

RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL CLASH IN TURKEY: A NEW HISTORICAL READING OF ORHAN PAMUK'S A *STRANGENESS IN MY MIND*

A.SANGEETH KUMAR.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH

SACRED HEART COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS)

TIRUPATTUR, VELLORE (DT)

Abstract

A simple definition of new historicism is that is a method based of the parallel reading of literary and non-literary text in a same historical period so this theory helps to find the historical anecdotes in a particular period about the culture of Turkish people, and it torches us the way to the problems between modern secularist and tradition Islamic people in Turkey through the novel *A Strangeness in My Mind* (2015) Written by Orhan Pamuk. The common themes of Pamuk's novels project the ordinary life of Turkish people and their life style. Cultural aspect plays a vital role in all his novels. The researcher goes to bring out the culture and clash of Modern secularist struggle with the life of Mevlut, protagonist from Istanbul, and starts to sell Yogurt and Boza (non- alcoholic drinks available in Turkey).

Turkish Literature has thousand three hundred years of history. Islamic Literature is an oral tradition which is deeply rooted from Asian nomadic tradition. It echoes the life style and problems of nomadic people in Turkey. Turkey is situated in the border of west so there is lot of influence from western culture. Rudyard Kipling mentions in his work *The East West Ballad* "East is East ,West is West never shall two meet each other ,like his point still Turkey faces problems due to political and religious trauma. Karla Marks says:"Religious is an opium" in his book Das capital. Likewise people in Turkey diverged in religion as well as culture. Pamuk has mentions it and he is the first Islamic writer who denounce the Fatwa ,given to Salman Rushdie and ha says in the in the interview with Wroe "I was Famous by then but no one knew my address so did not worry " through this statement readers can predict how he is denounce Ayatollah's statement on condemnation of Rushdie '. The philosophers like Friedrich Nietzsche uses to argue that There is no fact only interpretation but the historicism consider as inevitable tool for interpreting text .Even historicism theory faces lot of controversies with other theories like Russian formalism and new criticism . It gives equal weight for the textual and contextual reading for get better meaning in any work of art. When this approach used in *A Strangeness in*

his Mind (2015) The Protagonist Melvut is an ordinary vendor who leaves his village and plan to sell Boza in Istanbul“Melvut ,who walks the poor and neglected cobblestone street on winter evenings for sell Boza”(S.M.M 18),Where he faces problem with Idealist, they never allow any western culture in the town .People of Istanbul hate coffee house on contrary leftist ready to die for protect nation, their vision involved creating a free society modelled on Russia and china

Through this historical approach the research can delve out the political, religious and cultural problems in turkey. Turkey faces problem when it became republic country, conflict arise from modern secularist against Islamic traditional people. Diana Aschner have mentioned about turkey in her book *History & Culture of Turkey: From Anatolian Civilization to Modern Republic* (2009) Now Islam would not be a part of public life. This was an attempt to replace an Islamic identity with a Turkish identity. “Construction of mosques was halted, schools were secularized” (H.C.T 5). Pamuk has argued this issue in his one of the novel *Snow* (2008) he talk the culture of Muslims and their hatred thought with western Life along with mystical murder enquiry.

Now in *A Strangeness in My Mind*, Melvut could not complete his school education as there is fight between Duttepe and Kultepe.”Alevi of Kultepe did not use the Mosque in Duttepe”(S.M.M.113) Duttepe had been taken by nationalist, the “Idealist” who called themselves as Grey Wolves, their aim is to free Turkish from central Asia especially from Chinese Communist government but Kultepe leftist want this country model to be like Russia and China. Melvut searches his identity due to this two group as their family were participates in two group.

Melvut leads his life like fugitive then he faces happy in his life when he marries Rayhia, but he has to serve in Military there he faces agitation when he encounter Military life “Those who had committed political crime, thought ,and Communist who were often labeled “terrorist” had the sole of their feet whipped”(S.M.M.191) .Kurds are the minority in Turkey. They are the largest ethnical group in Turkey. In 1991 the Turkish government considered Kurds as “mountain Turks”. After 1991 Kurds started to live in various places in Turkey but the Turkish Government ban them due to 1980’s Military Coup. Even the language of Kurds was banned in Turkey. The government officially prohibited the language in all places of Turkey. Louis Althusser says in his essay *Ideology and Ideological state Apparatuses* (1970) “Ideology represent the imaginary relationship of Individuals to their real conditions of existence” in the same way he talks about Religious state apparatuses (I.S.A.11). Islamic religion control everything and in the country and Melvt finds difficult to live as there is clash in religion .Most of the people were arrested because many people have used Kurds language. In 1977 Left-wing gathered and argued separate land for theme but over the argument all property comes under

government so leftist loss their war, Through the historical approach this paper portray the problems in this country .The entire novel concern the life of the protagonist and his family in textual point ,in contextual point it depicts the country problem and responsibility of the protagonist .Clifford Geertz writes *The Interpretation of Culture: Selected Essay (1983)* and coined the term ‘Thick Description’ and, explain that close analysis, or reading of a particular social production helps to understand the background for the text. (M.H.A. 191).Greenblatt writes an essay *Resonance and Wonder (1990)*, he depicts the concept of cultural forces and emergence of historical ideologies. “I have tried to understand the intersecting circumstances not as stable, prefabricated background against which the literary texts can be placed”(R.W 2). Again he argues that every text has social historical value that would be omitted, added by circumstance but it is impossible to focus and derive meaning from the textual point alone .He point out the value of social energy in *The Circulation of Social Energy* “There are textual trace- a bewildering mass of them but it is impossible to take the text itself as the perfect, substitutable, freestanding container of all of its meaning” (M.C.T 515)New historicism emerged as an inevitable reaction against the failure of new criticism. Catherin Gallaher and Greenblatt have written the book *Practicing New Historicism (1994)* focused on main aspects of new historicism like recurrent use of anecdote, nature of representing. The historical document can be an eyewitness account, memoire, documentary. Certainly it helps to understand the text very clearly for an example the culture and their political ideologies can be found out when the researcher start to treat the non-literary text as co-text rather than context that would be written in the same period .

Richard Wilson and Richard Dutton in the introduction of the collection of essay *New Historicism and Renaissance Drama (1996)* call them as co –text rather than context .Which mean it serves as evident for represent any events .History cannot be divorced from text .Even historicism theory faces lot of controversies with other theories like Russian formalism and new criticism .New criticism tells its motto that nothing outside the text and the text itself tells the meaning for the book but historical approach focuses on the backgrounds of the text. It gives equal weight for the textual and contextual reading for get better meaning in any work of art. .

When the east west ideologies clash in a state it creates problem .Walter G. Andrews shows this point in his work *Step Aside: Ottoman literature in Modern Turkey (2004)* “turkey presence in the Near East and the creation of powerful Turkish states are events which bring two cultural aggregates into contact and initiate a profound transformation in culture” (4 J.T.L) .when the researcher uses this theory with this novel it brings out the culture of Istanbul and their lifestyle. The aim of the research is not only focus on historical approach but also deal with

narrative aspects in the novel. Finally the research will fetch the hidden historical facts with fabulous narrative style.

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