Pamuk himself has suggested that the act of writing is a kind of identity project in and of itself: “A writer is someone who spends years patiently trying to discover the second being inside him...[he] is a person who shuts himself up in a room... and alone, turns inward; amid its shadows, he builds a new world with words... My world is a mixture of the local—the national—and the West” (Pamuk, Nobel Lecture 2006). Pamuk seems to believe that writing is a building process which results in a new world, in which an inward self is brought into being. In a broader sense, Pamuk also seems to believe that literature is “...the most valuable hoard that humanity has gathered in its quest to understand itself” (Pamuk, Nobel Lecture 2006). Pamuk’s vested belief in the power of literature is in keeping with both Said and Taylor’s views of literature (and the novel in particular). On the one hand, it can be used as a tool for deconstructing such “myths” as the Orient (Said), and on the other it can be an instrument for the egalitarian affirmation of ordinary life (Taylor). In humanity’s quest to understand itself, coming to terms with individual identities will support the deconstruction of mythic notions of identity, as opposed to relying on a mythic image such as “the Oriental.”

Pamuk’s novels are well-known in the cultural, political, and literary spheres of much of the contemporary world. His novels have been translated into more than sixty languages, and in 2012 he received the Sonning Prize, which is awarded for contributions to European culture. He also became the best-selling writer in Sweden after receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2006. His popularity throughout much of the world indicates that Pamuk is

engaging with the binary logic of East and West insofar as his readers are able to enjoy, and perhaps even identify with, his method of narrating a search for identity, instead of being repelled by its concepts which may appear completely foreign due to being perceived as only belonging to the “East” or the “West.” In other words, his readers are able to identify with his narration of a search for identity in a way which is not predicated on a version of identity classified as “Eastern” or “Western.” Pamuk has made it clear that this is his goal:

All the artists and intellectuals of previous generations have had an idea of a Turkey, which would be either totally Eastern, or totally Western, totally traditional or modern. My little trick is to see these two spirits of Turkey as one and see this eternal fight between East and West, that takes place in Turkey’s spirit, not as a weakness but as strength, and to try to dramatize that force by making something literary out of it (Pamuk, “The Two Souls of Turkey” 2007).

Pamuk’s explanation of his attempt to engage with the “eternal fight between East and West” and depict this binary logic which has characterized Turkey’s “spirit” is similar to Taylor’s notion of an identity which reaches beyond a traditional notion of self, and is articulated via a retrieval of lived experience in a constant flux, which is conducive to a fluid (as opposed to static) notion of self (Taylor 1989). Quite simply, Pamuk must rely on a fluid concept of what it means to be Turkish in order to successfully “dramatize that force” as a unifying factor of identity.

The retrieval of lived experience is something that has strongly characterized much of Pamuk’s autobiographical work. In his memoir, *İstanbul-- Hatıralar ve Şehir (İstanbul-- Memories of a City)*, Pamuk writes about his life as a child in İstanbul, but also about the life of the city before and during his time, and the way in which the city and the culture of Turkey functions in the past and the present under the duality of Ottoman/Islamic tradition and Westernization, and how the two are often at odds. In this memoir, he also articulates several critical aspects about his writing, such as his personal relationship with religion, secularism, and the interdependence between European ideals and the Turkish drive to modernize.

In the chapter entitled “Religion,” Pamuk discusses Turkey’s relationship with secularism, “...in the secular fury of Atatürk’s new republic, to move away from religion was to be modern and Western; having stripped religion of its power, we were able to accept it into our home, as a strange sort of background music to accompany our oscillations between East and West” (Pamuk, *İstanbul* 2005:163-164). Pamuk goes into extensive detail about the duality of his family’s religious life when recalls the observance of *Ramazan*<sup>2</sup>. While

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<sup>2</sup> The Turkish word for *Ramadan*. This is the annual period of fasting which takes place during the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. Fasting is one of the five pillars of Islam, and as such is considered an ‘obligatory’

Pamuk's family never fasted during the day, they nevertheless prepared a feast as decadent as those who had for their *iftar*<sup>3</sup>. He uses his early memories of *Ramazan* to demonstrate his own early, personal struggle between the secular life of his family and the constant presence of Islam in the outside world. When he fasted for *Ramazan* in secret at the age of eleven as a way of exploring his uncertainty about God and religion, he reflects upon his innocent misunderstanding about the purpose of the fast. According to Pamuk, instead of finding spiritual fulfillment, he finds satisfaction in his ability to withstand hunger until the *iftar* meal. This ambivalence towards Islam, according to him, is a typical characteristic of the Turkish bourgeoisie; a result of their fear that traditional religious practice threatens secular life.

Especially in the early years of the Turkish republic, the secular bourgeoisie commonly believed that religiously devout members of the population stood in the way of the progress of modernization in Turkey. Pamuk writes, "My fear [about the devotion of deeply religious people], which I shared with everyone in the Turkish secular bourgeoisie, was not of God, but of the fury of those who believed in Her<sup>4</sup> too much" (Pamuk, *Istanbul* 2005:162). Pamuk's family, like other members of the affluent bourgeoisie of Istanbul in the early years of the Turkish republic, were concerned that the religious population of the nation would conspire to rise up and destroy the young democracy of the country in a fury of religious fanaticism. While Pamuk's own outlook on religion has changed since his childhood, which is evident in his novels, it is still widely believed in Turkey that Islam is at odds with democracy and especially with the concept of "modern;" religion stands in the way of modernization.

Pamuk continues in a similar vein later in the chapter, going on to discuss at length his early conception of religion. As a child, he believed the essence of religion to be guilt. He admits that he felt guilty about not fearing or believing strongly in the "white-scarved woman" who often entered his daydreams. He uses his child-self to demonstrate a greater example of how religion often functions in Westernized, secularist Turkish families. Pamuk notes that while these families (including his own) speak openly about other everyday aspects of life such as success at school, sports, leisure activities, and other modes for conversation, there is often a struggle to approach the basic questions of existence such as love, hatred, compassion, the meaning of life, etc., that everyone, secular or religious, modern or

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aspect of practicing the religion.

<sup>3</sup> The evening meal during Ramadan which is served after sunset and breaks the daily fast.

<sup>4</sup> Pamuk envisions God as a female wearing a white headscarf in most of his autobiographical writing.

traditional, faces (Pamuk, *Istanbul* 168:2005).

By the end of the chapter, Pamuk gives the impression that while he was surrounded by the secular bourgeoisie who believed that religion was merely something that held back the progress of modernization and Westernization, his belief was (and remains) that this way of life is unbalanced and lacking. Even as a child, Pamuk describes a noticeable absence or void in his life, which manifests in the form of fear or guilt at not being religious enough or not believing in God enough. This is succinctly summarized when he writes:

For years, I carried around the dread that, one day, I would be punished for not being 'like them' [pious people], and this dread had a far greater impact on me than any of the political theory I read during my leftist youth. What would surprise me later on was finding out how few of my fellow secularist Istanbulites shared my secret guilt (Pamuk, *Istanbul* 169: 2005).

The concept of "guilt" or a kind of "void" left as a result of secularization is a clear departure from the conception of modernity of which Taylor is critical; that religion would become obsolete during the process of modernization. If religion had successfully become obsolete, secular ideals should have taken over any "void" left behind as a result of its dissipation/removal. This notion of a void in identity in part substantiates Taylor's claim that a successful transition to modernity is not one which comes in a single wave which results in a homogenous "culture of modernity," but rather involves locating existing resources within a given culture which enables the adoption of new practices (Taylor 1999). In other words, Pamuk's "void" could be a result of Turkey's attempt to super-impose the "Enlightenment package" during the modernization process with the understanding that modernity is a cultural operation. This instead of integrating features of modernity, such as industrialization or democracy, while drawing on existing aspects of the Ottoman-Islamic legacy of culture and tradition as part of an effort to modernize.

Pamuk's "void" also confirms Said's criticism of the classical Orientalist notion that one of the most essential differences between "East" and "West" is one between modernity and ancient tradition, and which creates constituted entities which can be identified on the basis of religion, culture, or even racial essence specific to a particular geographical area (Said 1978: 322). Since Pamuk has experienced a "void" as a result of the dissipation or dismissal of religious tradition, this shows that categorizations via a binary logic such as "East" or "West" which force identity into static terms, or constituted entities, fail to account for what Pamuk identifies as "basic questions of existence," mentioned above.

## Conclusion

Pamuk's depiction of searching for his identity through his experience with religious ideas and traditions against the backdrop of a national drive to modernize is underpinned by Enlightenment notions of secularism. Said's claim that the novel depicts a relationship between culture and empire-- the relationship between the culture of Ottoman-Islamic legacy and the 'empire' of modernization delivered in an Enlightenment package—supports the idea that Pamuk draws on his personal experiences in his search for identity, since Pamuk seems to draw on his own experience of the Ottoman legacy and the drive to modernize. Pamuk's use of his personal experiences also supports Taylor's suggestion that the only criteria for authenticity is that the novel only need be loyal to an experience which is locally or individually unique in order to be authentic. Thus, the Gökner's evaluation discussed in the previous chapter, that Turkish literature is characterized by narratives which are *both* nationalized and Orientalized, yet engage with the binary logic of classical Orientalism via experimental literary techniques, seems to be the most accurate assessment of Pamuk. In order to confirm this, it is necessary to assess Pamuk's novels in more depth. It has been made clear that the importance of the novel for assessing the way culture affects identity is a common thread in Said and Taylor's understandings of the novel, and which is reflected in Pamuk's novels. The next chapter will explore Pamuk's use of the novel starting from this common thread, but will go on to emphasize that Pamuk supports both Said and Taylor's theories of the novel in different ways.

## Chapter IV

So far, this study has been predicated on the idea that novel is a cultural form used for asserting identity. As noted, the importance of the novel for assessing the way culture affects identity is a common thread in Said and Taylor's understandings of the novel, insofar as both attest to the potential of the genre to place culture on equal terms as part of the exploration and development of identity. For Said, this is in relation to the persistence of Western cultural hegemony during the modernization process. Contextualizing this in the case of the Turkish novel has made it evident that the binary logic of Orientalism underpins the role that the novel has played in Turkey's modernization process, which has been historically rooted in Enlightenment notions of modernity. In this way, the novel depicts a relationship between culture and empire, which in the Turkish context can be understood as the culture of the Ottoman-Islamic legacy, and the 'empire' of modernization packaged in Enlightenment ideology.

To the extent that the identity of an author is shaped by personal history and social experiences, an important aspect of Pamuk's assertion of identity includes the presence of a "void" or "guilt" left as a result of secularization. This could be explained by Turkey's attempt to super-impose Enlightenment notions of modernity—including the introduction of the novel-- during the republican era drive to modernize, instead of relying on existing cultural features of the Ottoman-Islamic legacy, as suggested in Taylor's theory.

This chapter will analyze Pamuk's novels, namely *The Black Book*, and *The Museum of Innocence* in order to investigate Pamuk's "void," given the understanding that an author draws on personal history and social experiences in order to construct a narrative of identity. Significantly, Pamuk attempts to fill this void with religious ideas/experiences which are expressed using Sufi motifs in his novels. Notwithstanding their different understandings of culture on the whole, both Said and Taylor rely on their definitions of culture in order to explain the role of novel. This small point of commonality in Said and Taylor's theories is the starting point from which Pamuk's novels can be analyzed.

On the one hand, Pamuk's novels can be explained using Said's critique of the binary logic of Orientalism, due to Pamuk's articulation of "two souls" in much of his work. In this way, Pamuk's work is an example which supports Said's hope of engaging critical consciousness in order to remove the old ideological straightjacket of classical Orientalism, since Pamuk repeatedly suggests that his "two souls" are in constant flux. Similarly, Pamuk's novels fit Said's theory that the genre demonstrates a relationship between culture and

empire, and the method by which colonized people assert their identity within this relationship. This is due to the way in which Pamuk depicts the relationship between the Ottoman-Islamic cultural legacy and the introduction of Western ideas of modernity in Turkey, and how this relationship has affected the development of Turkish identity.

On the other hand, Taylor's theory of multiple modernities supports Pamuk's depiction of a unique version of Turkish modernity, which relies on existing features of the Ottoman-Islamic legacy to integrate the features of modernity. Pamuk's novels are also an example of Taylor's theory of the "quintessentially modern" novel, due to the fact that Pamuk draws on his personal experiences in order to assert his identity. In this way, Pamuk's novels also illustrate Taylor's suggestion that the modern novel places all events and lives on the same stylistic footing, which in turn demonstrates an understanding of one's place among others—Pamuk's novels often feature a protagonist who locates his identity through his relation to others.

### **Orientalized and Nationalized**

First, it is prudent to shed additional light on Göknar's claim that Pamuk is both nationalized and Orientalized in his narratives, in order to further trace the development of the "void" that Pamuk identifies in his assertions of identity. As mentioned in chapter two, "nationalized" in this context can be understood as the ideology associated with the Young Turk Revolution, and persisting via Anatolianism and Kemalism. Therefore, "nationalized" can also be closely associated with the secularization and westernization of Turkey during this time-period.

According to Pamuk in *The Naïve and Sentimental Novelist*, early in his career he held the belief that the attempts of so-called non-Western novelists to emulate Western novels made the former appear to be occupying a peripheral space, the center of which were European novelists and novels (Pamuk, *Sentimental Novelist* 2010: 39). Pamuk originally used these categorizations to illustrate differences between Turkish, "non-Western" novelists, and Western ones, and later when he goes on to describe the "first" Ottoman novel:

Non-Western novelists—wishing to emulate the high aesthetic level that the novel had reached in, say, London or Paris, ...— wanted to use, adapt, and implement in their own countries ...the latest ideas of fiction ... [for example,] *A Carriage Affair* can be hilarious and brilliant in its portrayal of late nineteenth-century Ottoman intellectuals—their desire to imitate the West, and their resulting 'tragicomic confusion' ...sometimes rendered in a barely understandable mélange of Turkish and French. The same artificiality is depicted by Tolstoy in *War and Peace* when he reproduces the conversation style of the Russian elite... (Pamuk, *Sentimental Novelist*

2010: 39, 133).

By indicating that non-Western novelists wished to emulate the “high aesthetic level” already achieved in Western novels, and the resulting “tragicomic confusion” of this emulation, Pamuk himself was representing non-Western novelists in a way that pointedly ranked their work at a lower level than that of their Western counterparts. This gives the impression that Pamuk originally internalized aspects of Orientalism, which is indicative of Said’s critique of the notion that the so-called “Orient” is a “...pseudo-incarnation of some great original” (Said 1978: 62). It also supports the idea that the Orient seems to participate in its own Orientalizing, insofar as any ideas which reiterate Western superiority over Oriental “backwardness” will often overshadow the possibility of independent, skeptical thinking which might produce diverse views (Said 1978: 7).

In *İstanbul*, Pamuk describes what he calls a “troubled outlook” in his novels that he shares with other Turkish writers, and describes himself as both “secularized” and “Westernized.” Nevertheless, he often expresses his concern for how Westerners view not only his work, but Turkey itself. He admits that his own secular, Westernized attitude occasionally drives him to criticize certain elements of Turkish culture that are not considered secular or Western-- often those elements which are associated with traditional Ottoman culture (Pamuk, *İstanbul* 213: 2005). Many Turkish intellectuals, especially those who describe themselves as secularized and Westernized, often entertain the idea that “traditional” is at odds with “modern” in Turkey. A certain level of “apologeticism” is evident in collective Turkish consciousness as a result:

With the drive to Westernize and the concurrent rise of Turkish nationalism, the love-hate relationship with the Western gaze became all the more convoluted... Istanbul’s Westernized residents were all critical of these same things [the harem, the slave market, dervish lodges, and the seclusion of women]. But a Western writer voicing even a mild objection would wound their nationalist pride (Pamuk, *İstanbul*, 213: 2005).

In an interview with *The Paris Review*, Pamuk discusses the theme of impersonation, addressing this notion of “wounding nationalist pride” in his novels by drawing an analogy based on the jealousy he felt as a child towards his older brother. Pamuk explains that the theme of impersonation in many of his novels “...is reflected in the fragility Turkey feels when faced with Western culture... aspiring to become Westernized and then being accused of not being authentic enough... [this is] reminiscent of the relationship between two competitive brothers” (Pamuk, *The Paris Review*, 2005). Pamuk suggests that Turkish

intellectuals are able to identify with a “Western gaze,” and even claims that the city of Istanbul in particular has developed through identification with the West. Despite this, he cites a dichotomy in which it is possible to also “...identify with the Eastern anger too” (Pamuk, *The Paris Review*, 2005). Pamuk also admits to harboring a feeling of cultural inferiority that Turks have to address, which developed after the founding of the Republic; he indicates, “...there was a sort of intimidation because Turks wanted to Westernize but couldn’t go far enough” (Pamuk, *The Paris Review*, 2005).

Pamuk repeatedly suggests that Turkey holds a unique position to provide a bridge between the separateness and opposition that a binary logic often creates. Despite his optimistic outlook for Turkey’s unique position straddling “East” and “West” (both figuratively and physically), and his capacity for challenging a “binary logic,” he is still often labelled as a supporter of either one “side” or the other, even when describing himself:

I’m a Westernizer. I’m pleased that the Westernization process took place. I’m just criticizing the limited way in which the ruling elite—meaning both the bureaucracy and the new rich—had conceived of Westernization. They lacked the confidence necessary to create a national culture rich in its own symbols and rituals. They did not strive to create an Istanbul culture that would be an organic combination of East and West; they just put Western and Eastern things together (Pamuk, *The Paris Review*, 2005).

Pamuk’s description of lacking confidence to create a modern culture, and also his criticism that the westernization process in Turkey was conceived in a very limited way is treated as synonymous with modernization in this context. This positively reflects Taylor’s notion that modernity can be achieved by relying on existing features within a given culture in order to integrate these elements, as opposed to relying on the notion that everything modern has issued from a single Western source; i.e. an Enlightenment package (Taylor 1999). In this context, the existing cultural features of Turkey would be primarily, if not entirely derived from the Ottoman legacy, which was grounded in Islamic culture. Pamuk attests to this as part of his own identity, stating that, “...part of my identity has its roots in an Islamic culture that does not get on very well with the art of figurative depiction... novels served as my passage from the traditional world to the modern world. This also meant that I severed my ties with a community I should have belonged to” (Pamuk, *The Sentimental Novelist* 2010: 115-116). In this way, the role of religion for Pamuk is a unique feature of Turkish modernity, because it is one of the existing features of Turkish culture.

### **Doppelgängerism and the “Void”**

Chapter three showed that Pamuk has self-identified as having “two souls” engaged in an “eternal fight between East and West” (Pamuk, “The Two Souls of Turkey” 2007). Not only could this be attributed to Göknar’s claim that Pamuk is both Orientalized and nationalized, but it is strongly reflected in his novels through the theme of impersonation, which is most clearly articulated in his use of the experimental literary technique known as *doppelgängerism*. Literally a *double-goer*, a *doppelgänger* in literature is a (sometimes paranormal) double that physically and/or behaviorally resembles a person. Pamuk employs this device in a variety of ways in his novels, whether it is depicted as separate personalities within a single character, or confusion between two separate characters being the same person.

Pamuk’s use of *doppelgängerism* is a typical feature of a modern work of literature. The use of this technique positively reflects Said’s emphasis on how identity is dependent on individual experiences, and not on monolithic categories (Said 1978), since Pamuk personally identifies as having “two souls.” This self-identification further corresponds to Said’s theory of the binary of East and West, which is represented by the fact that his identity is doubled; much like a *doppelgänger* resembles another. A unique feature of Pamuk’s use of *doppelgängerism* is that his “two souls” involved in the scenario often undergo experiences punctuated by religious/spiritual events which frequently contribute to the confusion between the identity of the protagonist and his double. Pamuk’s use of *doppelgängerism* could be further explained using Said’s suggestion that the critique of Orientalism is a project of “...fixed identities battling across a permanent divide that [the Orientalist critique] specifically abjures, but which it paradoxically presupposes and depends on.” (Said 1978: 336) The characters that are part of Pamuk’s *doppelgänger* scenarios often exist in parallel or are at odds with one another, which could also be understood as a representation of Pamuk’s own “two souls.” The persistence of a “void” or “emptiness” is often closely associated with the confusion over the identity of those involved in the scenario. Pamuk’s “void” could be interpreted as a response to a binary logic, using it to illustrate the problems associated with relying on monolithic categories of “East” and “West” in the search for identity.

Pamuk’s use of *doppelgängerism* also reflects Taylor’s idea that it is a retrieval of experience or interiority (Taylor 1999). Since Pamuk’s identification with both Eastern and Western aspects is part of his personal involvement in Turkish society, this supports Taylor’s idea that identity is formed through lived experience. As mentioned, the notable aspect of Pamuk’s void is that he fills it with deeply religious and/or spiritual experiences, which

Göknaar has described as a paradox which targets established positions of Turkish secularism by reassessing notions of modernity which are not mutually exclusive with cultural formations of religion (i.e. Islam) (Göknaar 2013: 159). In other words, Pamuk is using religious themes in his novels to reevaluate strictly secularized notions of what it means to be modern in a Turkish context, in contrast to the Western claim that religion is a mutually exclusive category from modernity. Taylor's theory can be used to interpret this void as the outcome of attempting to super-impose cultural features of modernity as tools in the modernization process, which would result in the failure to recognize the individual's place among others-- Pamuk's void is representative of this failure.

### ***The Black Book***

Pamuk's void in conjunction with a doppelgänger scenario can be better understood by drawing on particular examples from his novels. In *The Black Book*, the main protagonist Galip increasingly loses his memory of his own identity. The novel opens with Galip's memories of his wife, Rüyaa—who also happens to be his cousin—beginning with their childhood. His memories quickly bring the reader to the present, in which Rüyaa has inexplicably disappeared. As Galip undertakes an extensive, secretive search for Rüyaa, he increasingly inhabits and eventually impersonates more and more aspects of Celâl's life, who in addition to being Rüyaa's half-brother (and also Galip's cousin), is a well-known columnist for *Milliyet* newspaper. Incidentally, Celâl has also disappeared without explanation. Galip believes that Celâl and Rüyaa have run away together, and in order to find both of them, he searches for clues by impersonating Celâl. Galip begins living in Celâl's house, wearing his clothes, writing his newspaper column, and even impersonating him for an interview with the BBC. The BBC interview is particularly significant since Galip is physically imitating Celâl, even though several of the journalists involved with the interview have previously met Galip. As Galip convinces İskender, another employee at *Milliyet*, to let him stand in for Celâl, it is evident that Galip is questioning his own identity as he increasingly impersonates Celâl:

... 'No one is ever himself,' Galip whispered, 'none of us can ever be ourselves. Don't you wonder if other people see you as someone other than the person you really are? ... Let me tell you what sort of person I think they're looking for: a foreigner who will appeal to the after-dinner audience... No one even needs to see my face. They could keep my face dark when they shoot the film. A celebrated columnist whose life is veiled in mystery—a Muslim, don't forget how much that adds to the allure—fearing assassination, sensing an imminent coup, mindful, too, of the way his government treats its critics, has agreed to give an interview to the BBC, providing his identity is kept secret.' ... Later, as İskender took him up to room 212 [for the interview]... Galip felt an emptiness inside of him, as if he'd forgotten the name of someone he knew

very well (Pamuk, *The Black Book* 2006: 413).

In Galip's description of "the sort of person" the BBC was looking for, he appears to be articulating essential perceptions of what Turkish identity might appear to be to a European (in this case, a Briton). In particular, the "alluring" notion of a Muslim Turk speaks to concepts of East and West; an Eastern image of identity is an exotic and alluring Other. Said often points to the exotification of "the Oriental" which contributes to the notion of mysterious "allure" throughout his critique (Said 1978). Thus, Galip's description of "the sort of person" the BBC was looking for to interview suggests not only that "the Turk"—who in Galip's mind should appear literally faceless during the interview, and thus stripped of individual or specific identity -- is as Galip says, an "alluring" notion for the European viewer. In this way, the doppelgänger scenario between Galip and Celâl is playing out Pamuk's image of "two souls," but also incorporates the persistence of a void—"emptiness" as it is expressed in this scene—as a result of the blurring of these identities.

Göknaar has interpreted this doppelgänger scenario as an allusion to the literature of the renowned Mevlevi Sufis and prolific poets, Celâleddin Rumi (d. 13<sup>th</sup> c.) and Şeyh Galip (d. 18<sup>th</sup> c.). This interpretation is largely due to the fact that Pamuk's protagonist Galip achieves mystical transcendence and redemption in his search for his wife and beloved Rûya (Göknaar 2013), whose name literally means *dream* in English. The allusion to Celâleddin Rumi is especially evident when considering the theme of much of the 13<sup>th</sup> century poet's writing, which is the concept of *tawhid* ('doctrine of oneness'; literally 'oneness'). In Sufi interpretation, and especially in Rumi's poetry, *tawhid* is understood to be a union with one's beloved, from which one has been cut off and become aloof, which one longs and desires to restore.

In the novel, the oneness of *tawhid* breaks up when his beloved Rûya disappears. Galip's longing to restore his oneness arises as soon as he begins his search for Rûya. This is also when Galip begins to impersonate Celâl, and thus loses his sense of singular identity as he begins to confuse his identity with Celâl's—it would appear that Galip is trying to find himself in the other. The "void" or "emptiness" begins to intensify as Galip impersonates Celâl, because the former is not actually the latter. It is only at the end of the novel, when Galip discovers that Celâl and Rûya have been murdered, that Galip's oneness of identity is restored, and the void disappears. This is illustrated when the novel shifts from a third-person perspective to first-person, with Galip as the narrator. This shift occurs in conjunction with the resolution following Rûya's death; "I'll remember the story of the lover who lost himself

in the streets of Istanbul only to become himself, or the story of the man who believed life's meaning and mystery resided in his face" (Pamuk, *The Black Book* 2006: 450-451). In other words, Galip had to search for himself in the face of the other (i.e. Celâl) to confirm who he really was. Importantly, the death of Rûya-- whose death went unnoticed for some time after Celâl's body was discovered—coincides with Galip successfully solving the mystery of her disappearance. When he discovers that she had been staying in Celâl's apartment, Galip appears to have ultimately come to terms with himself:

As Galip stood there... a moment arrived when he felt as if he had moved beyond enchantment, walking through his own illusions to see the second meanings they hid deep inside them; moving through these too, he was suddenly sure he had penetrated the mystery hidden inside the very heart of the world (Pamuk, *The Black Book* 2006: 452).

The experience of solving the mystery of Rûya's disappearance signals a moment which has allowed Galip to "penetrate the mystery" of existence itself. Importantly, this moment is also when Galip's void disappears as he emerges from his own illusions and discovers the true meaning of the world. At the end of *The Black Book*, a professor of classical Ottoman Literature is questioned during the investigation of Rûya and Celâl's murder, who informs the interrogators that "... 'the entire matter [of these murders] sat easily inside the framework of Sheikh Galip's *Beauty and Love*'" (Pamuk, *The Black Book* 2006: 455). The epic poem that the professor is referring to is the crowning achievement of Şeyh Galip. The story of two lovers, *Aşk* (Love) and *Hüsn* (Beauty), are born into the same tribal clan and eventually fall in love. When *Aşk* seeks *Hüsn*'s hand in marriage, the clan requires him to bring back *Kimya* (alchemy; literally 'chemistry') from the land of *Kalb* (heart). During his journey, which he undertakes with his servant *Garyet* (perseverance; literally 'effort' or 'intentness'), *Aşk* encounters a variety of obstacles and dangers, which ultimately lead him to understand that he and *Hüsn* are actually the same person.

A conventional interpretation of *Beauty and Love* is that it is a symbolic story of one's journey towards or union with God. At the end of this journey, the spiritual pilgrim will come to realize that s/he is (a reflection of) God, and as such one is in God because all being and consciousness *is* God. As mentioned, the final pages of the novel oscillate between a first and third-person perspective as Galip recalls the "...tale of 'Rûya and Galip'" as told by Celâl. During the re-telling of this story, Galip recalls a different story; "...in which the hero discovers that he can only become himself by first becoming someone else or by losing himself in someone else's stories...I'll remember the story of the lover who lost himself in

the streets of Istanbul only to become himself” (Pamuk, *The Black Book* 2006: 461). Again, the use of first and third person is suggestive of losing oneself, or of the fragmentation of oneness. Since both the first and third person turn out to be from the perspective of Galip, the narrator and narrated object (both Galip) become lost in this oscillation.

Ultimately, by impersonating Celâl, Galip has successfully blurred a clear articulation of his original identity and ultimately succeeded in transcending his notion of self, in what Taylor might refer to as a “decentering of the subject,” or the dissolution of the self, in favor of some new constellation (Taylor 1989: 456). Galip’s transcendent notion of self in *The Black Book* is strongly characterized by Sufi motifs which suggest the location of self via religious experiences. Taylor takes note of a “spiritual reality” which is enacted in the novel. His theory specifies that creative imagination and the horizons of emotional fulfilment are an indispensable part of spiritual nourishment, which he describes as “richness of life” and “personal fulfilment” which are underpinned by instrumental reason in a “...collusive relation that develops between bourgeois and avant-garde” (Taylor 1989: 457, 459). In this way, Pamuk appears to be harnessing his creative imagination in order to achieve spiritual nourishment through the use of Sufi motifs in his novels.

For Said, the particulars of life as narrated in the novel are often characterized by the relationship between culture and empire and the effect that this relationship has on individual identity. This idea conforms to Pamuk’s use of doppelgängerism, since the “empire” of Westernization has led to the denigration of the Ottoman cultural legacy. Pamuk, in an attempt to locate his own modern identity, has admitted to impersonating Western cultural ideologies. In *The Black Book*, this is represented by the relationship between Galip and Rûya. Galip embodies a secularized, western lifestyle; he drinks alcohol, he has a preference for western films and other goods, and he has spent time studying in the U.S. Not only is Rûya a memory from Galip’s past—much like Ottoman history is for modern Turkey—but her entire existence is also denigrated at the expense of Galip’s lifestyle, which causes her to disappear (and later die) entirely.

### ***The Museum of Innocence***

In *The Museum of Innocence*, the protagonist Kemal’s Westernized, secular lifestyle is evident in his chain-smoking, consumption of alcohol, preference for American and European goods (cars, appliances, food, etcetera), and his opinion of religious Turks as “ignorant,” “backward,” or otherwise inhibiting Turkey’s modernization. *Nişantaşı*, the district of Istanbul where Kemal and his family live, is a district of the city known for

Western shops, restaurants, and night clubs. Kemal's lifestyle and ideology, which was often characteristic of Westernized, secular Turks in the early years of the Turkish republic, is typified early in the novel.

The name Kemal translates in English as, "perfection, refinement, maturity or ripeness." While Kemal is not an uncommon name in Turkey, the association of the name with Atatürk is so strong, one could consider it the "secular" equivalent of naming one's son Mehmet, the Turkish transliteration of Mohammad (Incidentally, Mehmet is the most common Turkish name for males). When considering the association of the name Kemal with Atatürk<sup>1</sup>, one cannot ignore that his memory is often also synonymous in Turkish consciousness with "secular," "modern," and "western." Finally, Kemal's family name is Basacı. This translates in English as "one who leads," or literally, "the kephale." Based on the Kemal's western lifestyle and association with Atatürk, as well as the connotation of his family name, the protagonist Kemal is the embodiment of the Turkish idea of modernity.

The object of Kemal's love obsession is Füsün, which in contrast to Kemal's embodiment of all things Western, is an allusion to all things Eastern. Füsün translates as, "magic, magical charm, or mystical influence." Her surname, Keskin, literally means; "keen, poignant, or severe." Within moments of meeting Füsün, Kemal is seduced by the girl's beauty, falling instantly in love with her. (Pamuk, *Museum of Innocence* 2009:6). This is immediately problematic for a number of reasons. Namely, Kemal is engaged to another woman, and more importantly, Füsün's family is not part of the secular, westernized elite of Istanbul. Nevertheless, he pursues a sexual relationship with Füsün while he is engaged to Sibel. She is the embodiment of a westernized Turkish woman (Sibel is the Turkish transliteration for Cybele, one and the same from Greek Mythology), which is especially evident in her pre-marital sexual prowess, which is the keenest example of her "modernity:"

Those in favor of Westernization hoped that as Turkey modernized (and in their view, became more civilized) the moral code attending virginity would be forgotten... But in those days, even in Istanbul's most affluent Westernized circles, a young girl who surrendered her chastity before marriage could still expect to be judged in certain ways (Pamuk, *Museum of Innocence* 2009: 93).

The more Kemal and Füsün see each other, the more Kemal becomes obsessed with

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<sup>1</sup> Atatürk's full name is Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. He was named Mustafa by his parents, and his second name *Kemal* (literally, *Perfection* or *Maturity*), may have been given to him by his mathematics teacher as a child, supposedly in admiration of his capability and maturity. However, in an authorized biography by Andrew Mango, it is suggested that he may have chosen the name himself as a tribute to the nationalist poet Namık Kemal. He took the name Atatürk (literally, *father Turk*) in conjunction with the introduction of the Surname law which he introduced in 1924.

her, eventually to the point of attributing magical powers to any object she has touched, which is exacerbated when Kemal and Sibel celebrate their engagement with a lavish party, after which Füsün inexplicably disappears. To fill the void of her absence, Kemal spends hours engaging in repetitive, ritual-like activities with the objects Füsün has touched or used, as a way of reminiscing over the time he has spent with her:

...my therapy had consisted of going to the Merhamet Apartments and lying down on that bed, and fondling something she had touched... I would make straight for a teacup, a forgotten hair clip, a ruler, a comb, an eraser, a ballpoint pen—whatever talisman I could find of those blissful days when we sat side by side. I came to believe I was reducing my suffering to a manageable condition (*The Museum of Innocence*, 245: 2009).

Kemal's obsession with Füsün also leads him to search for her incessantly. He takes up residence at a hotel in the *Fatih* neighborhood of Istanbul entertaining the hope that Füsün and her family have taken up residence there. According to Feroz Ahmad in his essay "Politics and Islam in Modern Turkey," The Fatih district of Istanbul was in the 1990s still famous for its Islamic conservatism. Fatih is also famous for being the location of a protest led by Kör Ali, a *müezzin* of a mosque in the district. Ali led a crowd to the Sultan's residence in Yıldız palace in 1908, where he demanded the end to constitutional rule and reinstatement of the *Shariah*. He also demanded that drinking establishments and theatres be shut down, and Muslim women be barred from appearing in public unveiled (Ahmad 1991).

In the novel, there is no clear explanation for Kemal seeking Füsün in Fatih, apart from the fact that it is one among many neighborhoods of working-class families in Istanbul. Why, for instance, did he not take up residence in a hotel in *Çiğir*, another predominantly working-class neighborhood in the city? His proximity to the religious working-class people of Fatih inspires in him a certain feeling of fulfilment that he could not find in his lifestyle in Nişantaşı, and illustrates his feeling of emptiness or a void:

Sometimes I felt that my happiness issued not from the possibility that Füsün was near, but from something less tangible. I felt as if I could see the very essence of life in these poor neighborhoods. My father's expanding business...and the attendant obligation to live the 'elegant European' life...it all now seemed to have deprived me of simple essences (*The Museum of Innocence* 293: 2009).

Füsün's poignant mystical power over Kemal ultimately leads him to abandon his life as a member of Istanbul's westernized, secular elite. Kemal eventually dissolves his engagement to Sibel and effectively ostracizes himself from much of his social and professional circle during his lengthy stay in Fatih. His obsession with Füsün is also the cause

of a poor decision that ultimately leads to the failure of his family's business. Kemal's family textile business, Satsat, is partnered with Turgay Bey, with whom Satsat has had many successful business ventures. When Kemal finds out that Turgay Bey and Füsün were romantically involved in the past, he abruptly ends Satsat's partnership with Turgay Bey, leaving little hope for reconciliation. Turgay Bey goes on to become infinitely more successful with a new venture that was meant to be in collaboration with Satsat, while the latter begins a slow, steady decline. The reader begins to see that Kemal's obsession with Füsün is hindering his progress as a member of Istanbul's westernized, secular elite on several levels. However, he is not upset by this. On the contrary; several times throughout the novel, Kemal clearly expresses his happiness at pursuing Füsün, and ultimately shows little concern for having effectively removed himself from his former position in Turkish society.

Kemal's position in society is hindered and eventually dismantled by his incessant pursuit of a relationship with Füsün. However, at the end of the novel, he is perceivably much happier with his life than all of those around him—especially his former social circle in the secular elite--, at having pursued Füsün until her untimely death. The last lines of the novel illustrate this clearly; "He kissed Füsün's photograph lovingly. Then he smiled at me, victorious. 'Let everyone know, I lived a very happy life'" (Pamuk, *The Museum of Innocence*, 2009: 728). The perception of Kemal from the perspective of his peers and colleagues is that he has failed to realize life as a secular, Westernized Turk according to the ideals that defined this identity because he has failed to integrate markers of his identity which make him appear modern and westernized. The reality, however, is that Kemal believes that he has managed to find happiness and be "victorious" despite this. Kemal's rejection of his former life in Istanbul's secular elite in favor of coming to terms with his true self, who is obsessed with Füsün, would suggest that the binary logic which had arisen in his identity—on the one hand maintaining his secular, westernized lifestyle, and on the other, secretly indulging in obsessively worshipping Füsün with religious fervor-- has been played out, and his "two souls" have come to terms as he takes up residence in the *Museum of Innocence*.

The final pages of the novel reveal a kind of double entendre of doppelgängerism; at first it would appear that this scenario takes place internally inside of Kemal, as he grapples with his secular, westernized lifestyle on the one hand, which he comes to only impersonate, since his other, true personality is devoted to worshipping Füsün and sacralizing the objects which encompass her memory. At the end of the novel, the reader is let on to the fact that the story of Kemal's love obsession has been narrated by Orhan, a writer who has attempted to

impersonate Kemal and inhabits his museum with the hope of better understanding his obsession in order to record this remarkable love story (and who eventually reveals his identity as Orhan Pamuk himself). Taylor's emphasis on individual experiences and the retrieval of interiority as formations of identity is positively reflected in this scenario; the writer Orhan is relying on the individual experiences of Kemal in order to reproduce a narrative of the latter's identity. This can be further interpreted as an auto-biographical scheme which details Pamuk's own experience of rejecting a strictly secularized, western identity as he engages in a "love affair" with the Ottoman legacy. The protagonist Kemal represents this strictly westernized identity, while Füsün represents the Ottoman legacy.

This doppelgänger scenario is different from that in *The Black Book*, not only because the doppelgänger scenario occurs on multiple levels, but also because of the pointed use of objects to represent individual experiences. This is evident in several instances throughout the novel, but is clearly illustrated when Kemal begins to compile the objects after Füsün's death: "...[objects] would always arrive, the old ones replaced with the new, as surely as a south wind deposits its debris on the shore, and each time people would forget the objects with which they had lived so intimately, never acknowledging their emotional attachment to them" (Pamuk, *The Museum of Innocence* 2008: 488). This failure to acknowledge an emotional attachment can be interpreted as Kemal's lack of attachment to the western culture in which he has been steeped for most of his life.

The ongoing influx of objects in Kemal's possession is similar to the idea of identity as an ongoing process which is subject to continuous reinterpretation as Said suggests. The sacralization of these objects points to Pamuk's inclusion of religious experience as part of this ongoing process, and the attempt to fill the void that the protagonist Kemal feels from Füsün's absence, and eventually her death. Göknaar refers to this as the "spiritual redemption" in the novel (Göknaar 2013: 235-236), which is further illustrated by Kemal's description of what he hopes will be the atmosphere of the museum; "...a place of worship that, like a mosque, should awaken in them [the visitors] feelings of humility, respect, and reverence" (Pamuk, *The Museum of Innocence* 519: 2009).

Again, the Sufi leitmotif of separation from and pursuit of a beloved is an overlying element in this novel, similar to the allusion in *The Black Book* to Rumi's poetry and his common use of the scenario of being cut off from one's beloved, and the longing to restore the oneness of this relationship. In his use of this Sufi motif, Pamuk further supports Taylor's idea of a "spiritual reality." Pamuk's allusions to a search for spiritual fulfilment also support Taylor's idea that modern realities and identities look different depending on the



circumstances. In *The Museum of Innocence*, this is depicted via Kemal's reverence of Füsün's memory through the worship of Füsün's objects. Kemal's worship culminates in the museum he has built to house Füsün's belongings. Gökner points out that the general concept of a museum is an institution of national modernity (Gökner 2013: 235-236). Kemal's use of the museum is unique to and an integral part of his formation of identity. This supports Taylor's claim that modernity comes down to the individual who finds self-realization against the backdrop of coming to terms with the world and with others.

Pamuk's use of Sufi motifs in this context is certainly drawing on a particular cultural form (i.e. the culture of Sufism). As noted, Said emphasizes the importance of a stream of consciousness which is in constant flux in the formation of identity. This could include the possibility of identifying the self via worship or reverence of the divine, or even that consciousness in constant flux ultimately culminates in the understanding that all consciousness is a reflection of some sort of spiritual truth (i.e. God). Gökner attributes this to the possibility that "voices and memories that constitute an alternative to Empire-to-Republic modernization challenge the political foundations of Republican secular modernity and Turkishness [in Pamuk's novels]... the fear of faith, in a neurotic and cyclical way, has been ingrained into the secular state" (Gökner 2013: 83-84). In other words, Pamuk seems to be re-assessing the role religion plays in modern formations of identity by using Sufi narratives in his novels to do so. Thus, Pamuk is relying on subjective experience in his formation of identity, as opposed to static notions of self, which supports Said's theory that identity cannot be grasped in static terms.

## **Conclusion**

Ultimately, Pamuk is using the novel as a tool to assert identity. It is clear that his use of the novel reflects both Said and Taylor's theories of the genre, but for different reasons. On the one hand, Pamuk's novels illustrate a relationship between culture and empire, and how this relationship affects individual identity, as in Said's theory. It is also clear that this relationship is underpinned by the binary logic of classical Orientalism. On the other hand, Pamuk's novels are also an example of Taylor's theory of the modern novel, because Pamuk is not only drawing on his own personal experiences in his search for identity, but also because he narrates the events of his life in stylistically egalitarian terms in order to locate a version of modernity. A unique aspect of Pamuk's novels is that his search for identity is punctuated by a kind of void which he fills with religious/spiritual experiences, which he explains using common Sufi leitmotifs. The presence of religious/spiritual experiences can be

described using Said's notion that identity is in part based on subjective experiences, and is also not something which can be understood in static terms, much like religious or spiritual ideas. It can also be explained using Taylor's explanation that spiritual nourishment can be achieved through the use of creative imagination, which is underpinned by instrumental reason. In other words, the writing of novels in and of itself is a kind of spiritual experience, and Pamuk is using Sufi narratives to create a new identity using the novel to do so. Perhaps the most exciting element of Pamuk's novels is that it is possible, and even necessary, to utilize two separate theories in order to gain a deeper understanding of the complexity of Pamuk's goal.

## Conclusion

This study has shown that the novel provides a means to examine society and the individual in terms of a specific perception of reality. Said describes the novel as a “cultural form” which has strongly contributed to the formation of imperial attitudes, references, and experiences, and which is the foremost aesthetic object in connection with the cultural expansion of various societies. Decidedly a modern form of literature, and referred to as a “quintessentially modern” form by Taylor, the novel represents a link between modernity and identity.

Taylor argues that since the inception of the novel as a literary form, the genre has been a means of narration which conveys the particulars of ordinary life and places all events and lives on the same stylistic footing. Thus, the characters in a novel-- and perhaps even more so the writers of novels-- find identity in self-narration through particular events and circumstances. As discussed, this method of self-narration is prototypically “modern” because it moves away from more “traditional” models of existence, which lack a strong practice of self-narration. In this process, the novelist is often drawn to unique experiences which allow them to articulate their identity in ways more attuned to a lifestyle and a self which is noticeably individualistic.

For Said, identity does not adhere to monolithic or static notions of self. Furthermore, an author’s identity is shaped by personal history and social experiences, as opposed to things like ideology, class, or social history. In his critique of Orientalism, Said also determined that an understanding of identity cannot be fully grasped by merely studying lists or catalogues. Instead, identity is best understood through narrative. It is also in narrative that the relationship between culture and empire is depicted.

Western society has often defined its culture from elements largely considered to be “modern.” By extension, it is often assumed that these elements were invented in the West, which has led to the conclusion that Western society is somehow superior as a result. Because of this, Western culture has accumulated a level of hegemony in relation to the concept of modernity.

The appearance of the novel in Turkey was closely associated with the so-called “modernization” of the Ottoman state and society, which is often thought to have begun at the end of the *Tanzimat* era in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Since the start of the republican era in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, it has been the state’s hope that Turks would develop a strong national identity based on a secular attachment to the state, which would replace identification with or attachment to a religious community. This has resulted in a binary logic of identity divided between “East” and “West,” which is reflected in the history of the novel in Turkey.

## Conclusion

The introduction of the novel in Turkey can be understood as part of an imperial process of modernization which has struggled to come to terms with the hegemony of Western cultural ideals against the backdrop of the Ottoman-Islamic cultural legacy. Some literary critics, such as Ahmet Evin, have concluded that the shadow of “the West” has receded in the Turkish novel, since engagement with Western culture has shed light on this previously uncharted territory. In this way, the Turkish novel has largely come to terms with the hegemony of the so-called West. Other critics, such as Erdağ Gökner, have suggested that the novel is being used to come to terms with what has been identified as a torn identity as a result of trying to reconcile the Ottoman legacy and the imperialism of Enlightenment notions of modernization via a European method (the novel).

Orhan Pamuk in particular has embodied the notion of reconciling a torn identity in his articulation of “two souls.” Pamuk’s use of the novel supports both Said and Taylor’s theories of the genre. Pamuk’s work demonstrates the relationship between culture and empire, and how this affects individual identity (Said’s theory). Pamuk’s novels are also demonstrative of narratives which draw on personal experiences in the search for identity, as in Taylor’s theory. Pamuk’s use of the novel as a tool to assert identity is somewhat unique, however, since he identifies a “void” in the midst of his two souls. Pamuk is able to come to terms with this void through religious/spiritual experiences, which he often narrates using common Sufi leitmotifs in his novels, namely in *The Museum of Innocence* and *The Black Book*.

Said’s notion that identity is part of subjective experience which cannot be understood in static terms is sufficient for explaining Pamuk’s void, since religious ideas are also subjective. Taylor’s idea that creative imagination is a way to achieve “spiritual nourishment” is also an explanation for how Pamuk uses the novel. By using these two distinct theories to forge an interpretation of Pamuk’s work, this study has shown that the writing of novels for Pamuk is itself a spiritual experience, which is a central aspect of his search for identity.

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