

Review

Knowledge as Perspective: A Genealogical Study of Pamuk's *My Name is Red*

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This research paper is focused on Orhan Pamuk's use of multiple character-narrators in his fictional work *My Name is Red*. The character-narrators express various perspectives regarding different issues to aid the new historical notion of "knowledge as perspective". Characters like Black, Beloved Uncle, Shekure, Husret Hoja, Butterfly, Olive, Dog, Tree, Gold Coin and so on opine ideas countering the canonical notions regarding truth, knowledge, history and so on. Similarly, the recurrent account of historical characters and their exposition of the negative aspects of the past in a fictional work entice the readers to question history. Sultan Murat III's passion for power and miniaturist painters' treacheries to be in a better position unveil the dark side of history to support Nietzschean notion that history is also the record of crimes, passions and follies. Therefore, this research proves that truth, knowledge, history and power are nothing but the definition of power holders, which are one-sided, subjective and changeable

Key Words: knowledge, power, genealogy, history, fictional truth, new historicism

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INTRODUCTION

My Name is Red: An Amalgam of Perspectives

My Name is Red (2001) is a magnum opus of Orhan Pamuk (born on June 7, 1952), a novelist from Turkey, which claimed a well famous International IMPAC Dublin Award in 2003. In this text, Pamuk gives voice to each and every character to intensify the objective of his writing. He has used multiple plots and character-narrators.

The multiplicity of plots and narrators, in *My Name is Red*, creates problems. Pamuk has used various characters including images, animals and humans. His style of giving voice to each character reminds us of heteroglossia that gets textualized in the novel. A Corpse

speaks in the first chapter and this unusual narration continues in further chapters. Like Corpse, Dog, Tree, Horse, Gold Coin, Death, Red and Satan get chance to develop the plot further. However, Black, Beloved Uncle, Shekure, Butterfly, Esther, Master Osman etc. are the usual character-narrators. There is politics behind using multiple character-narrators and non-human characters. Gold Coin, a non-human character-narrator, narrates that it is not pure but counterfeit.

However, other persons like Stork and Butterfly treat it as pure gold coin. Even the readers consider it as pure but the mystery unveils when the coin speaks itself. Shekure, in anger, discloses the truth that his father Enishte Effendi shares bed with his slave girl Hayriye. Until she disclosed this fact, it was another truth that Enishte is a renowned moral artist. So, problem arises regarding the truth. Which condition, before disclosing the fact or after disclosing the fact, is true? Should we believe

Shekure who tells something in anger and recants later? Likewise, need we to believe on Husret Hoja, who believes coffee as devil's ruse? Is coffee really a devil's ruse or is it just an expression guided by religious preoccupation? What about the dog which considers humans less rational than beasts? Therefore, we can deduce that expressions are the result of socio-politico-historical situatedness. Behind declaring something, there is the role of culture, society, politics, history etc. These factors convert truth and knowledge to mere perspectives.

Butterfly, a miniaturist painter, claims to be the best artist. Likewise, both Olive and Stork also claim to be the best. So, it becomes very difficult to know the best. Whom should we believe- Butterfly, Stork or Olive? Or, can there be many 'best' artists? Similarly, the Murderer acts as if he is grieved most by the death of Elegant Effendi and even the other people believe him. But, the murderer himself says that he is pretending of grieving so that others won't suspect him as the murderer. So, what about those characters who are unaware of this fact. Are not they believing on something as true which is not exactly?

When all the miniaturists run behind money and power, we are obliged to consider that money and power are determining factors of everything. Probably, Sultan Murat III, the imperialist king of Ottoman Empire of late sixteenth century, commissions Enishte Effendi to illustrate a book in Venetian style so that he could impress the Westerners to elongate the age of his rule. The depiction of Sultan Murat III and his ruling period as setting of the novel, presenting of Master Osman, a historical man, as a character; and mentioning and describing many historical events, persons and places to forward the plot confuse the readers. Whether we are reading a fictional work or historical document, we get turmoil sometimes. Even the autobiographical, social and religious aspects of the author add this confusion.

Marc. Kloszewski in the Library Journal critiques this novel by relating it to its religious background. He remarks:

In addition, this is both an examination of the way figurative art is viewed within Islam and a love story that demonstrates the tricky mechanics of marriage laws. Award-winning Turkish author Pamuk [. . .] creatively casts the novel with colorful characters (including such entities as a tree and a gold coin) and provides a palpable sense of atmosphere of the Ottoman Empire that history and literary fans will appreciate. (234)

Kloszewski, moreover, is interested in viewing the novel by relating its form to its content. He mentions Pamuk's figurative tallancy and aligns it

with Islam and Ottoman Empire of sixteenth century. Being different to Kloszewski, J. Stefan Cole focuses on the cultural aspects of the text. He mentions that Pamuk's *My Name is Red* is the amalgam of eastern and western cultures. He opines, "To God belongs the East and the West," the book quotes the Koran, and this suggests its polemic: With the Renaissance the historical tide turns finally and forever away from the arts of the East. A cultural clash that apparently echoes today" (13).

Pamuk's basketball coach and professor Walter G. Andrews comments on the overall writing style of Pamuk. He finds Pamuk's work being enmeshed with memory and nostalgia. He says:

In Orhan's novels, I am brought face to face with the fact that memory is important. It becomes far more than harmless nostalgia. It is not just the museum we once visited on a class trip or during a sojourn abroad. It is not just the Topkapı Palace or the Ottoman treasury. It is not the buried or sunken detritus of lost civilizations or junk at the bottom of an apartment airshaft. It is the stories we are going to tell ourselves about all this stuff. (27-29)

New historical reading of the novel *My Name is Red* tries to prove the notion that knowledge and truth are only perspectives. They get changed with time, place and persons. Money, power, socio-politico-cultural background, religion, gender etc. are the factors that help to convert truth and knowledge to perspectives. Like truth and knowledge, history also gets questioned in new historicism. Pamuk has tried to capture the new sense of history in his fictional work. In new historicism, history is understood as the relative factor that is affected by power and politics. The very sense of history gets textualized when Pamuk presents Sultan Murat III and Master Osman as historical characters with their 'other side'. Obviously, Sultan Murat III was the imperialist king of the then Ottoman Empire. His 'grand' deeds were recorded in history. However, his negative sides were concealed. Pamuk unveils those aspects.

Sultan had greed for power, therefore, he secretly commissioned Enishte Effendi, a miniaturist painter, for illustrating a book in Venetian Style so that he could impress the westerners and save his throne.

In the same way, Pamuk excavates the bitter reality of miniaturist painters. No doubt, miniaturist painters are still famous in the world. But it will be strange to the modern readers to reveal that those miniaturists would be engaged in murdering and killing to be the 'best' illuminator. Their claim to be the best turns out to be their one-sided evaluation that leads their understanding to be only perspective. Not only miniaturist painters but also

other characters like Husret Hoja, Dog, Corpse, Esther etc. get affected by the same disease.

History, here, includes every details of the past. Like Keith Jenkins, history is not the past for this researcher too. Past is what is really passed, whereas, history is what historians recorded. Therefore, history also is not absolute and objective but relative and subjective. Autobiographical backgrounds of historians, power, society, culture etc influence history. In this thesis, history is also understood as the inclusion of past crimes, passions and follies. It is the voice of 'left overs' too. Hence, all these terms in this thesis are used in a different sense. To be clear, terms are used in Foucauldian sense of the 'other'.

History, Truth and Knowledge

New Historicism, as a theoretical practice, was developed in the 1980s at the hands of American critics like Louise Montrose, Stephen Greenblatt and Giles Gunn. The purpose behind its inception was to undermine the long-practiced way of viewing a text as an 'objective totality'. Unlike New Critical perspective of viewing a text as an 'objective totality', New Historicism views a particular text in relation to author's autobiographical backgrounds, culture and his/her socio-politico-historical situatedness. In fact, New Historicism blurs the boundary between 'literary text' and 'history'. For it, history is textual and a text is historical. New Historicism fosters the concept that history is not 'teleological', 'objective' and 'universal' but it is discontinuous, subjective and parodic which is written from the power-holder's perspective. History does not have definite beginning, proper middle and the logical end; so, it is not teleological. Neither the history of different places can be the similar nor unified, so, it is not universal too. Therefore, New Historicism redefines history by undermining the traditional concept and including the 'left overs'.

Louis Montrose excavates three factors for the emergence of New Historicism. First, it is the people's growing consciousness on gender, ethnicity, religion, or class origins, political allegiances etc. This consciousness forced each and every individual to think about one's historicity, culture and situatedness, which, later on, led to the coming out of this theory. Regarding this factor, Montrose writes that "experiences of exclusion or otherness may, of course, provoke a compensatory embrace of the dominant culture, a desire for acceptance and assimilation . . . [which] provoke attitudes of resistance or contestation" (393). Second, the burgeoning of the women's movement and of feminism during the 1970s and; the third is challenging the existing assumptions and procedures in several academic disciplines by 'intellectual ferment' that is summed up in a word 'theory'. These factors share some principles commonly.

Not only that, Montrose also points out the shift towards ideological analysis of discursive practices from closed aesthetic analysis of verbal artifact. Discursive practice refers to the social rules and regulations, which are constructed by the ruling classes but are treated as universal truths. New historicism considers such ideologies and discursive practices as situational and provisional that are created.

J. Hillis Miller, however, shows his dismay towards this reorientation in literary and cultural studies. His dismay becomes explicit in his 1986 Presidential Address to the Modern Language Association. In his speech, he notes:

Literary study in the past few years has undergone a sudden, almost universal turn away from theory in the sense of an orientation towards language as such and has made a corresponding turn toward history, culture, society, politics, institutions, class and gender conditions, the social context, the material base. (283)

Though, Miller is hyperbolic, his speech proves the shift in criticism from textual to contextual.

Clifford Geertz, an anthropologist, in his book "The Interpretation of Cultures", influenced 'cultural poetics' or new historicism produced during the later 1970s and early 1980s. However, Geertz seems to align new historicism with culture. For him:

The term "culture" [. . .] denotes a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life. (89)

Unsurprisingly, Geertz too opines that meaning of a text can be revealed by linking to the historical aspects. However, he views that those historical aspects are not expressed directly but in symbolic form.

The definition of new historicism becomes shallow and superficial if Michel Foucault is not cited. Foucault, a French philosopher and 'a historian of otherwise', contributed a lot to give life to new historicism. Foucauldian new historicism discusses about history, power, discourse, truth, knowledge, representation etc. and how these factors support each other to be strengthened. Foucault studies these factors very minutely and finds out many susceptible but interesting ideas, which challenge the long-governed truths and ideas in western metaphysics. In fact, his thorough study reveals the other side of history, truth and knowledge.

This minute 'study of factors' refers to what Foucault calls "genealogy".

Genealogy was first used by Charles Darwin to mean 'the passing of genes from one generation to another.' It suggests 'descent' that Darwin took vertically.

Foucault rejects the Darwinian sense of the term. For him genealogy does not refer to descent and verticality but it refers to dispersion and horizontality. In Foucault's definition, genealogy refers to a form of history that studies the process of the formation of discourse, history, knowledge, truth etc. In his own words:

[. . .] Genealogy, that is, a form of history which can account for the constitution of knowledge, discourses, domains of objects, etc., without having to make reference to a subject which is either transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs in its empty sameness throughout the course of history. (Truth and Power 59)

From these lines, one can understand that genealogy is not history itself but it is a tool to study history, constituents of knowledge and discourses, power and representation etc. Genealogy analyses everything 'of the subject within a historical framework.' Therefore, genealogy does not take anything in its absolute form, but analyses according to its socio-political-historical situatedness.

As genealogical study challenges the absoluteness of everything, it is vain to search for 'Truth' and 'Knowledge'. However, because of the cultural and historical backgrounds, there is the possibility of multiple truths and perspectives on knowledge. Traditional notion of objective truth and pure knowledge is shattered in genealogical study. Instead, the process and politics of discourse formation is revealed.

Discourse, Foucault argues, constructs the topic. It defines and produces the objects of our knowledge. It governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about and reasoned about. It also influences how ideas are put into practice and used to regulate the conduct of others. Similarly, discourse never consists of one statement, one text, one action or one source.

Discourses provide ways of talking about a particular topic with repeated motifs or clusters of ideas, practices and forms of knowledge across a range of sites of activity. Regarding the changeability of discourse, Foucault writes:

In a science like medicine, for example, up to the end of the eighteenth century one has a certain type of discourse whose gradual transformation,

within a period of twenty-five or thirty years, broke not only with the "true" propositions which it had hitherto been possible to formulate, but also more profoundly, with the ways of speaking and seeing, the whole ensemble of practices which served as supports for medical knowledge. These are not simply new discoveries; there is a whole new "regime" in discourse and forms of knowledge. (Truth and Power 54)

Similarly, Foucault challenges the notion of verticality of the power. Power does not only come from 'above' but also comes from 'below', left and right. So, he categorizes power as 'all pervasive' meaning it 'comes from everywhere'. Even resistance can be a form of power. One can defeat other by not obeying him/her.

Therefore, it can be concluded that Foucault redefined the traditional notion of power by adding on it. For Foucault, power does not 'function in the form of a chain' – it circulates. It "is never monopolized by one center. It is deployed and exercised through a net-like organization" (98). This suggests that we are all, to some degree, caught up in its circulation – oppressors and oppressed. It does not radiate downwards, either from one source or from one place. Power relations permeate all levels of social existence and are therefore to be found operating at every site of social life – in the private spheres of family and sexuality as much as in the public spheres of politics, the economy and law.

Knowledge as Perspective: A Genealogical Study of Pamuk's *My Name is Red*

Orhan Pamuk's award winning fictional work *My Name is Red* challenges traditional style of fiction writing. Since Pamuk himself believes that "imperfection gives rise to what we call 'style'" (79), it will be futile to talk about style and writing techniques. Basically, this fictional work deals with the issues of art and illustration.

In addition, it takes us back to the later part of sixteenth century Turkish location and involves us in the interaction of various issues with the then Sultan, miniaturists and artists. So, history is the main issue of this work. But, we don't feel that we are reading history while reading this novel as the whole novel is set in that particular time. If to borrow from S.B. Kelly, a critic, this novel is a scintillating fusion of murder mystery, postmodernist fable and historical romance. However, this research's objective is not to vanish in the grandness of this novel but to peep through the window of criticism to solve some problems.

Problem arises when the writer gives voice to multiple characters. Including non-living, non-human and human characters, there are twenty-one mouths to take forward the actions of the text. In a Bakhtinian sense, this novel is a beautiful example of heteroglossic construct. Different characters narrate the story from their side. They do not

know many things about other characters. Even the readers should depend on all the characters to know the whole plot. What one character narrates is just a part of the plot. Therefore, every character's narration supplements the plot of the novel. The interesting aspect is that readers get confused by listening to the different characters.

The series of problems don't end only on these. Shekure, the female protagonist, reveals in anger that her father Enishte Effendi sleeps with his slave girl. Whereas, Enishte Effendi doesn't seem such a moral less man because he is a renowned artist. Is this true? Or, is it only the expression of anger? We have not authentic answer. The Gold coin, a non-living character-narrator, reveals the secret that it is not pure gold but counterfeit. However, people carry it very secretly considering it as the pure gold. What would be our conception if the coin hadn't been given the voice? Wouldn't we believe the gold coin as pure? In the same way, Butterfly, a human character-narrator, opines, "If a man's reed [penis] satisfies the wife, his reed of artistry will pale in comparison" (80). This simple sentence blames all the artists to be sexually impotent and also conveys that the people who can satisfy their wives cannot be the great artists. However, there are not factual evidences regarding all these problems. These are mere perspectives.

Interestingly, Pamuk also includes dog's perspective. The dog, another character-narrator, barks, "to be human is to err" (13). It says, "I am a dog, and because you humans are less rational beasts than I, you are telling yourselves, "Dogs don't talk." Nevertheless, you seem to believe a story in which corpses speak and characters use words they couldn't possibly know. Dog's do speak, but only to those who know how to listen" (12). This speech of a dog is really amazing. It is wonderful to give voice to a dog. More than that, a dog blames human beings for being less rational beast than dog itself. Why Pamuk is giving voice to dogs? Cannot others represent dog's voice? Is it really factual what the dog believes? These questions remain unanswered until this researcher does surgery of each and every aspects of this text through the perspective of new historicism.

Historically, the novel is set in the later part of the sixteenth century. Exactly, it takes the time of Sultan Murat III who ruled the Ottoman Empire (the part of which is modern Turkey) from 1574 to 1595. Though this novel is a fictional work, many historical events and characters have influenced the plot of it. To exaggerate a little, this novel seems to be a historical documentation of the then time. Different characters discuss about the style of miniaturist painters. Some of the characters are directly brought from history. For example Master Osman is a historical figure of sixteenth century Ottoman Empire, but he also gets his position in this novel

New historicism considers knowledge and truth as perspective. Unlike the traditional notion of knowledge

that it is pure, objective and universal, new historicism takes it as a constructive and subjective element. Knowledge and truth vary according to time, place and persons. Pamuk seems fully aware of this fact.

That's why he makes the use of Bakhtinian heteroglossia. He brings twenty-one different characters and gives voice to each of them. These twenty-one mouths produce such a noise that this text turns out to be a collage of sound. Each character has his/her limited point of view. No characters can cross their limited circumstance and intervene others. Their limited perspective guides them to narrate whatever they think and see but not what other characters think and see. So, it seems natural to give voice to a corpse, a dog, a tree or a gold coin. No one can represent every other. That is why, the corpse's lament in first chapter about his death and Master Osman's not knowing of this fact in chapter 11 sounds realistic. The corpse [of Elegant Effendi] in first chapter narrates from the depth of a well:

"for nearly four days I have been missing: My wife and children must be searching for me; my daughter, spent from crying, must be staring fretfully at the courtyard gate. Yes, I know they're all at the window hoping for my return. But are they truly waiting? I can't even be sure of that" (3).

And, Master Osman shows his ignorance regarding whereabouts of this man. He says, "It has been six days, and he [Elegant Effendi]'s not to be found anywhere. He's plain disappeared" (67). This confusion, in fact, has been aroused because of the limited point of view. If there were a single omniscient narrator, s/he would know each and everything that would be objective and universal. But there is nothing all pervasive and objective. Therefore twenty-one different character-narrators foster the concept of knowledge as mere perspective.

Someone's perception on something is also applied to others. When a perspective is applied to others, it becomes knowledge for them and the same knowledge changes into Truth. In Foucauldian notion, the perception of someone regarding something is called discourse. Discourse helps to create knowledge and truth. Discourse gets universalized when it is believed as Truth. This politics of truth and knowledge gets excavated through genealogy. Genealogy is the form of history, which studies the constituents of something. So, if someone studies truth and knowledge genealogically, s/he finds the real politics. For example, the notion "imperfection gives rise to what we call style" (79) seems to be truthful. Even, we may blindly believe on it. But, if we question on its constituents- how and why this notion is coined, we can know that this is not a proven statement, but only the Butterfly's perspective on style. Similarly, Butterfly again tries to create another truth by saying "If a man's reed satisfies the wife, his reed of

artistry will pale in comparison" (80). If this statement is fact-based, it declares all the artists sexually impotent and also establishes the point that the people, who can satisfy their wives, can never be artists. Actually, this idea was intentionally made by Butterfly to make Black, the protagonist, jealous. This fact gets revealed through Butterfly's monologue. He mutters, "Like everyone who envies the talent of the miniaturist, Black, too, believed these lies and was heartened" (80). In reality, this is the lie of Butterfly, which turned out to be truth for Black. This is just an example. All truths are product of somebody else's lie, pretension and perception.

When Butterfly claims, "I am the one who earns the most money, and therefore, I am the best of all miniaturists" (83), we are obliged to believe him. But when Stork narrates, "Our sovereign, despite the endless gossip of all of those jealous artists, knows full well that I am the most talented of his miniaturists. He admires my illustrations" (337); we get confused. Both the miniaturists claim to be best. Who is actually best? Is it Butterfly or Stork? The best is always one. Both painters cannot be best. Therefore, it is mere their perspective which comes out of their self-glorifying nature.

Perspective on something is created through discourse. Discourse is a group of statements, which provide a language for talking about a particular topic at particular historical moment. It is about the production of knowledge through language. In the novel, the murderer, a speaker, tries to produce a truth when he says "a city's intellect ought to be measured not by its scholars, libraries, miniaturists, calligraphers and schools, but by the number of crimes insidiously committed on its dark streets over thousands of years" (123). The murderer produced this discourse because he is given a chance to speak. Because of his socio-cultural background, he demanded to determine the intellectuality of the city by the sides of crimes committed here, which is natural.

This demand also fulfils the notion that discourse is the product of someone's socio-cultural situatedness. This conception is reinstated by a Satan, a character-narrator. Satan views "if all men went to Heaven, no one would ever be frightened, and the world and its governments could never function on virtue alone; for in our world evil is as necessary as virtue and sin as necessary as rectitude" (350). Satan's this discourse is nothing but the product of its being Satan. These two examples are enough to believe that discourse creates the effects of truth.

In another scene, the murderer helps us to declare that the outer reality (truth) may not be always genuine but also fakes. Or, his pretension becomes truth for others. In the funeral ceremony of the miniaturist painter Elegant Effendi, the murderer was also present. He narrates:

They threw cold, muddy earth onto the battered and disfigured corpse of ill-fated Elegant Effendi and I wept more than any of them. I shouted, "I

want to die with him!" and "Let me share his grave!" and they held me by the waist so that I wouldn't fall in. I gasped for air and they pressed their palms to my forehead, drawing my head back so I might breath. By the glances of the deceased's relatives, I sensed I might have exaggerated my sobs and wailing; I pulled myself together. Based upon my excessive sorrow the workshop gossips might suppose that Elegant Effendi and I had been in love. (117)

What can be the limitation of incongruity more than this? A murderer who has murdered someone grieves much than any others in his death! For others, it is truth that the murderer (who is not identified as murderer by others except readers) grieved much than other people. In fact, it was his pretension so that others could not identify him as murderer. We know this fact when he says, "I sensed I might have exaggerated my sobs and wailing." Do not other people consider his acting as reality? But, it is not reality; it is just an act. This act compels us to believe reality (truth) as fake action, which differs from person to person. If his wailing is truth for others, it is pretense for him and the readers.

The knowledge as perspective comes to the surface if the narration of Beloved Uncle (Enishte) and Butterfly is compared. Butterfly suspects Olive and Stork for murdering Elegant Effendi, whereas Beloved Uncle suspects on Butterfly himself.

Butterfly blames, "Olive and Stork are the ones behind this vulgarity" (114). On the other hand, Beloved Uncle doubts on Butterfly for murdering Elegant and also fears whether he (Butterfly) also kills him (Uncle). Uncle questions: "Could this one actually kill a man, I wondered, for example out of envy? Might he kill me" (115)?

This two-way suspicion entices us to conclude that truth varies according to persons. Like truth, power also gets questioned in new historical reading. New historicism, however, defines power not only as a negative attribute but also as a positive aspect. Power is the determining factor of everything. It creates discourses and paves ways for constructing truths. Regarding the greatness of power, Beloved Uncle (Enishte) recites, "despite whatever great artistic sense and talent a man might possess, he ought to seek money and power everywhere to avoid forsaking his art when he fails to receive proper compensation for his gifts and efforts"(27). Beloved Uncle views that it is money and power, not artistic talent that makes people strong.

Even the miniaturist painters, given voice in the novel, try their best to hold power. Elegant Effendi was killed so that the murderer could win the favor of Master Osman. Butterfly, Olive, Stork and Enishte all try their best to show their ability of drawing. However, their purpose is

not other than to be best miniaturist, and hence, to be most powerful. Being confused by the murdering of miniaturists, Hasan, the brother of Shekure's past husband, questions, "Miniaturists are murdering each other over the pictures in that book. [. . .] Is it for money or—God forbid—because the book desecrates our religion" (158)? People do everything for money and power.

They work, they illustrate, they rule or they kill; whatever they do – do for power. Power is the only goal and end of everyone. In the novel, Black notices, "In all of Venice, rich and influential men wanted their portraits painted as a symbol, a memento of their lives and a sign of their riches, power and influence – so they might always be there, standing before us, announcing their existence, nay, their individuality and distinction"(130). Black's this mentioning frees power from Hegelian and Marxist definition. Power, for them, is repressive element, which casts from 'above' to 'below'. However, this extract presents power as a symbol for social prestige. In the novel, we get enough evidences that show people's consciousness regarding the importance of power, no matter it is economical, social or political. Master Osman says, "The pictures as well as the books commissioned by sultans, shahs and pashas proclaim their power" (323).

Orhan Pamuk, the novelist, himself seems very much cognizant concerning the new historical notion of power. New historicism considers power as all pervasive element that circulates even from the 'below'. Unlike the Hegelian notion, which limits power in the hands of some upper class people, Pamuk gives equal chance to every character to speak their voice. If Pamuk had used single omniscient narrator, his depiction would be like that of a tyrant ruler. But, he has given voice to everyone, from the richest (like Sultan, Master Osman) to the weakest (like Esther, Orhan, corpse). In this sense, Pamuk seems democratic and associative. He gives chance to speak even to the very minor characters like Esther and Orhan. Esther, a poor clothier, sometimes challenges Black and Enishte as well. Orhan, a six-year-old boy, forces his mother, Shekure, to do whatever he likes through his obstinate manner and crying.

The series of the influence of history to this text does not end in these examples only. Most of the events in the text are historically occurred events, which are only kept in order by Pamuk. Referring to the Ottoman-Safavid war of the past, Pamuk speaks through Black, "it seems I reminded the landlady of her son who'd been killed by Safavid Persian soldiers at the front and so she agreed to clean the house and cook for me" (8). More than this, the recurring reiteration of historical books and people confuses us whether is it imaginary text or factual record. Time and again, Pamuk talks (through the mouth of different characters) about Bihzad, Nizami or Firdusi, the artists, and their works like Husrev and Shirin, Leyla and

Majnun or The Book of Festivities. As an example, the murderer narrates:

Let's consider a piece by Bihzad, the master of masters, patron saint of all miniaturists. I happened across this masterpiece, which also nicely pertains to my situation because it's a depiction of murder, among the pages of a flawless ninety-year-old book of the Heart School. It emerged from the library of a Persian prince killed in a merciless battle of succession and recounts the story of Husrev and Shirin. (20-21)

Similarly, Beloved Uncle (Enishte Effendi) reminds of an historical event to show the influence of Western tradition in Ottoman's art. Clarifying it, Uncle gives account:

Not only in Tabriz, but in Mashhad and Aleppo, many miniaturists had abandoned working on books and begun making odd single-leaf pictures – curiosities that would please European travelers – even obscene drawings. Rumor has it that the illuminated manuscript Shah Abbas presented to Our Sultan during the Tabriz peace treaty has already been taken apart so its pages could be used for another book. Supposedly, the Emperor of Hindustan, Akbar was throwing so much money around for a large new book that the most gifted illustrators of and Kazvin quit what they were doing and flocked his palace. (28)

In this extract, Beloved Uncle remembers that historical time in which the miniaturists of Ottoman Empire were faded up with their own style and attracted to the style of Westerners. It also gives information about how the Emperor of Hindustan threw money around for new books and how illustrators of Tabriz and Kazvin were tempted to it. Likewise, Butterfly, a miniaturist painter, meditates on the painting and visualizes his past experience. He says, "the two-page scene I was painting depicted the deliverance of condemned and imprisoned debtors and their families by the grace of Our Sultan. I'd situated the Sultan on the corner of a carpet covered in bags full of silver coins, as I'd personally witnessed during such ceremonies" (81). This past experience reflected in the text suggests that history cannot be avoided from the fiction writing too.

In fact, the whole novel is about the killings of miniaturist painters and finding out the culprits. 'Grand' history does not include this 'other side' of past. In reality, there was the ill competition among the miniaturist painters to illustrate better arts and to earn a lot. They used to take power by hooks or crooks. So, the murdering of Elegant Effendi and Enishte Effendi

resembles the same historical imperfection.

Black narrates, "I informed him [the Head Treasurer] that the monetary rewards and honor involved in being invited to illustrate and illuminate Enishte Effendi's book had likely led to unavoidable competition and jealousy among the masters" (274). Black's this realization is nothing but the reality of the then time. The murderer, a character-narrator, tells that he murdered Elegant Effendi so that his (murderer's) misdeed of religious sacrilege would not come out. He confesses, "panicking, I grabbed a stone that lay beside the well.

Traditional history recorded the fact that Sultan Murat III was a very powerful king of Ottoman Empire. He was equally interested in miniaturist art and illustration. So, he used to commission painters to make beautiful illustrations. However, it does not mention why king was so much passionate towards the paintings. But Pamuk unearths this secret. He speaks through Black:

Precisely what Our Sultan stated He wanted: A book that depicted the thousandth year of the Muslim calendar, which would strike terror into the heart of the Venetian Doge by showing the military strength and pride of Islam, together with the power and wealth of the Exalted House of Osman. (275)

This extract excavates that Sultan wanted to make a book of illustration not because he loves art very much but because he wants to show his pride and prestige through art. Actually, his intention is to threaten Venetian Doge by showing his military power and wealth. This fact cannot be found in traditional history but it is noticed in this novel while reading new historically. Therefore, this novel can be taken as the masterpiece for representing history from the other side.

New historicism stresses the fact that a literary text conceives history not in its purest form but in a contaminated appearance. It also believes that writers cannot be free from their values, positions and ideological perspectives along with their epistemological presuppositions while constructing a text. Religious beliefs, social status and gender also influence the writings of a writer. Since Orhan Pamuk is a Muslim novelist, the Muslim religiosity shapes this text's structure. In the novel, he time and again says 'Allah' to 'God' as Muslims call Allah for God. For example, Olive says, "through our color, paints, art and love, we remember that Allah had commanded us to 'See'" (92). Similarly, Muslim terms like Sultan, kaffir and names like Orhan, Esther, Hasan, Shevket, Nizami etc. echo the whole text. There are many citations from Koran too. Black and Shekure follow the tradition of marriage according to Koran. Likewise, Hasan reminds Shekure about the law of Koran to get divorce and remarriage. Regarding the process of remarry in Muslim culture Black takes the reference of a preacher. Black narrates, "the

preacher objected that by the dictates of Islamic law a divorced woman must wait a month before remarrying, but I countered by explaining that Shekure's former husband had been absent for four years; and so there was no chance she was pregnant by him" (241). Not only the case of divorce and remarry but also about marriage procession, funeral procession or circumcision procession, Pamuk cites from the Koran. The beautiful example of influence of religion on text comes while reading the Murderer's narration to Enishte. The Murderer says:

On Judgment Day, the idol makers will be asked to bring the images they have created to life. [. . .] Since they will be unable to do so their lot will be to suffer the torments of Hell. Let it not be forgotten that 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 pressure to do what He does, who claim to be as creative as He. (193)

History in a new sense challenges the conventional one. Traditionally, a married woman goes to her husband's house to serve her husband and his family. Pamuk, however, goes against this convention. He forces Black, the protagonist, to live with Shekure in her father's house even after he marries her. This revolutionary fact is captured when Black says, "Since Shekure wouldn't be leaving her father's house for mine, and I would be moving into the paternal home as bridegroom, the bridal procession was only fitting" (243). Along with history, religion, culture and tradition, social status also plays important role to determine somebody else's thinking. New historicism accepts social status as an important tenet for shaping a text. If a writer belongs to poor social status, his writings depict the struggle of a poor man for food and cloths, and if s/he belongs to higher class, his/her writings represent the higher class too.

Conclusion: Multiplicity of Truth and Knowledge

New historical reading of the fictional work *My Name is Red*, by Pamuk, proves the statement that truth and knowledge, after all, are constructed elements, which, instead of being factual, are mere perspectives. To convert truth and knowledge into perspective, there is the role of culture, society, social status, religion, political background, gender etc. These very elements influence history too. History also gets questioned in new historicism that ends including the crimes, passions and follies of the past. In other words, history, truth,

knowledge, discourse and power get new sense in the novel *My Name is Red*.

However, this text strongly opposes the traditional notion of history. Conventional notion of history includes only 'grand' incidents and events. Basically, it records the perspective of ruling class people. Whereas, this text includes crimes, passions and follies of the then sultans; and also depicts the other side of miniaturist painters. Hence, this text advocates for new notion of history. The depiction of Sultan Murat III's passion for power and miniaturist painters' murdering and killing each other to get more money and power asserts the same fact. Power, in new historicism, gets new meaning. In traditional sense, power means the brutal force that is applied to control others. But, assertion of the power in a new way defines it in a little different way. Power is the determinant of social prestige.

The valorization of margin over center is another aspect of new historicism. It is through narration that Pamuk equates everyone and everything. Pamuk has given voice to every character who (which) narrates his/her perception over events and incidents. All together, there are twenty-one mouths to forward the plot. Beloved Uncle, Black, Shekure, Esther, Butterfly, Olive, Stork etc. are common character- narrators, whereas, Corpse, Horse, Death, Tree, Gold Coin etc. are non-human

exceptional character-narrators. Pamuk's democratic depiction can be found in his characterization. Their twenty-one perspectives toward events support the claim that truth and knowledge are perspectives.

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