Chapter I

Possible Stories, Possible Worlds: Narrative Modes and Labyrinthine Configurations

The idea of story is firmly rooted in the idea of fictionality. The idea of ‘certainty’ was challenged in the discourses of contemporary thought. The contemporary ethos entailed a new ‘praxis’ invested in the “illusions of so-called ‘natural verities’” and “a release of the individual ‘human’ subject” (Nash 2). This release however was not in the spirit of revolution rather it rose out of the release of multiplicity. The fluidity of boundaries was vested with an underlying idea of uncertainty of fixed identities and constant system of beliefs. The inevitable gap between language and representation was exposed during the studies in narrative theory and the movement of postmodernism. These two contemporary streams have chosen to focus on the fictionality of things thus giving advantage to the machinations of the story. Dolezel describes fictionality as “ensembles of non-actualized possible states of affairs” (Dolezel 19) whereby the fictionality of a certain state like a text or a medium differs from the actual world events or persons through the characteristic trait of “otherworldliness”. Patricia Waugh defines fictionality as “the condition of being fictional, that is to say, the condition of being constructed, narrated, mediated” (Nicol xvii). The mimetic theory of representation as well as Realism demanded the author to be true to the real world as far as possible. The counterpoint to this theory is the idea of fictionality which deems that the text is its own world with its own set of rules different to the rules of the actual world.

The focus of contemporary theory has been a dual analysis of both the representative and the anti-representative modes of praxis. The “story” has become one of those umbrella terms which can cover a vast variety of theoretical as well as practical concerns. It is also a reference to the ambiguity ever prevalent in contemporary thought. Nash in The Unravelling of the Postmodern Mind discussed the idea of “just one reading”:
To ask why we favour this story, and to suggest a few thoughts about just how much it’s worth – about where, more precisely, its force lies – and why it might appeal to us, why we might need it as an account of ‘where we’re coming from’. (3)

The idea of ‘which story’ is crucial to the understanding of fictionality. We inhabit a world where the individual is bombarded with a ‘spray of phenomena’. The profusion of technology, social media sites, internet etc. has split the individual into many selves according to the different avatars that exist in the not only in private or public but also in the digital world. The “individual notions of self vanish” because “we live in each other’s brains, as voices, images, words on screens”¹. There are not really valid notions of distinctions left between the private, social and digital selves. This notion of plurality can be translated into the understanding of stories. The existence of the individual can be understood through the narratives of their life.

The idea of the story also arises from a proliferation of indeterminacy. The different systems of difference are generated through – what Nash calls – the ‘potentially infinite number of meanings’ that reside in them:

A text – any event invoked in language, even if only in the language of our thoughts – appears to ‘give us’ too many ‘things’, which melt into further signs, which signify other ‘things’ which in their turn … ad infinitum; signs participate in a constant condition of flux, of becoming. (Nash 8)

This webbed characteristic of story is at the heart of this thesis. The plurality of existence belies the plurality of its retelling. One individual can generate many stories of his life just like one text can generate multiple meanings at a given point of time. The idea of ‘truth’ and

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¹ Sherry Turkle discusses the idea of existence in the Internet culture as a “state of continuous construction and reconstructions” where the “reality of self gives way to reflexive questioning” (Turkle 14)
beauty’ have been one of the foundational values of literature since times immemorial. In the contemporary context of story-telling they are both accepted as constructs – neither of them possessing any immanent characteristic but being a subjective perception of a given individual at a certain point of time.

The idea of constructs is vested in the question of the real where “everything can be exchanged for everything else” (Nash 8). The telling and the living are inexorably linked and are in constant negotiation with each other. The negotiation monopolizes and finds its opening in the gap of the narrative. It can be traced not just through the references embedded in the narrative but also in the aspiration of the narrative to overcome the boundaries set by textual borders. The text speaks and ‘contradicts itself’. In its fulfilment, it seeks not just its ‘termination’ but also its ‘indetermination’. Michel Foucault in his essay “The Threshold and the Key” describes the scene of standing at the edge of the labyrinth. In critiquing the autobiographical work of Raymond Roussel which explains his previous works, Foucault is attempting to understand the latent meaning of the former. The explanation of the work is like standing at the edge of the labyrinth. The work itself becomes a possible trap because it invites the reader to navigate the labyrinth while providing no viable Ariadne’s thread to do so. In doing so, Foucault explains the idea of an ‘enigmatic text’ which is both “luminous and shadowy, which these ordered openings transform into an impregnable fortress” (Foucault 9). The threshold is a gateway to a ‘space of infinite uncertainty’ (Foucault 11). For Foucault, an autobiographical intervention is a possible trap. It cannot provide the reader with an unicursal account of the texts he or she is reading but rather lead the reader into the infinite garden of forking paths going around and round in search of multiple meanings.

Foucault’s following essay on “The Metamorphosis and the Labyrinth” brings forth the idea of the fairy tale which will be crucial in understanding certain aspects of the works of Orhan Pamuk. The characteristic of the fairy tale is a preservation of the state of being. It
opens doors to communicate with the past and yet closes certain communications. It is contained in the “simple collision of things” (Foucault 86). The mythic fairy tale is a form of fantastic which is being constantly renewed and redefined. In discussing the two prominent mythic functions, Foucault attempts to arrive at an understanding of the conditions of the labyrinth and metamorphosis:

Whatever imitates in fact crossed the world, the substance of beings, the hierarchy of species to arrive at the place of the original and rediscover in itself the truth of this other being. (82)

The mythic functions laid out by Foucault are the characteristics of joining and discovery. These two functions are synonymous with the idea of labyrinth and metamorphosis. The idea of labyrinth is the idea of discovery which happens at the end of the passage. The discovery is not of the truths of the self but rather of understanding of the self’s other and that of the multiple faces of the self. The joining on the other hand is a condition of metamorphosis which connects “great distances and incompatible elements”. It looks for the different gaps of knowledge and seeks to either connect or collide with them.

Foucault compares the fairy tale to a ‘boxwood edge’ which tries to contain the fantastic. This idea is consistent with his idea of the threshold which can lead to the mazes of the labyrinth. The boundary is just the surface line. What the fairy tale conceals are multiple surface lines hidden behind its thin veneer. This corresponds to the idea of the story as a gateway to the possible worlds of fictionality. The story then is not just the threshold rather it is a container of multiple thresholds which lead to further labyrinths. The interval movement which leads to duality and a complete discovery of ‘an emptiness of being’ can be re-scribed through an absolute free play of imagination. The free play of imagination in turn creates an entanglement of words where the sentences formed give rise to “several circles which are not
identical but crisscross one another as if to form a strange roseate configuration” (Foucault 22). The storied forms of knowledge acknowledge a fundamental gap in the representation of the world. It creates the different categories of language, ‘represented world of fiction’ and the real world which are in constant tension with each other.

One of the main problems with discussing contemporary theory is its propensity for slipperiness. The body of theories and works are so diverse and multi-faceted that one systematic study is not enough to cover that entire ground laid before them. The theories of narrative as well as postmodernism have been constantly defined and redefined in an attempt to arrive at the fundamental coherent resolution. Matti Hyvarinen in his book *Travelling Stories* discusses the idea of four narrative turns which can be used to cover a certain ground of narrative theory. Similarly, the contemporary theories of structuralism, poststructuralism as well as postmodernism are too broad to be dealt with convincingly in this thesis. What the thesis will examine is the profusion of stories in contemporary thought and what this entails. It will then seek to understand the works of Orhan Pamuk through the ideas of stories and fictionality.

1.1 **Storied Forms of Knowledge**

In *The Nature of Narrative*, Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg mention very lightly in passing the phrase “unstable compound” – “But long narrative satire seems almost in the nature of things to be an unstable compound” (Kellogg, Scholes 113). While the paragraph would go on to chart the representational theories of the era past, the phrase itself seems to be a reflection of the identity that the narrative holds today. An unstable compound in terms of chemistry is a possible combination of noble gas compounds previously thought to be unreactive. In certain conditions though an amalgamation of these compounds can occur but such a combination would be highly unstable. Narratives today seem to inhabit a space that
seems to be a shifting zone of mixed kinds with their nature subject to interpretation and change. The analogy charts the evolution of the narrative from a closed text mired in authorial assistance to an unmapped cognitive space that shifts and morphs under a variety of contexts.

The Narrative Turn in the 1960s forms the bedrock for the various paths that contemporary narrative theory took in order to reach the position it is. That position is no less sure than it was when its wellspring events began but it did bring the essential narrative to the fore. This shining new idea became the subject of analysis for various theorists from various disciplines. “The scientific aspirations resulted in a need to use a precise metalanguage, with a one-to-one relationship between term and phenomenon” writes Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan and it is this drive that prompted Structuralists like Claude Levi-Strauss to chart the objectives of this idea and attempt to codify it into a proper discipline. The aim was to define the specific literariness or the differentia specifica of what constitutes as a narrative. The Narrative Turn steered the study of narrative into a structuralist interpretation of its form as well as examining its own volatility. It is this volatility that we will return to in order to chart intersections of various media and the combinations that they can forge.

Any order is based on limitations. For a certain set of practices to be implemented, there exist an equal number of practices that have to be disavowed. Structuralism worked with language, seeking to create an order of the chaotic mess that the narrative resided in. The essential logic was looked for in a bid to achieve abstract objectivity. Isolation was the first step. One will remember Vladimir Propp’s Morphology of Russian folk tales and the list of tropes that he lists that form the basis of the stories of the myths he has studied. The abstraction of meaning gives it a certain autonomous and universal power, enabling it to be used in other discourses.
The myth analysed by Claude Levi Strauss is a discontinuous model that integrates new ideas into its fold while essentially remaining the same. It was picked up by Jonathan Culler who classified the signifying systems underlying the acts of literature. The notion of the author changed into an institutional structure that divested an order of signs and meaning. Rimmon-Kenan in his *Narrative Fiction* writes of a ‘narrative grammar’ which posits recurrent structures in meaning working in permutations and combinations. The functionality of narrative becomes evident in the making of this theoretical premise.

Propp’s fifty-one functions set the tone for this regulation. Gremias semiotic square follows the same tone in an act of mediating between contradiction, ‘contrateity’ and complementarity. The structural dissemination of the narrative and its re-integration forms the crux of the narrative analysis. Barthes in his *The Rustle of Language* writes:

“…the role of literature is to represent actively to the scientific institution just what it rejects i.e., the sovereignty of language. And structuralism should be in a good position to provoke this scandal….” (10)

In relation to narrative, the words seem to assert a certain degree of objectivity which forms an abstract system of knowledge. Instead of relying on “the zodiac of his own wit”\(^2\) to create his text, his act of writing becomes an inter-relation of signifying structures with language as the referential code. In such a microscopic bent, the literary narrative was classified, a history was charted and a system of reading the novel was established. T. Todorov, Roland Barthes, Claude Bremond, Gerald Prince – they all established structures of reference that the later generation would either dispute or adapt.

\(^2\) Sir Philip Sydney referring to the stature of the poet against the philosopher or lawyer in his “An Apology for Poetry” (1595)
And yet the theories of structuralist narrative exposed a fundamental schism between language and the world which would form one of basic tenets of postmodernism. The language or the signifier has no connection to the signified. It rests in the subjective assignation of the observer. As Bran Nicol writes:

The real implication of Saussure’s theory is that language doesn’t need the world to function; it works independently of it. What this means is that when someone is speaking about a real thing he or she is only understood because of the code of the signifier. (7)

This schism suggests that “we inhabit a virtual world always already divorced from the real” (Nicol 7) and it would be one of the bedrocks of the theories of poststructuralism, postmodernism and deconstruction.

The comfortable science of structuralist narrative theory would later be both appropriated and modified by succeeding postclassical theories of narrative. The order posed a constraint on narrative and the potential it could achieve. Ihab Hassan talks of the negative that informs silence – this silence which represents a “stress in art, culture and consciousness” (Hassan 12). Viktor Shlovsky coined the term De-familiarization which by depicting unusualness of the literary object, by making use of the unfamiliar jolts the reader out of his complacency and make him aware of “the sensation of life…to make one feel things” (Habib 604). The novel or better yet fiction is that site which defies, opposes the currents of thought that seek to oppress. It moves beyond boundaries and limitations. The text becomes a crossroads that can lead to many other crossroads. The associations of it are endless.
This shift of thinking with the increasing identification of the indeterminate gaps left in fiction which is left for the reader to fill. With the death of the author, the reader came to be. And the text assumed an importance in a way that was different from the structuralist approach. Brian McHale in his Postmodernist Fiction talks of the dominant shift which foregrounds the questions asked in that particular epoch. In the postmodern era, the question of ontology becomes the dominant question. The inhabitation and crossing of worlds becomes an increasing background to that particular question.

With the breaking down of grand narratives, fiction found itself at the edge of the abyss to the point of dismemberment. There were no longer foundational structures that it sought to build its story on, the causal events in themselves were unravelled and the threads of meaning were pulled apart. As Derrida writes:

“My thoughts were soon crippled if I tried to force them on in any single direction against their natural inclinations…. For this compels us to travel over a wide field of thought criss-cross in every direction.” (Derrida 17)

It was in this state that the definition of Aporia makes sense. In its Greek etymological roots, the word can be divided into *a* – without and *poros* – passage. By this definition, Aporia is a state of uncertainty that leaves the person aware of the undeterminable gaps in his grasp of knowledge. William Harmon states that the term “indicates a point of undecidability which locates the site at which the text most obviously undermines its own rhetorical structure, dismantles, or deconstructs itself”. Aporia is the gap at the edge of the known universe. It behoves the reader to investigate, to desire to close the breaks in his own systems of knowledge. Sarah Kofman in her “Beyond Aporia?” charts the origins of the term in the myths of Poros. Poros in Greek myths symbolizes plenty. He was also the father of Eros.
Hence the term has positive connotations. Hofman juxtaposes this to aporia which is the opposite of this word. She describes this conflict as:

One speaks of a *poros* when it is a matter of blazing a trail where no trail exists, of crossing an impassable expanse of territory, an unknown, hostile and boundless world, an *apeiron* which it is impossible to cross from end to end. (10)

The fictional world is an ‘aporetic’ rendition of the real world. It works through these gaps which provide a space to navigate the boundaries of thought that have not been woven yet. This cognitive dissonance plays on the mind of the reader who strives to resolve it. The term *Aporia* also can be a creative source. Kofman’s analysis of Plato’s *Meno* talks of the latter’s use of *Aporia* to denote that level of puzzlement that inevitably comes with sophistic thinking. *Aporia* in relation to the real world is full of “false wonders” and “childish difficulties” which can be resolved with the right application of mind. Plato’s clear hegemony of the proper philosophical discourse without the ruse of rhetoric or poetry clearly shadows the dismissal of perplexities and gaps that exist in various disciplines of thought and where “logos is reduced to chaos” (Derrida 14). It becomes a trap for reason leaving one confused and mired in hopeless *Aporia*.

Jacques Derrida works this term in terms of boundaries that have to be crossed. The presence of *Aporia* forms an obstacle that has to be either disintegrated or crossed over. This negative needs to be used as a step to traverse the limits. He traces the Aristotelian notion of *aporei* explained in his *Metaphysics* where he lists the perplexities that one should know before attempting to attain the knowledge of things. These perplexities then become signposts which one must overcome in order to achieve a certainty of being. This state he describes as, “the crossing of borders always unannounces itself according to the movement of a certain step [pas] – and of the step that crosses a line” (Derrida 11). This indeterminable space forms
a “harrowing state” that needs to be overcome. Comparing it with borders of a property to that of death, he speaks of a completely annihilated self-divested of its prior identities and ripe to the formation of the new one that transcends. It is a negative turn that affirms. *Aporia* becomes for Derrida a state where the person achieves a sense of over-duty where he does his duty for the sake of duty and not for any self-interested goals. *Aporia* has been denoted by turns negative and positive, but on one thing all its exponents do agree on – it is a space that lies at the edge of im-permeability, “the opaque existence of an uncrossable border” (Derrida 20). It is a site of absolute exposure where the limits of man are tested. By their very condition of impossibility, they demand a response from the wanderer. To test his strengths and weakness and to compel him to take this journey that would enable him to overturn the hierarchy of order and bring into existence new modes of being.

The world today is dominated by plurality. We have various possible alternatives to a specified statement. It is not that action has an equal and opposite reactions but that an action has multiple reactions. And fiction by virtue of its amorphous nature is the perfect space for the exploration of the number of worlds that can be housed within it. The creation of these worlds begins in its psychological conceivability. It is the *anthromorphic* element in the fiction that allows for embedded narrative interpretations. Hence for a fictional world to make an impact in the reader’s mind, it must have some bearing on the experiences that the reader undergoes. David Herman writes of a “universe composed of a plurality of distinct elements” (Herman 446) and the “fictional worlds” giving “imaginative existence to worlds, objects, and states of affairs by simply describing them.” (Herman 447). The existence of possible worlds comes out of the reader’s aporetic understanding of the text. The private world of the reader looks for a referential reality in the works that he reads. In the process of such a search the reader fills the gap in the text through the knowledge of his own experiences. The indeterminate gaps constitute of that kind of *Aporia* – the perplexity of occurrence that
compels the reader to move beyond the confines of one’s own thinking and that of the world around. It confronts the reader with its deliberate epistemological uncertainties so that the reader acknowledges its ontological existence and then slowly incorporates it into his/her own level of thinking. “All language was said to be permeated by figurativity, indeterminacy, Aporias” – this statement can be extended to all fictional worlds that have the whiff of this tendency to shimmer these other worlds into existence. The existence of Aporias fuels this need, acting as catalysts to bring a cognitive embedding in the minds of the reader so that a path can be trail-blazed through this “ocean alive with aporia” and form interpretations that are contextual and unique to the reader that beholds it. It is this gap that the narrative exploits in order to invade the senses and shock the understanding. Linda Hutcheon’s historiographic metafiction is a reminder of the ‘postmodern stand to confront’ and then critique. Gerald Genette’s ‘pastiche contract’ is another term that reiterates this form of disavowal. The space of narrative is also a space of subversiveness. By exploring its depths, we come across its ostranenie or its strange newness.

The word narrative is derived from the Latin word narrativus which means something that recounts or narrates. It is the form of consciousness that comes together to tell what we know. Hence, narrative is essentially a communicative act with a special affinity towards the fictional construction of worlds. For Hegel beauty of art is conceived in spirit and the function of art is to reconcile ‘these colliding elements in their grim strife and opposition’ (Hegel 4). The actuality of the now always contains within it a higher actuality that it would eventually achieve. The higher form of convergence is also discussed by Theodore Adorno as

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3 Linda Hutcheon in the chapter “The Historiographic Metafiction: “The Pastime of Pasttime” (105-123) formulates the concept of porous genres that move forward through in conflict and interplay with each other. The term ‘installs totalizing order, only to contest it’.

4 Brian McHale in his Postmodernist Fiction uses the trope of invasion from science fiction in order to construct this confrontation in the fictional world in the postmodern context. It is when the text hesitates that an innovative interpretation can be created.
an eventuality when one “pursues its immanent principle in a pure way” (Adorno 67). The
definition of this immanence resides in the abstract, in a higher realm of being which even to
Adorno forms an ‘utopian vision’. The purity of synthesis which he seeks cannot be achieved,
but aspired for. The postmodern time is an awareness of the boundaries and then creating
criterias to break away from the old structure leaving the narrative to explore territories that
had not been in the horizon. As Cristopher Nash points out, “We are shaped by our responses
to the disjunction between some sense of an ideal and the reality of the limitations of our
individual being” (Nash 54).

The lack in the world resonates through the indeterminacy of language. There is
always some new sensation, some new desire that engenders the being at a given time and
within the formulation of that being sets the stage for another being. The question, “is lettered
production enough to contain this vast heterogeneity?” is informed by this gap in the
language to convey sensuous perception. The Picture Theory of WJT Mitchell re-emphasizes
this lack through the study of the ‘linguistic of the image’ and its parallel ‘the iconology of
the text’. The narrative can bring about an interaction of its sister arts. But, it cannot become
that art. That is the fundamental lack that Mitchell articulates. This lack is reiterated by
Nelson Goodman in his Languages of Art where he sets parameters of score and performance
for defining the worth of the art form. The more correctly the work performs the higher the
score.

A narrative works on description, on filling the aporetic gap of metonymic
understanding. In these “ontic spheres” or gaps of thought, there is a possibility for the entry
of such arts in order to create a homogeneous rendering of their various facets. In the
postmodern scenario where the lines of categories are becoming blurred increasingly, there
are non-critical spaces that contain an affinity to the inclusion of such non-narrative elements
in order to complete the process of interpretation of narratives. Thus the parameters of
Mitchell and Goodman seem to fall prey to certain contexts. Mitchell charts the lines of painting and poetry through the aesthetics of Romantics and the nineteenth century intellectuals but he also denotes:

Writing is thus the medium in which the interaction of image and text, pictorial and verbal expression, adumbrated in the tropes of *ut pictora poesis* and the ‘sisterhood’ of the arts, seems to be a literal possibility. (Mitchell 113)

The language which even for Nelson Goodman fails in certain aspects of semantic requirements becomes desirable in the right context. “A symbol” for him “may be representation even it denotes nothing at all” (Goodman 226).

This liminal zone forms the first of the levels of intentionality in narration. Lisa Zunshine in her *Why We Read Fiction: Theory of the Mind and Novel* refers to this concept.

The narrative becomes the site which can allow the reader to access the different levels of intentional meaning. Through the textual interplay, the narrative can be privy to as much as ten levels of intentionality if the reader has the resolve to comb through it. Zunshine adapts Daniel Dennett’s three levels of intentionality hypothesizing that these three levels can in effect be stretched into the realm of infinity. The infinite levels however remain a utopian concept because the cognitive apparatus of a human being can only reach till the fifth level of intentionality. What Zunshine brings out is the difficulty of moving below the various layers of embedded cognition and still hold on to the threads of comprehension that we had earlier. There will be a point where “the agglomeration of multiply embedded minds proves too much of a cognitive load” (Zunshine 31). The binaries explicated in Lessing’s work correspond to our need for straight-laced understanding of the world around us. The neat compartmentalization of the various works of art gives a safety net much like labelling our drawers or incorporating a proper filing system. Through the medium of narrative, however,
we can open the mind to multiple possibilities, inciting the various levels of cognition lying dormant into action.

In the contemporary scenario, the textual world has reached out and boldly crossed its borders into the realms of other media forms. The fundamental feature of the narrative is its ‘promiscuity’. As David Herman writes, “The narrative moves back and forth between the humanities and this volatility forms the space of critique and re-assessment” (Herman 5). As established above, the consciousness is possible through the integration of the senses. The space of the narrative opens up the gaps which allow for such an interplay of other aesthetic forms. Michel Foucault has developed this concept of Heterotopia which defines the existence of various worlds depending on the psychological conceivability of the human being. It undermines and violates the traditional modes of thought and ontological depictions. A heterotopia is that third space that introduces unfamiliarity and doing so forms a space of revolution. It works in the space of the excluded middle where the problems of reality and unreality clash. As he says in his essay “Of Other Spaces”:

There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places – places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society – which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. (3)

Heterotopia is a subversion of convention landscapes of existence and it works through heterogeneity. It is not confined to a single culture. In fact, by virtue of it existence in a subversive space it subsumes various modes of thought and integrates that which probably resides outside the comprehension of the reality of our world. Thus the heterotopia “according the synchrony of the culture in which it occurs” can only contain “one function or
the other” (Foucault 5). The narrative functions as a site of such a heterotopia in the sense that it can incorporate various spaces in which the various arts reside into its textual fold. It moves from the space of realistic representation of the world to the levels of abstractions that undermine such assumptions and form a break from the chronological temporal order in order to attempt at such a synthesis. Even Lessing for all his insistence on segregation had to admit to poetry’s vivid power to make the visual appear more terrifying than the actual picture itself. The narrative forms that aporetic space which has to be navigated so that the euphoria of truth can be achieved. This space like the heterotopian space is not like the public sphere which can be shared with everyone else. It is closed space, opening for those individual who dare to step, to cross its borders.

The space of heterotopia brings to mind another similar concept. Mikhail Bakhtin in his *The Dialogic Imagination* introduces the concept of Heteroglossia. The concept of Heteroglossia is read in opposition to the single, unitary language. The single, dominant language or dialect posits itself over the systems of thoughts. It consists of forces that “serve to unify and centralize the verbal-ideological world” (Bakhtin 270), the forces that “struggle to overcome Heteroglossia” (Bakhtin 271). The Heteroglossia forms a subversive network of practices, of various languages that operate under the reigning language and seek to undermine its hegemony. As Bakhtin says in *The Dialogic Imagination*:

> The word is born in a dialogue as a living rejoinder within it; the word is shaped in dialogic interaction with an alien word that is already in the object. A word forms a concept of its own object in a dialogic way. (271)

To understand Heteroglossia we need to understand the concept of dialogism as pertaining to Bakhtin’s theories. The internal ‘dialogia’ of the subject becomes essential in its pervasion of the monologic imposition of verbo-centric forces outside of it. Literary language
in Bakhtin’s world has the potential of achieving the limits of stratification thereby making it central to the formulation of Heteroglossia. This term supposes the co-existence of the multiple strands of language in one single language which exposes the internal dynamism of that single language. The context of Heteroglossia is formed from the juxtaposition of poetic language and the language of the novel. In the poetic language the narrative though forms its own contradictions and conflicts ultimately move towards the resolution of these forces. The novel, on the other hand, intensifies the conflicts and differences creating Heteroglossia of various “intentions and accents”. Thus the novel narrative becomes a space for the intersection of languages, of “parodic stylizations of generic languages, various forms of stylizations and illustrations of professional and period-bound languages, the languages of particular generations, of social dialects and others” (Bakhtin 292). The “double voiced discourse” that moves through the novel and which according to Bakhtin forms its heterogeneous discourse thus advances the notion of synthesis of the arts in the “unitary plane” of narrative.

Goethe’s *weltliteratur*5 or world literature formed the starting point of a heterogeneous osmosis of various disciplines and the breakthrough it engineers. As he says, “the age of world literature is beginning, and everybody should contribute to hasten its advent” (3). It became the site of subversiveness, a liminal space where conflict and blurring of genres can aspire to a free play. This radical interrogation forms the crux of the idea that “literary phenomena” is “no longer the exclusive focus”6. The “almost” realm forms the third space locating the culture in the “realm of the beyond”7. Homi Bhabha in his *Location of Culture* writes, “It is the trope of our time to locate the question of culture in the realm of the beyond” (4). The spatial reconstructions have become instrumental in the intellectual creating

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6 The Bernheimer Report on the dimensions and possibilities of comparative literature
7 Edward Said in his book *Orientalism*. 
imaginary cartographies to dwell and form new identities for themselves. In such a space, the horizons of subjectivity are stretched to their limits. The blurring of genres becomes a real phenomenon rather than an imagined concept.

While the category of “blurring of the genres” is not new in itself, the Postmodernism brand of this heterogeneous multiplicity became the forerunner of the inter-disciplinary studies that dominate the field today. Knowledge is not a water-tight exercise. It has to grow, absorb and mutate. The practice of convergence of fields or disciplines adds to the collective knowledge and forms an effective check against stagnation of theory or literature. The past few decades have broadened our horizons. The old world nativism has been interpreted and critically examined in order to make room for literature that was previously foreign to the canon as it stands. This heterogeneity forms varied contexts that conceptualizes and formulates unprecedented possibilities. The world has changed from the way we perceive as we well as the way we engage and interpret. The technological consciousness referred to as the final extension of the senses of man has changed the way we grapple with the semiotic systems of thought. Our previous modes of thought are suddenly not enough. This leads us to ask the question, “Is Literature enough to represent or contain the vast heterogeneity?” The dominance of the visual medium and its many simulations in the contemporary popular culture has made it imperative that we study this medium especially in conjunction with other medium and study the significations that overlap and then conflict.

1.2 A “New Sensibility” – Formulations of Possible Stories

Susan Sontag coined the phrase “new sensibility” in order to discuss the new medial forms of representation that came to life post the second world war and such new sensibilities can be characterized by the idea of transgressive boundaries. Alain Robbe-Grillet chose to
write of his “nouveau roman” or new novel in order to understand this new form of narrative which is self-reflexive and self-aware. Bran Nicol examines Robbe-Grillet’s motivation as:

For Robbe-Grillet, the function of the novel has changed in the twentieth century … “the novel is not a tool, not something conceived with a view to a task defined in advance. The novel is not meant to inform us about reality but to constitute reality – in other words to create an aesthetic world which exists separately from the real world and does not necessarily correspond to it. (160)

The implications behind these two ideas is the renewed configuration of the story and its form. The idea of possible stories derives from this aspiration. It delineates an infinite number of paths which the story can take, the various mediums that it can be transmitted through and while doing so change the relations between the two media of communication. Dolezel in his postulation of the ‘possible worlds theory’ sought to make the narrative world as the fundamental unit of narrative theory. The conceptualization of possible stories while based on Dolezel’s idea of possible worlds and fictionality deviates from it in the delineation of the possible stories. It is the contention of this thesis that through the telling and the living of the stories the different fictional worlds come into being. The story is in negotiation with the world it generates. The possible worlds are predicated on the act of creation. Possible worlds of fiction “are ‘artefacts produced by aesthetics activities” (Dolezel 15) and constructed through semiotic systems. The idea of ‘possible stories’ can be likened to this idea of possible world in the sense that they are constructed and they circulate through the medium of the texts. This idea however deviates from the ‘possible worlds’ idea in its exploration of fluidity of transmission and its interweaving with the media it inhabits.

A possible story can be defined as having the following traits:

- It is a travelling story
• It trans-mutates and trans-substantiates while travelling through the various media.
• It speaks to multiple generations of meaning and responses by the reader.
• It is aimed at preservation
• It is an expression of the self-reflexive narrative

Possible stories are a response to the porous nature of boundaries as well as the postmodern idea of ‘which story’. Through the narrative medium, possible stories generate possible worlds. Through other visual media, it seeks to bring about plural expression of perspective which is crucial to the different representative theories of the contemporary theory. Nash, in his *Unravelling of the Postmodern Mind* discusses the idea of decentring of the subject. This subject disintegration forms another inspiration for the formulation of the idea of possible stories. In discussing the profusion of this disintegrated subject, Nash writes,

> The attractive force of the twentieth-century spectral vision of the disintegrating, ‘dissolving human subject’ has been so pervasive that it has brought about an otherwise unimaginable confluence of intellectual bedpartners… (11)

This spectral, fragmented subject in the times of Modernism was not a cause for despair but a call to action. The author and the reader needed to put back the fragments of the subject together in an effort to attain closure.

In the postmodern scenario, these fragments in the end ‘obliterate each other’ in an extreme nihilistic desire to see to an apocalyptic end. Applying this idea to the functioning of the narrative, the idea of possible stories can be likened to the analogy of a Chinese puzzle box which opens into one box after another. Possible stories are the infinite potential of meanings as generated by the narrative in a similar way as Nash’s view of language in postmodern culture:
If language is the site where a postmodern consciousness locates the uncertainties that most beset and engross it, here is where postmodern culture’s preoccupation with narrative comes in. It’s in our thinking in story form – giving accounts of ourselves as actors in events ‘spelled out’ in time, in a compact drama of causes and effects – that we’ve routinely constructed and organized our lines and our import. (14)

Mark Turner in *The Literary Mind* discussed the idea of story as a “basic principle of mind” (Turner 11). Roland Barthes in his “Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives” defines the narrative as “international, trans historical, transcultural: it is simply there, like life itself” (Barthes 79). The fundamental understanding of human experience is their ability to come to terms to the external worlds and actions. The structuralist phase of narrative theory was invested in broadening the horizons of the narrative from the boundary of the text. This interdisciplinary shift resulted in “complex transactions” involving “producers of texts or other semiotic artifacts” and “interpreters of these narrative productions” (Herman 5) who make sense of its different characteristics. Even in the heyday of structuralist interpretation of narrative theory, the chaotic potential of narrative was never far behind in the different explorations of the nature of narrative. This chaotic potential underlies the different discourses of contextual postclassical narratologies which focused on the implications of narrative in multiple disciplines and vice versa. The inevitable crack at the bases of narrative grammar and structure led to the creation of interdisciplinary concerns which have affected and galvanised the revolution of the narrative.

The final inspiration for the idea of possible stories comes from the idea of ‘blended spaces’ coined by Mark Turner. In order to understand this concept, we must first take a look at Turner’s theoretical configurations. Turner in his *The Literary Mind* discusses the idea of the essential or the small story; “the kinds of stories that are most essential to human thought produce experience that is completely absorbing, but we rarely notice those stories
themselves or the way they work” (Turner 12). In order to recognize and understand these stories a certain narrative imagination is necessary. These ‘small stories’ are understood in terms of their spatiality. The stories are bound to certain spaces and any mental divination needs to understand this link between the two. The idea of ‘blended space’ is the third space that incorporates the event stories and the action stories creating a space for narration and narrative understanding. As Turner postulates:

In that blended space spatial events of change, including body action, are blended with mental events of memory in strikingly impossible ways … meanings … are not mental objects bounded in conceptual places but rather complex operations of projecting, blending and integrating over multiple spaces. (86)

The blended space can be achieved through three different mechanisms: composition where the story is computed through input stories, completion which proposes a solution to the events mentioned and finally elaboration which leads to ‘imaginative mental simulations’ (Turner 85). This final mechanism will be the chief concern for this thesis. The mechanism of imaginative simulations can be used to conceive fantastical stories as well as worlds which challenge the perceptions of the conventional narrative theory. It can “reveal latent contradictions and coherences between previously separated elements” and can lead to ‘conceptual reconfiguration’ and ‘elaboration of new logic and principles’ (Foucault 15).

For Turner the ‘everyday mind” is “essentially literary” (Turner 67). Possible stories combine Dolezel’s idea of possible worlds with the postmodern idea of fictional multiplicity in a labyrinthian space. The literariness of the mind is represented in the literariness of literature. Narratives are expression of ‘experience and memory of human happenings’ and possible stories intend to take this idea forward into realms of hitherto unrecognized spaces. The first understanding of possible stories requires a crossing of aporetic boundaries. It
requires the reader to understand that he/she is standing at the edge of the labyrinth and that to move forward is to leave conventional understanding at its threshold.

1.3 Orhan Pamuk as a Storyteller

The first impression that strikes the reader of Orhan Pamuk and his works is the fundamental desire to tell stories. The stories themselves form a separate entity apart from the central plot and characters and it is this aspect that the thesis will concern itself with. The idea of ‘possible stories’ cannot find a better expression than in the works of Orhan Pamuk. One cannot read the story of Black and Shekure without thinking of the story of Husrev and Shirin or while reading Ruya and Galip the underlying strains of Firdausi and his myths or when exploring Pamuk’s story in Istanbul, the different stories written about Istanbul are never far from the mind of the reader. All these stories begin with the author himself – the storyteller.

Walter Benjamin in his “The Storyteller” discuss the idea of distance in the conceptualization of his perception of the storyteller. In perceiving the storyteller from a distance, we can attempt an understanding of his/her motivations and the relevance of their stories. Benjamin places the storyteller at the end of the first world war when the scarcity of communicable experience translated to the decline of the art of storytelling. There are two important factors that contributed to the loss of this art. The first is the loss of human communication as a result of the drastic change brought about by the world war. The second factor was the rise of the novel. The novel like the changed human communication rests in the isolation of the reader. Reading a novel is a private activity and hence it does not require the communal condition necessary to storytelling. The idea of storytelling was tied to an oral transmission from the storyteller to the audience which was based on the understanding the audience will commit it to memory and hence immortalize the story told. Benjamin also distinguishes between the imparting of information and the craft of storytelling. The current
context of civilization is shrouded in the spread of information and modern technology has made this concern even easier. The formula of information works very differently to the communication of a story. The idea behind information is a recurring and constant supply of events for the knowledge of the hearer to be forgotten and then replaced with a new piece of information. The art of storytelling works on different formula. It is an imparting of a memory from the storyteller. It is also designed to preserve cultural traditions and histories. Benjamin in discussing the importance of storytelling gives the instance of death which is captured by the storyteller. Death is a by-product of history and by capturing history the storyteller is preserving the concept of death.

The works of Orhan Pamuk are thoroughly steeped in the idea of the outsider and in the image of the distant storyteller. These novels carry the idea of the storyteller preserving the nature and quality of memories before his mind loses a sense of order. This idea of the distant storyteller can be attributed to Pamuk. In the article titled “On Trial” Pamuk discusses the twin feelings of defiance and shame – defiance in speaking of historical taboos surrounding Turkish identity and shame of being persecuted. He writes, “because I did not want to add to the controversy, and did not want to hear about it, I at first kept quiet, drenched in a strange sort of shame, hiding from the public, and even from my own words”. Ever since the interview with the Swiss newspaper discussing genocide, Pamuk has been in the spotlight as being a voice of free speech against censorship. In this article he discusses the idea of “real Turkish writer”. This status is conferred on the writers who have been imprisoned for their political views and have ‘spent years in courts and in prisons’. The word ‘real’ is telling here. In the course of the article, Pamuk has used the word real in telling juxtaposition. The first time he uses the word it is to state the idea of ‘real Turkish identity’. The second time in quoting his friends who have proffered the status of “real Turkish writer” on him. There are two different currents underlying the idea of real – one suggesting distance
and the other belonging. The trial of Orhan Pamuk occurring under the charge of ‘denigrating Turkish identity’ distances Pamuk from the dimensions of society. It makes him an outcast standing on trial for deviating from the norms and boundaries of society. And yet at the same time it places in the circle of belonging in the community of outcasts. From the viewpoint of a Turkish citizen – through his actions – Pamuk has become a real Turkish writer. It is this paradox that has encompassed much of the public life of Orhan Pamuk. The idea of the distant storyteller seems to be more and more akin with the lives of Orhan Pamuk. The novels of Pamuk are an extension of this idea where the characters inhabit the uneasy space of distance and belonging. In discussing the idea of freedom of expression, Pamuk discussed the idea of understanding people. He writes that “we shall truly understand the people who have been part of this transformation until we have seen their private lives reflected in novels”. A part of this understanding rests on what he calls ‘bizzarreries’ or the ‘grotesque and inscrutable drama’ peculiar to a certain part of the world. The stories he writes and preserves are an expression of this ‘bizzarreries’.

The different stories that pervade the works of Orhan Pamuk have a certain underlying theme to themselves. These are stories told from the margins, from characters who inhabit the fringes of society by virtue of their anonymity or enigmatic nature. In the event of the trial and his curious case of distance and belonging, the shame felt by Pamuk was on account of not wanting this form of notoriety or a motivation to belong to either circle. His personal reflections in Other Colours tell the story of just another individual who inhabits the city of Istanbul and intends to write stories capturing the essence of both. This nature of the storyteller is replicated through the different characters of the novels who become the possible selves of the authorial self. Through the generation of the various possible selves can the different possible stories find their proper expression. The figure of the storyteller is important as it provides us with a passage to understand the nature of possible stories and
through we understand the different motivations of memory, self and preservation. Pamuk as a storyteller tells the stories from the margins and through these stories explores the idea of mythical function. The mythical function is unique to the novels as it comes from not just the stories told but from the living of the individual.

The novels of Orhan Pamuk, though have their roots in modernity, are classified and recognized better under the tentative label of Postmodernism. The snowflake forms the first image that will be utilized to study the blurring the genres that has been effected in the various novels. Turkey’s aspiration to the ascension to the European Union heralded the need for westernization for the country. The Ottoman history rested very heavily over the city of Istanbul and reforms were in effect for the creation of a more modern Turkey. The Republic of Turkey was formed in 1928 after the disbanding of the Ottoman Empire. During this time the “Young Turks” moved forward the notion of a national literature that would be in line with a Pan-Turkish identity. This literature was created with an amalgamation of modernism, Turkish folk tradition and realism. The literature of Orhan Pamuk came at a time when there was an Ottoman revival responding to the Sufi mysticism and the miniature traditions that flourished under this regime.

Erdag Goknar in his “Orhan Pamuk and the “Ottoman Theme” writes that “every Pamuk book is doubled: a major story of lament and failure is balanced by the quiet birth of a narrative of hybrid or multiperspectival authority” (34). The “ottomanesque” forms the first branch of the snowflake – the first grand narrative that must be unravelled so that the subsequent veins can be brought into light and then studied. As Goknar says in his concluding remarks, “The Ottoman Theme in short, is 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” (Goknar 37). This idea of snowflake has been appropriated from the novel Snow where the snowflake becomes a representation of the hidden music of creativity. The
idea of composition forms the central hinge of the novel where the poet Ka after coming to Kars (which literally translated means snow) and finally finds his inspiration to compose poems. The first instance of creation comes to him after his meeting with Ipek, his former beloved. The narrative entwines Ka’s feeling for Ipek and his feeling for snowflakes falling around him in an unicursal direction to make him compose his poems. The first poem he writes is titled “What Makes This Poem Beautiful?” and through his poem Ka realizes how “much of his life was determined by the hidden symmetries” (Pamuk 89). For the remainder of the narrative, the different poems that come to Ka fly on the wings of divine inspiration as “he fell under the spell of the snowflakes” (Pamuk 101). In a letter Ka wrote to the Sheikh he discusses the joy of witnessing snow; “it was snowing in my dream and every snowflake that fell to the earth shown with divine radiance” (Pamuk 92). The music of the snowflakes pervades the narrative of the novel, interweaving its own transiency with the written word. The “sublime” exudes from these words as Ka frantically captures his thoughts in the green notebook which will be lost never to be found.

The narrator’s search for the lost ‘green notebook’ after Ka was murdered later in Germany re-emphasizes the element of strange in the narrative of Snow. The sublime is also engrossed with the idea of strange. The idea of sublime as discussed by Edmund Burke defines the idea of sublime as a form of terrifying beauty. The works of Orhan Pamuk discuss images and events of terrifying beauty. The snowflake stands as a guide to the labyrinthine space of Pamuk’s works but even this guidance only goes so far. What the snowflake does is to take us to the edge of the labyrinth and let us make our journey into the deep recesses of the works of Orhan Pamuk.

Mikhail Bakhtin writes that “novelist representation is always an open, unresolvable conflict of representations” and that the novel reveals a “plurality that no single genres, metadiscourse, or master-game encompasses” (20). The inclusion of these events blur the
boundaries of art and reality, of art and narrative so as showcase a dissemination of forms and assertion of the subversive elements of the novel. From these events we come to the novel *My Name is Red* which begins with the most disorienting opening of the novels of Pamuk. The murdered victim speaks from beyond and begs the reader to find his murderer. This assertion forms the logical continuation from the events of *Snow*. The narrative now has definitely crossed the aporetic barrier. In his *The Naïve and Sentimentalist Novelist*, Pamuk describes the creation of *My Name is Red*:

Especially in *My Name is Red*, where not only the protagonists but also the colors and objects have voices and speak aloud, I felt that I was entering the different world – a world I wanted to describe and reconstruct via painting. (100)

The labyrinthine space of stories first manifests itself in this aporetic barrier of transgression. From the very first moment when the murdered corpse begins to speak, the readers are thrust into the labyrinth of the narrative which itself seeks to metamorphose into the painted dimensions of the image. Chapter II will discuss the visual kaleidoscopic representations of the stories told. This chapter provides an uncanny and strange dimension to the regular process of telling stories. The concept of narrative transgression must be grasped first in order to understand the different stories that find expression in the novel. The titles of the chapters beginning with “I am” are the first surface that the reader must traverse. These titles provided the necessary entrance to the world created by Orhan Pamuk. Through the individualization of the chapters, Pamuk in addition to created multiple perspectives and selves is also creating a possible dimension of fluidity. Consider the horizon point put forward by Bihzad as he witnesses the destruction of Tabriz. In the novel, Bihzad describes his escape to the hill surrounding Tabriz in order to escape the slaughter of the city. From the vantage point, he can see not only the slaughter but its colours as well. This vision leads him to invent the horizon point which is characteristic of the illumination tradition.
*My Name is Red* traces the tradition of *Murqqua* or miniatures that have been bound in a book with verses on one side and illuminations on the other side. The “ottomanesque” is developed here more vividly than any other novels. The sifting realities presented in *Snow* are more vividly drawn in this novel where the narrative aspires to become a painting. This novel will be read in two ways. The first will be to trace the word/image history of the eastern painting and then to advance a re-imagining of this debate in the context of the narrative. The first illumination is that of Bihzad and his depiction of Husrev being murdered by his step-son Shiruye. This illumination is followed by the description of Bihzad and the discovery of the horizon line while he witnessed the Mongol Invasion and the massacre that followed. From the nearby hill, Bihzad stood witness to this event of history and then formulate a style for the miniatures to follow. His *Miniatures of Shiraz* formed one of the origins of the Ottoman miniature style.

In *Kara Kitap* or *The Black Book*, the narrator writes of his intention “to mix objects dating back from centuries with those from his own past”. *Istanbuil: Memories and the City* is an expression of this interface of history and personal, of city and the individual, of stories and the self so as to generate a critical construct of the image of the city. As he writes, “to see the city in black and white is to see it through the tarnish of history: the patina of what is old and faded no longer matters to the rest of the world” (Pamuk 38). The Istanbul that Pamuk has grown up in and where he still lives is “littered with the ruins of the great fall” of the Ottoman empire that had one day ruled strong from this capital. From the images that he knows he wants to form his intentional view of his city. Jakobson’s intersemiotic translation finds its expression in this re-construction. The lack in the words is augmented with the photographs of his childhood and the engravings of Melling, Allom and Guler. The growth of the boy is juxtaposed with the development of the city. The city is subjectified through the self.
The tradition of murakka shall be entertained in this chapter one more time in order to discuss the format of Istanbul. The book has been developed in the template of the miniature album with the words of the narrative juxtaposed with not the personal but also with the historical. The presence of the images while seeking to compliment also exposes the “limitations of the fiction itself, and indeed on the difficulties and limitations of all fiction making” (Jakobson 117). Also, the presence of other art forms with the narrative shows the heterogeneity of the text that the narrative reveals through its position between the image and reality.

The construction of the city is an act of remembrance. The evolution of the city traced throughout the novel is Pamuk’s method of remembering the empire with its impressive achievement. Through the study of photographs, he comes to the conclusion very early into the novel Istanbul:

My prolonged study of these photographs led me to appreciate the importance of preserving certain moments for posterity, and as time moved forwards I also came to see what a powerful influence these framed scenes exerted over us as we went about our daily live. (13)

Ludwig Wittgenstein describes the picture as holding us captive and “we could not get outside it, for it lay in our language and language seems to repeat itself to us inexorably” (Wittgenstein 37). The Pictorial Turn laid down by WJT Mitchell echoes this anxiety of a linguistic interpretation of a visual representation. It is the “realization of spectatorship” that “may be as deep a problem as various forms of reading” (Mitchell 3). Both of these fears are echoed in The Black Book which forms a more fictional rendition of the image of the city than Istanbul. The novels also echo the fear of forgetting as looking for all the means that can help the narrative of the city remember the past of its existence.
The novels of Orhan Pamuk straddle the very thin line between the modern and postmodern. The shifting perspective are not linear but studded throughout the repertoire of his works. The visual is appropriated into the narrative in order to compliment as well as conflict with the lettered chronology. In Istanbul, Pamuk uses the engravings of Melling and Gide as well as personal pictures to engage with the narrative. The photographs give an overview of the life of Pamuk as he went through his childhood. But, the narrative compliments that which is absent from the portraits that he includes in the layout of the book. The photos show the carefully posed side of the Pamuk family. Yet, at every turn, he describes the real story as it happened before it was matted and framed. In the same way, he describes the city of Istanbul. The vast lands that were there before rampant urbanization took over in order to create the history of the city. Through the series of engravings, Pamuk shows the ruin of the city in the wake of westernization. The spacious lands near Bosporus are now entirely filled with ruined and dilapidated apartment buildings. All the paintings that he uses are entirely black and white. This monochrome perception of the city as mentioned above speaks to the ‘tarnish of history’ which in turn is responsible for the Huzun of not just the city but also its individual. The city is witness to the ruin of a great empire and also stands as the victim caught between its ruin and its desire to form a western ideal. The paintings are complimented with the literary entries by famous authors who visited Istanbul from Andre Gide to Walter Benjamin. Using these integrative approaches, Pamuk seeks to move beyond the conventional form of genres and formulate a unique looking glass at his and his city’s past.

In a novel like My Name is Red, the narrative is not the only form of text. This narrative forms a textual network along with the painting and metaphysical questioning. The matrix invokes the strategy of “imbuing illustrations with the poetry of the soul” (Pamuk 20). When the chapter of tree happens, the narrative makes an ambitious claim – “I don’t want to
be a tree, I want to be its meaning” (Pamuk 61). In the subsequent chapters, the action becomes a reverse signification. Through the imaginings of words, the narrative becomes painting and vice versa. Master Osman talks of the blinding of Sheikh Ali. He speaks of the former Master taking a needle and piercing his own eyes so he can see the world that exists outside of time. He says, “painting is the act of seeking out Allah’s memories and seeing the world as He sees the world” (Pamuk 96) and then proceeds to pierce his own eyes in the exact enactment of the story he has just narrated. Depiction becomes actualization and then action leads to narration. The senses are intermingled. The Black Book goes on to a journey of the city’s consciousness through the “gestures” taught through visual media as well as the color references that the author gives in relation to the quest undertaken by the hero to find his wife and at the same time find his other self. Snow’s collates between the silence of the white snow and theatre to the music of literary creation. This novel also contains within its pages a diagram of the snowflake. This picture is used by Pamuk to chart the poems written by Ka, the protagonist during his stay at Kars. This diagram is going to be the visual aid to the theories that will be used in this thesis to find a common ground for a possible synthesis of the approaches used.

The narrative turn began in the 1960s when the emphasis shifted to the textuality of existence. Postmodernism, went even further, and asked the question “which story?” The survey will examine narrative theories with an emphasis on the narrative as a “heterotopia”8 or a “possible world”9. The interfaces will go further to using these theories as a platform for establishing the narrative as a medium of convergence for the various strains of art disciplines found in the novels. The word/image will be the dominant strain. This will be followed by memory and architecture and film and influence. In that respect, the theories of medium,

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8 Micel Foucault in his “Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias” posits the existences of spaces dependent only on the psychological conceivability of the human mind.
9 Thomas Pavel. Possible Worlds in Fiction.
inter-mediality and communication will be studied. Finally, the thesis will broadly examine the context of convergence using inter-art representation theories of Theodore Adorno, WJT Mitchell etc. as well the field of evolutionary biology to articulate an underlying concept that can posit a possible synthesis of these arts. The novels of Pamuk will feature as the primary texts. His non-fiction novels *Other Colours* and *The Naïve and The Sentimentalist Novelist* will form the necessary compliment to the primary novels by shedding light on the author’s views and his own life. This will form another literary dimension to the inter-textual as well an inter-art strain that will further the cause of an inter-disciplinary interpretation of the text.

This thesis will hope to look for its place in the current debates of inter-disciplinary with regards to an increasing fluid text and re-configuration of disciplines in order to find new ways of representation and interpretation. It will take the blurring of the genres as a starting point to analyze the interface of narrative with disciplines of painting, films, theatre, photography and the underlying acts of literary creativity so as to formulate a heterogeneous and intensive understanding of the novels written by Pamuk. Ultimately, the aim of the thesis will be to try and work out a new interpretative curve to the existing fields of inter-disciplinary thought.

Chapter II will examine the different genealogies of contemporary narrative, postmodern and inter-art theories. The aim of this chapter is to understand the different mechanics of these different media in order to understand the diverse configurations of possible stories. Franco Moretti discusses the idea of graphs, maps and trees as offering “a model of the narrative universe which re-arranges its components in a non-trivial way, and may bring hidden patterns to the surface” (Moretti 54). Moretti discusses the idea of ‘distant reading’ as a tool to understand the different disciplinary threads of a particular discourse which here constitutes the history of the novel. The idea of distant reading can lend a certain horizon perspective in order to cull out patterns already in existence as well as discover their
hidden traces of meaning. This concept is fundamental to the methodology constituted to understand the frames of references of the possible stories. The theories of narrative constituted from not just narratology but also from postmodern thought will expose the idea of story and storytelling lending crucial support to the conceptualization of the possible stories. The discussion of inter-art theories will develop the different empirical, perspectival and cognitive notions concerning the debate of word and image in order to chart the transmission and trans-substantiation of storytelling through the different media. Together, these threads will attempt to arrive at a certain understanding of the profusion of stories in our contemporary culture and thought. It will also provide the necessary genealogies for the chapters to come.

Chapter III will discuss the idea of travelling stories with specific reference to the visual media. One of the fundamental themes running through the novels of Orhan Pamuk is the proliferation of images. My Name is Red charts the illumination tradition in the Ottoman reign of Suleyman the Magnificent through multi-perspectival narrative strategies. Istanbul: Memories and the City juxtaposes the craft of etching in tradition of Melling with the contemporary photographs of life of Orhan Pamuk. The Black Book, Snow, Museum of Innocence through their affiliations with theatrical and cinematic images add another dimension to the word-image tensions running through the novels of Orhan Pamuk. The tension however is not merely contained in the duality of word and image. The chapter will examine the character of possible stories as its transmits itself through the different media in order to understand the works of Orhan Pamuk. The different representations of myths, painting, cinema, photographs and theatre all come together in a ‘labyrinthian artistic space’ in order to address the transgressive aspirations of the narrative seeking to move beyond its own borders. It will also examine the idea of uncertainty brought about the inadequacy of
language in order to understand the implications and motivations of possible stories of the visual medium.

Chapter IV discuss the interweaving of life and narrative. Taking Jerome Bruner’s iconic essay of “Life as Narrative”, the chapter will examine the different possible selves and lives that are contained in the works of Orhan Pamuk. The idea of life as narrative is that not only a person’s lives affected by narrative but he/she also lives out his/her life through the conditions of narrativity. This concept has been appropriated by possible stories in order to first understand the authorial self and then examine his fictional selves. The second section of the chapters deals with the idea of doppelgangers and metamorphosis of the individual. The postmodern conditions of narrativity allow the character to not only assume the identity of the other but actually become the other. The different characters in The Black Book, The New Life, The White Castle, Snow and My Name is Red will be discussed in order to understand this idea of extreme and complex metamorphosis which the caveat of possible stories can allow. While Chapter II discusses the aspirations of the narrative to metamorphose into a different media altogether, Chapter III provides an in-depth analysis of the different fictional selves created through different possible stories.

Chapter V charts the evolution of the city and cityscape through the eyes of the individual and art. The possible worlds theory forms the underlying theoretical foundation in order to understand the character of Istanbul and the different Istanbul(s) that it generates. The thesis will examine the idea of Huzun in order to formulate the possible stories which make the different significations of the city. It will then study the various generations of the city as represented through the personal and aesthetic lenses. Finally, it will study the city of Kars or Snow which forms of foil to the city of Istanbul. In doing so it will seek to understand the different cityscapes that are in negotiation with the individual and the stories that they tell.
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