



Research Article

POSTMODERN ELEMENTS IN ORHAN PAMUK'S NOVEL "MY NAME IS RED"

Submission Date: March 21, 2023, **Accepted Date:** March 26, 2023,

Published Date: March 31, 2023

Crossref doi: <https://doi.org/10.37547/philological-crjps-04-03-07>

Journal Website:
<https://masterjournals.com/index.php/crjps>

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ABSTRACT

This scientific article reveals the postmodern elements in the novel "My name is red" by Orhan Pamuk, one of the leading representatives of Turkish postmodern literature. The main idea of the work is to end the conflict between Eastern and Western cultures and to harmonize the two with each other. In the novel "My name is red", Orhan Pamuk skillfully uses the elements of detective fiction, East-West conflict in art, and melodrama in terms of the processing of old motifs and the development of events.

The article emphasizes that the novel "My Name is Red" is a detective fiction and a love story. The novel tells about the colorful world of miniaturists, which is divided by East-West conflicts and is also the scene of fierce debates. The composition of the novel and the way of looking from a polyphonic point of view determine the individual style of the novel. The novel "My name is red" is a novel comprising 59 chapters, which analyze the paradoxes and parallels between history and today through the lives of various people, and reflect the complex reality.

If we compare the novel "My name is red" with other novels by Orkhan Pamuk in a postmodern spirit, this novel can be called a novel full of deep symbols, diverse characters and a chain of interesting events. The novel differs from Pamuk's other novels by its comprehensive themes such as situations, characters, their inner world, ordinary and scary dreams, sexual desires, history, art, and crime. At the same time, this work can be considered a historical, romantic-adventure, and detective novel.



KEYWORDS

"My name is red" novel, postmodern novel, motive, narrators, polyphony, detective fiction, melodrama.

INTRODUCTION

The novel "My name is red" is written in Pamuk's unique style and is a work that differs sharply from his previous novels. Although the novel has similarities with his previous works in terms of the main theme raised in the novel, the composition of the novel, the way of looking at it from a polyphonic point of view, determines the individual style of the novel. Pamuk described this novel as "my most colorful and optimistic novel". The novel "My name is red" is a novel comprising 59 chapters that analyze the paradoxes and parallels between history and today through the lives of various people. It tells about the crimes committed in 1591 in Istanbul during the snowy winter days because of a book secretly prepared by the Sultan and containing miniatures in the style of Western painting. Along with detective fiction, the novel is a love story and its background is about the colorful world of miniaturists, which is divided by East-West conflicts and is the scene of fierce debates.

We can say this novel is closer to "The Black Book" and "New Life" in terms of postmodern composition. Another aspect is that this work is a transition novel to the works written after it, so it is more similar to the novel "White Castle" in terms of content. Trying to write almost every work in different styles, Pamuk continued his creative style in the postmodern spirit with his third novel, "White Castle" and the thematic novel "My name is red". In them, the writer discusses the conflicts

between styles in modern art and the culture of the East and the West in a historical way. Pamuk said in one of the interviews that he planned to tell the novel "My name is red" as a life story of a brush owner, like the novel "White Castle". Later, the work rose from these molds and expanded its scope. I can say it to be a novel full of deep symbols, diverse characters and an interesting chain of events, compared to novels in the postmodern spirit such as "The Black Book" and "New Life". In fact, the novel differs from Pamuk's other novels, especially because it covers such broad themes as situations, characters, their inner world, ordinary and scary dreams, sexual desires, history, art, and crime. We can consider this work a historical, romantic-adventure, and detective novel.

"My name is red", like other works of the artist, attracted the attention of readers as soon as it was published. We can say this extraordinary work of the author is the product of a sense of guilt for betraying his youthful desire to become an artist. More precisely, this work is a literary picture painted with words, not with a brush. The realities he skillfully puts on paper break down the wall of differences between the image and the word in front of the reader. One representative of Turkish literature, Selim Karakishla Pamuk, says that he started writing this work not for himself, but for the reader, and for this reason, the work can be a masterpiece of historical novels.



This novel, which can be included among the historical works in terms of subject, makes the reader a witness of a common past with his own experiences, and also captures the reader's consciousness with its antique style and fills the reading process with enjoyable events. Consistency and inconsistency of reality, believable and misleading, rich in surprising and exciting scenes increase interest in the work. Another literary critic, Suha Sertabibioğlu, gives a very high assessment of the work and states that it has entered the agenda of world literature, and such influence can lead Orhan Pamuk to the Nobel Prize. "My name is red" is a comprehensive novel from the point of view of fiction. In it, like Pamuk's other works, a chain of different events develops interdependently. In other words, "My Name is Red" is divided into three different layers in terms of theme processing and plot development: detective fiction, East-West conflict in art, and love. Sometimes detective fiction, sometimes based on artistic discussions in the East-West context, sometimes focused on love and sensuality, comes to the fore.

In reading, the reader expects the love story in the novel to become stronger, is interested in the life of the Ottoman dynasty in the 16th century, gradually gets acquainted with ideas about the essence of Eastern and Western art and culture, and tries to reflect on the styles of fine art. In other words, "My Name is Red" is divided into three types of fiction from the point of view of processing the theme and the development of events: detective fiction, East-West debates in art, and love. The novel is sometimes a detective story,

sometimes an East-West artistic debate, and sometimes fiction focused on love and sexuality. Here, these three layers, which are considered the main factor that makes the novel writer unique from other postmodern novels, develop not longitudinally, as in "Black Book" and "New Life", but in a spread manner. In fact, in "The Black Book" and "New Life", the reader must have a strong literary reserve and be able to analyze symbols, metaphors and allegories in order to go from the superficial layer of meaning to deeper layers. In "My Name is Red", both love, crime fiction, and the circle of philosophical and social events develops side by side, and the analysis of any of them depends on the reader's interest and point of view. Therefore, "The Black Book" and "New Life" is a novel that is a bit complex and require observation, while "My Name is Red" is one of those novels that are fluidly narrated, colorful and easy to read.

In 1000 AH, Sultan Shekure's father, Enishte Effendi, ordered him to prepare a picture book depicting the world from the point of view of Western art to present to the ruler of Venice. Enishte Efendi, who had studied the methods of Western pictorial art during the years of the embassy, invited the miniaturists of the palace one after another to his house and began to prepare this secret book. The miniaturist artists working for Enishte Effendi are called Zarif, Kapalak, Leylak and Zeytin. At this point, stereotyped traditions and the desire for innovation come into conflict. This is a direct manifestation of the opposition between the East and the West. Miniaturists engage in heated and dangerous debates about



these issues. These debates, combined with external circumstances such as economic problems in Istanbul and pressure from conservative communities, escalate into a tense incident that ends in murder. When one of the miniaturists, Zarif, is killed, Enishte Effendi starts looking for someone to replace him. After his love for Shekure was unrequited, he left Istanbul and invited Kara, who was working as a calligrapher in Persian lands, to Istanbul. With Kara's arrival, the miniaturist sets out to solve a murder between the artists and an intense and dangerous battle to win Shekure's love. In the meantime, the murder of Enishte Effendi, Shekure's brother-in-law Hasan's desire to marry Shekure, and the sultan's pressure on Ustad Usman and Kara to solve the murder of the miniaturist painter complicates the matter. Eventually, the killer is found, Kara and Shekure get married, and the once-welcomed Westernization begins to take its toll on art, painting, and literature as much as anywhere else. The main idea of the work is to end the conflict between Eastern and Western cultures and to harmonize the two.

Sometimes we know that the composition of the novel "My Name is Red" is divided into different imaginary realities, but sometimes we witness the confusion of these imaginary realities. According to Semih Gumush, this is one of the shortcomings of the book "My name is red", because although each section is a whole by itself, the sections are not firmly connected to each other, and the composition lacks integrity. He chose to divide the work into independent chapters in a fragmented structure instead of the unified structure of "My

Name is Red", but says that this style reduces the reader's enjoyment of reading. Indeed, given the overall structure of the novel, it can be said that this fragmentary and eclectic fiction is consciously created and that the novel derives its main strength from this scattered composition. Orhan Pamuk, who looks at the East-West issue from an intermediate position, effectively uses the traditions of Eastern storytelling and Western literature to create his artistic work. The meetings, as observed in many cult works of Eastern culture, especially in miniatures, provided a unique atmosphere for the novel. "An author who does not neglect the Western tradition of optimism based on strong deterministic this does not neglect to create an imaginary world whose integrity it finely tuned in terms of form, connected by internal relations" . For example, since there is a connection between the three quotations from the Qur'an at the beginning of the novel and the artistic-aesthetic idea of the novel, these three quotations also refer to three different artistic layers of the novel. The first quote is from Surah Al-Baqara, verse 72 of the Holy Qur'an: "They killed a man and argued among themselves." This quote refers to the detective elements of the novel. The second quote refers to verse 19 of Surah Fotir: "The blind and the one with open eyes are not equal" . This verse is a reference to the love motif in the novel, as well as elements of detective fiction. The third quote is from Surah Al-Baqara, verse 119: "The east and the west belong to Allah, wherever you turn, there is the face of Allah" . It would be correct to interpret this



as a reference to the conflict between the East and the West, the main idea of the work.

In reading the novel "My name is red", we should recognize that the compositional structure of the work is extremely mature, against the background of its diverse, interesting and intense events. The writer has also revealed the point of view of the narrator and the hero in the work. Pamuk expands the storytelling technique he used in the novel "Silent House" and uses this method in the novel "My Name is Red", enriching it and improving it. In the novel, twenty narrators, comprising people, things and objects, representatives of the animal and plant world, and fictional characters, tell interesting stories and evaluate them from their point of view. The most interesting thing is that Pamuk wants to convince the reader that living and inanimate objects such as death, tree, dog, and wealth have their own language and their own story, along with assigning the role of narrator to characters such as Kara, Orhan, Shekure, Enishte, Ustad Usman.

"By telling everything in his own language, the author has created a colorful and rich novel that carries a lot of political, literary and mystical content from a polyphonic environment," says Fethi Demir. By dividing his artistic worldview into numbers, the writer brings the reader into the text and significantly reduces his participation. More precisely, the stories of the narrators, who witnessed interesting events from each other, are combined in the reader's mind and become a whole novel. This immediately opens the way for the narrator to go completely aside and disappear. Pamuk leaves the reader alone with the text,

creating a live theater scene before his eyes, and while enlivening many things at this stage, he creates a complex of events narrated by the narrator. The events of the novel "My name is red" take place in historical areas of Istanbul such as Atmaydon Bayazid, Edirnakapi, Jibali, Halich. The author places Istanbul, commonly referred to as the historical peninsula, at the center of the novel, while combining the information he has collected about Istanbul with his imagination. In it, daily life in Istanbul in those years, the life of ordinary people, is described in a parallel way with the thoughts about Istanbul today, through codes in the subtext. As a result, the history of Istanbul at the end of the 16th century, markets, villages, houses, places to eat, and the mood of its people, which are not very familiar to today's readers, will come alive before the eyes of the reader. Pamuk, who describes more interior spaces in the novel, creates colorful, vivid images of Istanbul that reflect the reality of the time through the words of the characters. Kara, who returned to Istanbul after twelve years, said, "In twelve years, some of the neighborhoods and streets that I used to walk in burned down, turned into ashes, flying in the air, where dogs cross, where madmen walk, scaring children, fire stations were opened, like fireplaces, so huge that some people from far away are amazed. and valuable buildings were erected. The windows of some of them have the most expensive, colored glass in Venice, and in the absence of such high walls, I saw many two-story, expensive houses built in Istanbul.

Compared to his other works, Pamuk gave a wider place to historical truths in his novel "My Name is



Red" in covering the social life of Istanbul in 1591. In the novel, I can see that the author emphasized more on the interior of historic buildings of that period. In it, the writer clearly described not the streets of Istanbul, but the interior of the buildings, the condition of the equipment, and the distances between the rooms in the building. The artist himself says this: "In my novel, I described the general view of Istanbul only two or three times. Like a Western beauty lover, I wanted to describe the exterior of the streets and the interior of the houses in Istanbul. If you live in the city, you may not have seen much of its general appearance. We spent most of our lives indoors. I, therefore, tried to describe more clearly the household furniture, the bed, the dishes, the chessboard, the stones on it, and the like".

In the novel, the interior of the houses, the tools and materials used in the painter's workshop, the sumptuous circumcision wedding of the prince, the interior of the sultan's treasury, and the small details there are narrated through careful and vivid images. For example, one of the most important objects in the work, Enishte Effendi's house (where Kara and Shekure later lived), gives more detail.. On the second floor of the multi-story building with high walls and Venetian windows, which attracted the attention of Kara, who returned to Istanbul after many years, there are four rooms, one of which is Enishte Effendi's painting room, another is his bedroom, and the other two are the rooms where his daughter Shekure and her children and Hayriya live. These four rooms are opened by a sofa and a wooden staircase under the sofa leads to the first floor. On

the first floor, there is a courtyard, a kitchen and a storage room. This house, mentioned in the work, is a type of luxurious courtyard of the rich families of that time, in which the writer focuses mainly on the interior images.

He describes them in the language of the characters of the novel. For example, during the work, Kara Enishte carefully examines the patterns on the carpet in the master's room, the copper jug, the coffee pot, the cups, the mother-of-pearl sofa standing on the side, the position of the headdress hanging on the wall, and everything that she remembers. The rented house in the novel, where Shekure lives with her father-in-law and brother-in-law Hassan, in a poorer neighborhood, is said to be full of slumber and death. All the furnishings in the house correspond to the character of Hasan, the villain of the play. Another achievement of the novel is that Pamuk's aim to faithfully depict the interior of inhabited houses can be said to emphasize the fact that women and children spent most of their time indoors, among many things that characterized the city at that time, unlike today. She sees the kitchen as the center of the house and tries to reveal the daily life of women and children here, their mental and physical condition convincingly, with pity, compassion and great humanity. In the process, Cotton provides the reader with a wealth of information about food, culture, cuisine, food, vegetables and fruits. These facts, which provide information about the life activities of women, especially Estere and Shekure, serve to open the novel's artistry, to understand the inner world of people, their experiences. The artistic thinking of



the writer is clarified in the relationship between the writer, the reader and the text. According to Professor Kazogboy Yoldashev, "the ideological nature of thinking is three forces that oppose each other in any literary text: a) author's intention; b) the meaning of the reader and c) the meaning of the text appears in the area where they collide". The novel "My name is red" is a multi-layered, complex work in which Pamuk's artistic intention is hidden under the text.

CONCLUSION

The novel "My Name is Red", which can be included among the historical works in terms of subject matter, made the reader a witness of a common past with his own experiences, the consistency and inconsistency of reality, believability and confusion, the richness of surprising and exciting scenes increased the interest in the work.

It is logical to say that "My Name is Red" is a comprehensive novel from the point of view of fiction. In this work, as in other works, Pamuk has developed various chains of events interdependently, from the point of view of reworking the old motif and the development of events, he has skillfully integrated the elements of detective fiction, East-West conflict in art, and melodrama into the text.

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