

(Western)Word / (Eastern)Image in *My Name is Red*: An Imagological Reading of Orhan Pamuk's Ekphrastic Reimagination

Orhan Pamuk'un *Benim Adım Kırmızı* Romanında (Batılı)Söz ve (Doğulu)İmge: Ekfrastik Romanda Biz ve Öteki İmgesi

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Abstract

This article aims to read Orhan Pamuk's My Name is Red as an ekphrastic reimagination and the "imagetext" in which the visual representation is the object of the novelist's verbal account of the sixteenth century miniature art and Renaissance perspectival painting shown in a diabolic opposition. Ekphrasis as the leading mode is also realized in the novel through incorporating certain figures and images from Ottoman and Persian miniatures as character narrators who in turn bring forth their individual comments on specific drawings in particular and on art's relation to reality in general. In this new paradigm of the copresence of word and image in the novel, we are told the Frankish style of perspective is deemed closer to the outer reality than Islamic miniature, whereas miniature illustrations are intended to represent meaning rather than distinct objects themselves. The East-West dichotomy reshapes itself on a metaphorical level in Pamuk's imagetext, suggesting imagological readings through this binarism between the two forms of the visual arts and their opposing ways of seeing and depicting the outer reality. The dynamic between the "self-image" defining the domestic, national identity and the "hetero-image" which typifies "the so-called Europeans" is reworked in My Name is Red on the very basis of the same conflict between the two dominant art forms.

Keywords: Orhan Pamuk, My Name is Red, ekphrasis, miniature, imatology, imagetext, hetero-image, self and other

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Orhan Pamuk'un *Benim Adım Kırmızı* romanını görsel yansıtma biçimlerinin ve Osmanlı minyatür eserlerinin konu edildiği imgetextin ve ekfrastik anlatı olarak incelemektir. Pamuk'un bu eserinde ekfrastik anlatı, Osmanlı ve İranlı üstatların minyatürlerinde yer alan imgelerin roman karakterlerine ve anlatıcılarına dönüşmesi ve bu sayede sürdürdükleri sanat ve gerçeklik ilişkisi üzerine tartışmalarıyla gerçekleşir. Romanda farklı anlatıcı-karakterler, 16. Yüzyıl Osmanlı minyatür resmi ve aynı dönemlerde Batı resim sanatında en bilinen örneklerini veren perspektifi ikili karşıtlık olarak tartışır. Böylece görsel olan romanda anlatının konusu haline gelir. İmge ve söz arasındaki ayrımın netliğini kaybettiği ve her ikisinin de hiyerarşik olmayan bir düzlemde yer aldığı *Benim Adım Kırmızı*, imgetextin kavramına örnek oluşturur. Ayrıca Pamuk'un bu romanı imgesel olanın yazılı metne aktarıldığı göstergeler arası bir çeviri olarak da değerlendirilir. Romanda, Frenk ya da Venedik üslubu olarak adlandırılan Rönesans perspektif kullanımı objektif gerçekliğe en yakın yansıtma biçimi olarak görülür. Minyatür ise resmettiği nesnelerin gerçeğine benzemeleriyle değil, "anlamı" yansıtma çabası bakımından daha üstün olarak görülür. Romanın konusunu oluşturan bu iki sanat türünün ve onların gerçekliği görme biçimlerinin Doğu-Batı zıtlığı içerisinde sunulması, "biz ve öteki" imgelerinin yeniden şekil aldığı farklı okumalara açar. İmgebilimin de konusunu oluşturan bu türden kimlik çalışmalarının dinamiğini belirleyen öz ve ötekini tanıma/tanımlama için imge yaratımı, *Benim Adım Kırmızı* adlı romanda birbirine karşıt olarak verilen görme ve resmetme biçimleri üzerinden tartışılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Orhan Pamuk, *Benim Adım Kırmızı*, ekfrasis, minyatür, imgebilim, imgetextin, kalıpyargı, Öteki

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Introduction

This article studies the Nobel Prize winning novelist, Orhan Pamuk's *My Name is Red* as an ekphrastic reimagination in which Eastern and Western modes of the visual representation become the object of Pamuk's verbal representation.² The novel thematizes the art of miniature illustration of the Ottoman Palace *naqqashes*, or court miniaturists, and discusses it in relation to the Western technique of perspective in painting within the fictional world of the novel, which opens with a verse from the Qur'an, "To God belongs the East and the West." In a rather simple reading, the presence of such a verse as the opening word of the novel can be deemed a sign of the hope of bridging East and West, as I claimed in an earlier article I co-authored.³ However, I hold the idea that this epigraph should be read against the pivotal character Black's unequivocal judgement given through the end of the novel as his concluding remark, "East is east and West is west" (Pamuk, 2001, p. 488). In this article, I maintain that the opposing forms of seeing and depicting the outer reality in miniature and perspective drawing, as discussed in Pamuk's novel, are the very forces at work in the constructions of the "self-image" describing the national identity and the "hetero-image" which typifies "the so-called Europeans" as the irreverent Other within the East-West dichotomy that the text pursues (Pamuk, 2001, p. 16).

As Joep Leerssen avers, "the nationality represented (the *spected*) is silhouetted in the perspectival context of the representing text or discourse (the *spectant*). For that reason, imagologists will have particular interest in the dynamics between those images which characterize the Other (*hetero-images*) and those which characterize one's own, domestic identity (*self-images* or *auto-images*)" (2007, p. 27). Accordingly, through the binarism between the two forms of the visual arts and the two opposing discourses, *My Name is Red* suggests imagological readings in which the orthodox stereotypes are reworked, and the self/other conflict is seemingly rewritten.⁴ Thijs Weststeijn argues that although the term "imagology" is not extensively used for the study of national stereotypes expressed in art, still "the approach is valuable to the study of the visual arts" too (2007, p. 452).⁵ In Pamuk's work, Ottoman miniature and the newly emerging technique of perspective in Venetian paintings are recognized as antagonistic forms by the court miniaturists, and therefore they underpin national stereotypes, nourishing the constructed self-image of the Ottoman court society as a "pious" and just one when seen against the stereotype of the "heretic" Other. The Ottoman court miniaturists of the time, as portrayed in Pamuk's novel, try to defend their art and the existing self-image against the influences of the western style of perspectival rendering which they regard as blasphemy. The present study seeks to discuss how *My Name is Red* reworks the opposition between the constructed self-image that the traditional court illustrators try to protect in their art and the stereotype image of the Other that they find its reflections in the "godless" world of Venetian lifelike drawings.

The East/West Dichotomy Reshaped

Orhan Pamuk blends western narrative techniques with themes and topics belonging to eastern cultures, the foreign with the familiar, historical past with what is fictional in his novels, particularly in those works translated into major languages and gained a widespread circulation as parts of World Literature.⁶ As Turkish literature scholar and translator Erdağ Göknaar puts forward in his "Occulted Texts: Pamuk's Untranslated Novels," Orhan Pamuk "is editing his position in the canon and dehistoricizing his literary

² James A. W. Heffernan's definition of ekphrasis is used here to simply denote the verbal representation of the visual representation: "As the point of departure for my own theory of ekphrasis, I propose a definition simple in form but complex in its implications: *ekphrasis is the verbal representation of the visual representation*" (1993, p. 3, italics in original).

³ Kirca, Mustafa and Fırat Karadaş. (2008). The problem of miniaturist art as reflection of reality in Orhan Pamuk's *My Name is Red*. Andrew Hock Soon Ng (Ed). In *The poetics of shadows* (pp. 123-36). Stuttgart: ibidem.

⁴ Imagological studies analyzing how the stereotype image of the other is created and the historical reasons for shaping such generalizations can be said to have become more common as "the rise of Cultural Studies, the establishment of Ethnic Studies and the rapidly growing interest in travel literature, swiftly made the field of imagology a clearly defined and respected part of the discipline of American and English Studies. Imagology moved quickly from the margins to near the center of the academic field" (Zacharasiewicz, 2010, p. 14).

⁵ Weststeijn explains that "The terms 'imagology' or 'image studies' are not used in historical or systematic studies of the visual arts, for the obvious reason that these disciplines use the term 'image' in a number of meanings, both literal and abstract, that have nothing to do with the representation of national characteristics. More specifically, the term imagology is avoided for fear of confusion with 'iconology', an approach that studies artworks as signs that obtain their meaning from a broader intellectual background" (2007, pp. 451-52).

⁶ Pamuk's 1998 novel *Benim Adım Kırmızı* was translated into English by Erdağ Göknaar (Knopf 2001; Everyman's Library 2010). It is acknowledged that Göknaar's award-winning translation of the novel marked Pamuk's emergence as an author of World Literature. See Göknaar's critical study of Pamuk's corpus (2013), *Orhan Pamuk, Secularism and Blasphemy: The Politics of the Turkish Novel*, p. 132.

genealogy. This enables him to foreground Istanbul cosmopolitanism and world literature as the sole contexts of his literary production” (2012, p. 192). Pamuk’s last novel, *Veba Geceleri [Plague Nights]*, published in March 2021, intentionally blurs the boundary between history and story in the way that has long been an established narrative mode in the West. The novel opens with the preface of the implied writer, who declares that the work is a history writing presented as a fiction or a fictional writing presented as a historical account. Such a postmodern innovation problematizes the textual border as the reader questions if the preface must be read as an extratextual material or a part of Pamuk’s fictional world. This also shows that such narrative novelties are still prevalent in new writings by non-western authors.

The same applies to *My Name is Red*, which is a work of historiographic metafiction⁷ (as opposed to a traditional historical novel) with its postmodern and self-reflexive innovations blurring textual borders. Its setting is late sixteenth-century Ottoman Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire then, during the reign of Sultan Murad III; to be more precise, the novel tells the story of “over ten days in the winter of 1591” (Shaw, p. 257). Against this historical backdrop, the novel is also a postmodernist mystery that starts with a miniaturist’s murder and sustains the mystery till the end in a subtle way by forcing the reader to find the identity of the murderer, who is also one of the multiple diegetic narrators of the novel. The stylized drawings of the murderer are expected to help readers identify him. Thus, the text turns into a multi layered canvas where readers are expected “to solve the whodunit through both textual and visual registers” (Irvin, 2017, p. 192).

In *My Name is Red*, Pamuk reimagines the historical period of the late sixteenth century, when the use of perspective came to be dominant in the visual arts in Europe and was supposedly exercising its influence on Ottoman miniature painting at the same time. In other words, it was a turning point when a so-called radical break was experienced with conventional ways of seeing the outer world in the visual arts. The novel tells the story of an illustrated book that the Sultan has commissioned from a group of the court miniaturists to celebrate “the thousandth year of the Muslim calendar” (of Mohammed’s migration) and also to demonstrate his power to the Venetian Doge; that is, the book has been commissioned from a master miniaturist, Enishte Effendi, who works with four other talented court naqqashes, nicknamed Stork, Olive, Elegant, and Butterfly, to complete the manuscript “which would strike terror into the heart of the Venetian Doge by showing the military strength and pride of Islam, together with the power and wealth of the Exalted House of Osman” (Pamuk, 2001, p. 275). In his study of Pamuk’s novels with the Ottoman past as their common theme, Göknaar states that the historical background of the Ottoman past is, at the same time, “a space of opportunity, a meeting place of the real and the imaginary, self and other, a space of negotiation, transgression, and even the ‘sublime’” (2006, p. 37). It is safe to argue that in *My Name is Red* the Ottoman history also opens up a *space* to examine the construction and reflection of the self-image and hetero-image through the conflicting discourses of the dominant art forms.

My Name is Red reinvents the East-West conflict through posing questions about the conception of reality in Ottoman miniature particularly and also on western art’s relation to objective reality. At the same time, a hierarchical binarism is created specifically when perspective is regarded as an innovation in art, and miniature painting, on the other hand, is linked with what is against modern and secular. For that matter, the novelist is accused by some of “employing orientalist stereotype in the representation of the Ottoman Empire” (Türkkan, 2017, p. 6). True, *My Name is Red* includes a variety of voices and differing discourses on a nonhierarchical footing by means of a multitude of first-person narrators.⁸ Behind this façade of multivoicedness, nevertheless, the eastern visual representation is associated with what is traditional, and the western perspectival representation with what is innovative.⁹ This also helps Pamuk pursue his prevalent theme of being stuck between East and West, which in turn serves to define a national identity within this context. We should note that in his 2003 interview,¹⁰ Pamuk stated:

⁷ In *Poetics of Postmodernism*, Linda Hutcheon defines the label historiographic metafiction as the one which “puts into question, at the same time as it exploits, the grounding of historical knowledge in the past real” (1989, p. 92).

⁸ Regarding to telling the story through a multitude of distinct perspectives/narrators in *My Name is Red*, Pamuk states: “Not only my characters speak in my story but objects and colors as well. I thought all these distinctive voices would produce a rich music—the texture of daily life in Istanbul four hundred years ago. These shifts in viewpoint also reflect the novel’s main concern about looking at the world from our point of view versus the point of view of a supreme being. All of this is related to the use of perspective in painting; my characters line in a world where the restrictions of perspective do not exist so they speak in their own voice with their own humor” (Knopf, “A Conversation with Orhan Pamuk”).

⁹ The western perspective painting denotes orderliness, and what is rational and materialistic (the everyday as opposed to the discourse of the divine Islamic book-arts); on the other hand, the colorful but seemingly disordered world of miniature mirrors the East stereotypically as exotic, alien, and sentimental.

¹⁰ This interview is available at www.randomhouse.com/knopf/authors/pamuk/qna.html. Accessed October 14, 2021.



I tried to tell my story in the manner of these Persian masters [from high above as the Islamic painters did]. These two distinctive ways of seeing the world and narrating stories are of course related to our cultures, histories and what is now popularly called *identities*. How much are they in conflict? In my novel they even kill each other because of this conflict between east and west. (Knopf, "A Conversation with Orhan Pamuk," my emphasis)

The Word/Image Hierarchy Reversed

My Name is Red's opening chapter consists of the cry of a corpse of one of the four naqqashes involved in the Sultan's secret commission. It is revealed that he was cynical about the book they were illuminating once he heard this book was the source of "idolatry." His cry from the bottom of a well into which his dead body was thrown asks for the reader's attention also: "My death conceals an appalling conspiracy against our religion, our traditions and the way we see the world. Open your eyes, discover why the enemies of the life in which you believe, of the life you are living, and of Islam, have destroyed me" (Pamuk, 2001, p. 6). The corpse wants readers' involvement in the detective story by addressing his listeners directly, and requires them to find out the identity of the murderer; yet, at the same time, he reveals the novel's main contradiction concerning which forms of the visual representation should be acceptable in miniature and are unprofane for Islamic faith. The novel distinguishes the style of Islamic miniature from that of Western painting, and by means of ekphrasis as its leading mode, it brings forth controversies over the effects of Western ideas on the Ottoman art of miniature. Through the multiple narrators of the novel, it is claimed, on the one hand, that the Frankish style is closer to reality than Islamic illustration because it employs artistic styles of perspective, shadow and light, etc. and represents the outer reality as Venetian artists see it with the naked eye: "When these Venetian infidels paint, it's as if they're not making a painting but actually creating the object they're painting" (Pamuk, 2001, p. 126). On the other hand, Islamic illustrators and specifically the Palace miniaturists claim that they represent reality as God would see it "from the balcony of a minaret" through employing the Persian way of seeing (Pamuk, 2001, p. 205), that is, "Allah's vision of the earthly realm, and *this unique perspective*" as opposed to western perspectival artistry (Pamuk, 2001, p. 97, my emphasis). Any realistic reflection with point of view is accepted as "an unforgivable sin by daring to draw, from the perspective of a mangy street dog, a horsefly and a mosque as if they were the same size – with the excuse that the mosque was in the background – thereby mocking the faithful who attend prayers" (Pamuk, 2001, p. 191).

Nevertheless, in the book commissioned by the Sultan, Enishte Effendi wishes the western technique of perspective to be applied to the art of miniature, thereby blending the two art forms in this way to create a new, hybrid form: "Two styles heretofore never brought together have come together to create something new and wondrous" (Pamuk, 2001, p. 194). Enishte Effendi claims that the Sultan requested a lifelike portraiture of him "be made in the style of the Frankish masters," which will employ the controversial inventive features of perspective and shadow that the majority of miniaturists deem "infidel"¹¹ (Pamuk, 2001, p. 133). Of course, Enishte Effendi is not unaware that he dares "to move the art of illustrating away from Allah's perspective" with this book (Pamuk, 2001, p. 135). Thus, he requires the other illustrators to paint parts of this secret book without letting them see the whole picture to hide his real intention. It is also unrevealed that the realistic portrait of the Sultan will "be situated at the heart of the book" (Pamuk, 2001, p. 275). The other naqqashes would regard this "infidel" as they hold their strict conviction that Islam prohibits (stylized) depictions of human faces in their uniqueness, since portraiture painting would mean idolization of human beings. As the unidentified murderer tells Enishte Effendi,

In the Glorious Koran, 'creator' is one of the attributes of Allah. It is Allah who is creative, who brings that which is not into existence, who gives life to the lifeless. No one ought to compete with Him. The greatest of sins is committed by painters who presume to do what He does, who claim to be as creative as He. (Pamuk, 2001, p. 193)

The naqqashes believe that representing equivalents of objective reality in their paintings bar them, as the murderer claims, "from the gates of Heaven" because, as it is prophesied, "on Judgment Day, Allah will punish painters most severely. [...] The idol makers will be asked to bring the images they've created to life. [...] Since they'll be unable to do so their lot will be to suffer the torments of Hell" (Pamuk, 2001, p. 193). The lack of perspective is favored in the illuminations of the court naqqashes as such a realistic representation of human face, in a lifelike manner, with detail and from a single point of view is accepted as "an unforgivable sin" (Pamuk, 2001, p. 191). In the novel its profanity is foregrounded via a character called Nusret Hoja of Erzurum, who is a leader of a radical sect and feverishly opposes the preparation of such a

¹¹ In Pamuk's novel, the words "Frankish" and "Venetian" are used interchangeably to refer to anything Western and hence anything supposedly "infidel" (Pamuk, 2001, p. 131).

blasphemous manuscript by the court miniaturists, believing that the Sultan's realistic portraiture is against Islamic doctrine. His wish is to ensure the just punishment of those who could be involved in this:

A cleric by the name of Nusret, who preached at the Bayazid Mosque and claimed to be descended from Our Glorious Prophet Muhammad, [...] attributed the catastrophes that had befallen Istanbul in the last ten years [...] to our having strayed from the path of the Prophet, to disregard for the strictures of the Glorious Koran, to the tolerance toward Christians. (Pamuk, 2001, p. 10)

Therefore, the court naqqashes endeavor to paint through strictly following the highly conventional rules of miniature art, avoiding the realistic illusion in their illuminations. The common motive is to prevent the alleged impact of the newfangled western approach to depiction on Ottoman painting, or to be more precise, to protect the image of the self against the intervention of what is "alien." The dominant Islamic art form, and its sanctity, has become the very thing that the followers of Nusret Hoja, and conservative miniaturists alike, associate with their religious/national identity. They take it for granted that Enishte Effendi's wish to mingle "our own established traditions with that of the infidels [the Venetians/Europeans] will strip us of our purity and reduce us to being their slaves" (Pamuk, 2001, p. 194). Therefore, while the "hetero-image" emerges as the stereotype of "infidel" European in Pamuk's text, the "self-image" is directly represented by the tradition of Islamic miniature illumination, which was actually the major form of Ottoman pictorial artistry that produced its best examples in the sixteenth century.

This specific period of the Ottoman history when miniature art reached its maturity while Venetian pictorial art produced the best examples of linear perspective drawing in Europe is fictionalized and comes to constitute the novel's focal point. In the sixteenth century, Murad III, who was known for his interest in miniature, had the *Chronicle of Sultan Murâd*, *Book of Victories*, the *Book of Festivities*, and the *Book of Skills* produced under the supervision of Naqqash Osman, the head miniaturist in the Ottoman court then.¹² This historical personage turns into Pamuk's fictional character, also known as Master Osman in the novel, as the head of the court naqqashes. It is known that miniature painting was commonly designed for the illustration of narrative texts, and as in the *Book of Victories* or the *Book of Festivities*, the main task of Ottoman court naqqashes was to illustrate, for instance, the battles that the Sultans participated, their victories, the audience scenes of ambassadors, the royal festivities, and so on. Therefore, any miniature image is not expected to signify the outer reality independently on its own. Put differently, a miniature painting does not stand for itself but is only subsidiary to writing for ornamental purposes. Additionally, they are used to illustrate texts for a better understanding. As a result, image in miniature art is not independent of narrative, and there is a hierarchical order between word and image. It should also be noted that miniature does not reflect objects in the material world as we see them either but tries to convey their meanings; such images are not expected to represent the real life but an "externalization" of meaning. Thus, contrary to meaning and interpretation in Western art, meaning in Islamic illumination is "inwards, conveying on a private truth," as the painting of a tree states: "I don't want to be a tree, I want to be its meaning" – here the meaning is the "story" behind the painted object (Pamuk, 2001, p. 61). Master Osman, while discussing the appropriateness of the illustrations that Enishte Effendi prepares for the Sultan's book, highlights the importance of meaning and the presence of a story¹³ behind what is pictorial: "Meaning precedes form in the world of our art" (Pamuk, 2001, p. 387).

Conversely, Pamuk's *My Name is Red* is an intersemiotic appropriation that translates pictorial language into written language, and in a sense, the hierarchical division between word and image, the verbal and the visual representation, is problematized in the novel. Particularly, in light of the new ekphrastic poetics "where the text attempts to represent a work of visual or graphic art" (Mitchell, 1987, p. 155), *My Name is Red* offers multiple textual layers in terms of the word-image relationship it thematizes. To illustrate, when Black describes the content of the historical books produced under the supervision of Naqqash Osman, the actual paintings there make up the story. The following quotation, for example, shows how the miniatures in the *Book of Festivities* were designed to reflect the power of the Empire this time through Black's narrating the miniature paintings of the circumcision ceremonies that lasted fifty-two days and nights. He relates:

¹² For a detailed analysis of miniatures in Ottoman art and the specific works of miniature produced in the Ottoman imperial *nakkashane* (painters' workshop) in the sixteenth century, see Zeren Tanındı's comprehensive study at <https://istanbultarihi.ist/637-from-the-painting-treasury-of-the-palace-miniatures-in-ottoman-art>. Accessed January 31, 2022.

¹³ Likewise, the Sultan, while commissioning the book from Enishte Effendi, valorizes the story behind the depiction thus: "It is the story that's essential. [...] A beautiful illustration elegantly completes the story. An illustration that does not compliment a story, in the end, will become but a false idol" (Pamuk, 2001, p. 132).



I eagerly beheld for the first time the legendary pages of the *Book of Festivities*, which recounted the circumcision ceremonies of our Sultan's prince. [...] In the first picture placed before me, fixed in the royal enclosure of late Ibrahim Pasha's palace, Our Sultan [...] gazed upon the festivities in the Hippodrome below with a look that bespoke His satisfaction. His face, even though not so detailed as to permit one to distinguish Him from others by features alone, was drawn adeptly and with reverence. (Pamuk, 2001, p. 68)

In some other pictures painted for the *Book of Victories* in Master Osman's workshop, Black notices that a naval fleet depicted supposedly by a young artist "by repeatedly tracing identical ships with a block pattern didn't even seem to float in the sea," and "the lack of wind in the sails" highlights its artificiality (Pamuk, 2001, p. 71). However, the artificiality of miniature painting should be regarded as the natural outcome of the lack of perspective, causing the distortion of correct proportions of physical objects. This feature of miniature is also presented by Black vocally in the novel. Pamuk adopts an ekphrastic practice here to verbally represent visual depictions of actual miniatures performed by Ottoman court naqqashes.

It is likewise notable that besides Black's relating certain pictures from authentic materials, and fictional ones alike, a number of individual figures and images from the abovementioned books of illustrations and those from other known Ottoman and Persian miniatures also constitute Pamuk's verbal narrative in *My Name is Red*. The prevalent examples are the drawings of tree, horse, and dog, which take the floor among the multiple narrators of the novel to comment on the contrast between the two artistic styles: while the Venetian artist strives to re-create the material object as they see it with the naked eye, the Ottoman miniaturist endeavors to detach art as far as they could from the material object for fear of blasphemy. Mainly, the discussions of the illustrations of these figures are presented in the form of an interchange in which each illustration expresses its individual view in response to the other. Therefore, verbal and visual coexist in Pamuk's multi layered work as we see the figures originally belonging to paintings recite and render their thoughts on artistic representation. Moreover, the novel manages to liberate the figures of Ottoman miniatures from the pages of books and from the yoke of the narrative text. For instance, in the chapters titled "I am a Tree," the narrator, namely the illustrated tree, speaks out its desire to be a part of a story in a miniature book, so that it can be a "shade for Mejnun disguised as a shepherd as he visited Leyla in her tent" and "fade into the night, representing the darkness in the soul of a wretched and hopeless man," or "shade Alexander during the final moments of his life on his campaign to conquer Hindustan" (Pamuk, 2001, p. 59). Defending miniature against the Frankish style, the tree argues that looking at the drawing of a tree is more pleasing than looking at a tree itself because the miniature painting of a tree represents its meaning rather than the material object.¹⁴ However, it informs us about the emerging realistic representation in the visual arts: "Painting in the new style demands such talent that if you depicted one of the trees in this forest, a man who looked upon that painting could come here, and if he so desired, correctly select that tree from among the others" (Pamuk, 2001, p. 61). Accordingly, it criticizes Frankish painters for depicting "the faces of kings, priests, noblemen, and even women in such a manner that after gazing upon the portrait, you'd be able to identify that person on the street" (Pamuk, 2001, p. 61).

On the other hand, defending the Frankish style, the illustrated horse's argument is a direct response to that of the tree. In this chapter, the horse illustration discusses its traditional representations in different illuminations and states that in these, the grace of its midsection, the length of its legs, and the pride of its bearing represent not the uniqueness of a real horse: "everyone knows that there is no horse exactly like me. I'm simply the rendering of a horse that exists in a miniaturist's imagination" (Pamuk, 2001, p. 264). This is because the miniaturist imitates the horse image in his mind rather than the real object itself, drawing not what he sees but what he remembers¹⁵ (Pamuk, 2001, p. 92). "All miniaturists," the horse narrates, "illustrate all horses from memory in the same way even though we've each been uniquely created by Allah, Greatest of all Creators. [...] Because they're attempting to depict the world that God perceives, not the world that they see" (Pamuk, 2001, p. 264). The horse image is after the realistic representation in painting. It is, therefore, foregrounded in these chapters that art's relation to the outer reality is one-to-one

¹⁴ "I thank Allah," the tree says, "I, the humble tree before you haven't been drawn with such intent. And not because I fear that if I'd been thus depicted all the dogs in Istanbul would assume I was a real tree and piss on me: I don't want to be a tree, I want to be its meaning" (2001, p. 61).

¹⁵ With this regard, the emphasis on "memory" and "remembering" as the mere source of artistic representation in miniature is what distinguishes it from the western art of perspectival painting. As Master Osman puts it, a talented miniaturist ought to draw not what he sees but what he remembers: "the horse that a master miniaturist has drawn tens of thousands of times eventually comes close to God's vision of a horse, and the artist knows this through experience and deep in his soul. The horse that his hand draws quickly from memory is rendered with talent, great effort, and insight, and it is a horse that approaches Allah's horse" (Pamuk, 2001, p. 306).

in the Frankish style and hence cannot be questioned. Defending such a view and criticizing miniature painting, the horse states that it is “sick of being incorrectly depicted by miniaturists who sit around the house like ladies and never go off to war. They’ll depict me at a gallop with both my forelegs extended at the same time. There isn’t a horse in this world that runs like a rabbit” (Pamuk, 2001, p. 265).

The horse deems painting in the Frankish style of perspective is closer to the outer reality than any in the Islamic style of miniature, while the tree argues that objects in miniature illustrations are closer to “reality” as they attempt to represent meaning rather than distinct objects themselves. Nevertheless, Black’s comment on artificiality is applicable to both art forms, and their problematic relationship with objective reality is actually valid for any artistic style. Put differently, it is acknowledged that whether it is painted in the Ottoman style or in the Frankish style, no representation of an object is the object itself. The issue of representation in art is mentioned in the narration of the illustrated dog that draws attention to its own “constructedness,” and within the metafictional world of the novel, the issue of representation is problematized in these lines: “I have no problem with the fact that my portrait was drawn on such cheap paper or that I’m a four-legged beast, but I do regret that I can’t sit down like a man and have a cup of coffee with you. [...] A picture can’t drink coffee, you say? Please! See for yourselves, this dog is happily lapping away” (Pamuk, 2001, p. 16).

Conclusion

By means of narrating actual miniature paintings, as in the case of Black’s narration above among other such instances, and also through including figures from known miniature books as character narrators, Pamuk’s *My Name is Red* evolves into the imagetext¹⁶ in which the visual representation is verbally narrated. As has been discussed, this is done mostly by incorporating certain figures and images from Ottoman and Persian miniatures as narrators to bring forth their individual conflicting ideas on depiction. Therefore, what is visual becomes topical in Pamuk’s narrative mostly through the verbal representation of such figures. That is, the actual illustrations are integrated into the narrative to transform what is visual into textual, but at the same time what is written is transformed into pictorial in *My Name is Red*. The binaries of word and image, of the verbal representation and the visual representation, are dissolved by the imagetext of Pamuk’s ekphrastic reimagination. The novel, thereby, turns into a thorough inquiry into the confrontation of word and image, and at the same time, the two ways of seeing as separate discourses. The miniaturists, whose controversial reflections over depiction are given, find themselves in a dilemma between these two opposing approaches to artistic representation.

Much as the boundary between the visual representation and the verbal representation is transgressed, the East-West dichotomy reshapes itself on a metaphorical level in *My Name is Red*, offering imagological implications by contrasting the distinct artistic styles in terms of their relation to objective reality and changing discourses. Although Enishte Effendi’s book is never completed and the hybrid form he imagines is never realized, Pamuk’s text nonetheless can be read as a reflection of this hybridity in the form of a combination where word and image are intertwined – a combination of western word (narrative and its stylistic and generic conventions) and eastern image. At the same time, in this new paradigm of the copresence of word and image, the separation of self and other is redefined in *My Name is Red*. It seems that the intervention of what is “alien” is inescapable as, through the end of the novel, the dialogue between Black and the murderer highlights. Also, Master Osman tells Black that “As we begin to paint in imitation of the Frankish and Venetian masters, as in the book that Our Sultan had commissioned from your Enishte, the domain of meaning ends and the domain of form begins” (Pamuk, 2001, p. 387). Through his textual innovations or more directly via his *My Name is Red* itself, Pamuk teaches us that *form* matters.

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¹⁶ For the discussion of the concept of the “imagetext,” see W. J. T. Mitchell’s *Picture Theory* (1994, pp. 83-107).



Conflict of Interest

There is no financial conflict of interest with any institution, organization, person related to our article titled "(Western)Word / (Eastern)Image in My Name is Red: An Imagological Reading of Orhan Pamuk's Ekphrastic Reimagination".

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Nobel ödüllü romancı Orhan Pamuk'un Benim Adım Kırmızı adlı eserini görsel yansıtma biçimlerinin ve Osmanlı minyatür eserlerinin konu edildiği imgetin ve ekfrastik anlatı olarak incelemektir. Pamuk'un bu eserinde ekfrastik anlatı, Osmanlı ve İranlı üstatların minyatürlerinde yer alan imgelerin roman karakterlerine ve anlatıcılarına dönüşmesi ve bu sayede sürdürdükleri sanat ve gerçeklik ilişkisi üzerine tartışmalarıyla gerçekleşir. Romanda farklı anlatıcı-karakterler, 16. Yüzyıl Osmanlı minyatür resmi ve aynı dönemlerde Batı resim sanatında en bilinen örneklerini veren perspektifi ikili karşıtlık olarak tartışır. Böylece görsel olan romanda anlatının konusu haline gelir. İmge ve söz arasındaki ayrımın netliğini kaybettiği ve her ikisinin de hiyerarşik olmayan bir düzlemde yer aldığı Benim Adım Kırmızı, W. J. T. Mitchell'in Picture Theory (1994) adlı kitabında tanımladığı imgetin kavramına örnek verilebilir. Ayrıca Orhan Pamuk'un bu romanı imgesel olanın yazılı metne aktarıldığı göstergeler arası bir çeviri olarak da değerlendirilir.

Benim Adım Kırmızı'da Frenk ya da Venedik üslubu olarak adlandırılan Rönesans perspektif kullanımı objektif gerçekliğe en yakın yansıtma biçimi olarak görülür. Bu sayede resimde "kusursuz" bir gerçeklik algısı yaratılır. Minyatür ise resmettiği nesnelere benzemeleriyle değil, "anlamı" yansıtma çabası bakımından daha

üstün olarak görülür. Aynı zamanda perspektif kullanımının Osmanlı minyatür sanatı üzerindeki kaçınılmaz etkisi de kabul edilmektedir. Bu iki görme ve yansıtma biçiminin zıtlık oluşturacak şekilde sunulduğu romanda Osmanlı saray nakkaşlarının Batı'nın perspektif kullanımıyla özdeşleşmiş gerçekçi yansıtma biçimine karşı minyatür sanatını koruma çabası anlatılmaktadır. Minyatür sanatında geleneksel değerleri korumaya çalışan nakkaşlar tarafından Frenk resim sanatının "kafirlikle" bir tutulduğu, bu nedenle Batılı resmetme biçimine karşı duruşun temelini daha çok dini kaygıların oluşturduğu aktarılmaktadır. Bu görüş, daha çok Erzurumlu Nusret Hoca karakteriyle temsil edilmektedir. Romanın konusunu oluşturan iki sanat türünün ve onların gerçekliği görme biçimlerinin Doğu-Batı zıtlığı içerisinde sunulması, "biz ve öteki" imgelerinin yeniden şekil aldığı farklı okumalara açar. İmgebilim, Öteki'ni yansıtmak için kalıpyargı oluşturma sürecini ve bu türden genellemelerin ve imge yaratımının arkasındaki tarihsel nedenleri inceler. Karşılaştırmalı Edebiyat, kültür çalışmaları ve çeviri çalışmalarının giderek yaygınlaşmasıyla birlikte imgebilim de edebi eserlerde öz ve ötekini tanımlayan imge yaratımı çalışmalarında daha merkezi bir konuma gelebilmiştir. Bu nedenle, imgebilimin de konusunu oluşturan bu türden kimlik çalışmalarının dinamiğini belirleyen öz ve ötekini tanıma/tanımlama için imge yaratımı, Benim Adım Kırmızı adlı romanda birbirine karşıt olarak verilen görme ve resmetme biçimleri üzerinden tartışılmaktadır diyebiliriz.

Enişte Efendi, Sultan için hazırladığını iddia ettiği kitapta perspektif tekniğini minyatür sanatına uygulamaya çalışmakta ve böylece her iki görme ve resmetme biçimini yan yana getirerek yeni, "hibrit" bir tür oluşturmayı istemektedir. Enişte Efendi, yukarıda bahsettiğimiz sözde dini kaygıların sonucu olarak kitabı tamamlayamadan öldürülür ve istediği hibrit formu bu nedenle gerçekleştiremez. Pamuk'un romanı ise (Batılı)söz ve (Doğulu)imgeyi birleştirmesi bakımından Enişte Efendi'nin yaratmaya çalıştığı hibrit yansıtma biçimini gerçekleştirmiştir. Biçim bakımından gerçekleşen bu birleşme, Doğu-Batı ikileminin ortadan kalkmasına değil, yeniden tanımlanmasına yol açabilmiştir. Batılı perspektif sanatı yenilikçi ve çağdaş olanı nitelerken Doğu'nun iki boyutlu yansıtma biçiminin ise Pamuk'un bazı anlatıcıları tarafından "kusurlu" bir yansıtma sunabildiği iddia edilir. Romanın farklı anlatıcılarla sağladığı çoksesliliğe karşın Doğu-Batı ikili karşıtlığı ve milli kimlik arayışının bu ikilem içerisinde sıkışması yine de baskın olan söylem olarak ortaya çıkar.

