CHAPTER – 4

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Pamuk’s prose bursts with the helplessness and agony of its characters. It is as if they want to break free of their subject-hood. However, whether the characters finally manage to culminate their journey from subject-hood to self-hood inventing a de-subjectified self is not explicitly depicted by him. My concern in this chapter is not to find out whether the characters emerge victorious in their resistance against their subject-hood or not, but an analysis and study of the various tactics and methods used by them in order to articulate their resistance. This chapter traces the various efforts made by Pamuk’s characters in formulating alternative discourses for themselves which contain the potential of freeing them of their subject-hood. Pamuk’s prose glimmers with these efforts of de-subjectification made by the characters and the strategies which they undertake in order to resist their subject formation.

Foucault conceived of the functioning of power as a, “. . . guiding [of] the actions of a fundamentally free subject, but always with the possibility that the subject can traverse the field in new and creative ways” (Hartmann 10). Hartmann has encapsulated Foucault’s concern with the model of resistance within power as: “. . . how can one have a positive means of resistance which does not devolve to re-action or negation?” (4), and explicated the Foucauldian resistance as a creative invention of alternative methodologies:

. . . resistance to power should not only be understood in terms of agonistic force relations, but in terms of a creative traversing of the field of possible action. Resistance – positive resistance – is no longer merely reversal, but consists in a subject’s becoming autonomous within a structured set of institutions and practices through immanent critique. (Hartmann 10)
Foucault never explicates in detail as to the exact nature and manner of an act of resistance but he delineates acts of resistance as deriving their very existence from the power which seeks to thwart them in the first place. He also stresses on an activism which has its roots in a cynical study of all rules, regimes or systems which claim to be more just and progressive than their predecessors:

My point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad. If everything is dangerous, then we always have something to do. So my position leads not to apathy but to a hyper- and pessimistic activism. I think that the ethico-political choice we have to make every day is to determine which is the main danger. (Rabinow, FR 343)

Thus Foucault makes it very clear that we ought not to accept the assertions of any organized structure as offering solutions to the problems posed to their precursors. Foucault’s lines of resistance begin from the continual detection of dangers in any regime. That is because he does not consider,

. . . anything that is functionally — by its very nature — absolutely liberating. Liberty is a practice. So there may, in fact, always be a certain number of projects whose aim is to modify some constraints, to loosen, or even to break them, but none of these projects can, simply by its nature, assure that people will have liberty automatically, that it will be established by the project itself. The liberty of men is never assured by the institutions and laws that are intended to guarantee

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9 This particular remark made by Foucault is a part of an interview conducted by Paul Rabinow and Hubert Dreyfus at Berkley in April 1983. The question posed here to Foucault is — “Do you think that the Greeks offer an attractive and plausible alternative [to the lack of a foundational ethics on which to base the care of the self]?” (Rabinow, FR 343).
them. This is why almost all of these laws and institutions are quite capable of being turned around. Not because they are ambiguous, but simply because “liberty” is what must be exercised. (Rabinow, FR 245) 

What Foucault offers us here is a continual engagement with the practice of liberty without succumbing to the complacency of a free existence in a so-called libertarian system because according to Foucault, every system which claims to be democratic, rational or tolerant must be scanned for potential defects. The Foucauldian act of resistance is thus a delicate balancing and straddling of the insidious workings of power on the one hand, and the temptations of falling prey to the trappings of an authoritarian and power-ridden regime itself on the other hand. This positive resistance is a carving out of a self which is not governed and controlled by a “fascistic regime of power” and the fashioning of new and untrodden ways of approaching the relations of power.

In fact in Foucault’s opinion, revolutions involved “subversive recodifications of power relations” which however operated in compliance with the networks of power. Alan D. Schrift has rightly examined this concept as:

. . . it has become increasingly difficult to ignore the historical tendency of revolutions of the Left evolving into regimes of the Right. To examine our century is to find the oppressed overthrowing their oppressors, only to take their places without challenging the fundamental social dynamics which initially made possible their own oppression. (186)

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10 This interview titled, “Space, Knowledge and Power” with Foucault was conducted by Paul Rabinow and translated by Christian Hubert. It was published in Skyline in March 1982.
Thus, Foucault has problematized and brought under the scanner those very mechanisms and apparatuses of power which threaten to resist and overthrow power but end up becoming allied with the agencies of power themselves. In this post-Foucauldian era, we understand that power instead of being shaped like a hierarchical pyramid, is diffused and even more dangerous than before. It is for this reason that, “... those who are reputed to be the possessors of power may change, but the fundamental relations of power remain unaltered” (Schrift 187).

In this kind of scenario, charting out a defined course of strategic resistance becomes even more complicated and difficult. What we are left with is a “positive resistance” which is a tactful maneuvering between its deterioration into a reactionary act – which would entail its ultimate dependence upon power – and being an entirely independent force working outside and with no link to the relations of power it seeks to challenge. It is here that a parallel can be drawn between Foucault’s strategies of resistance and those proposed by Albert Camus, as there are striking similarities between the two. Camus in *The Rebel* states that metaphysical rebellion in its primary stages is positive because it derives its strength from the tension between complete negation and total submission. But when finally God is killed and the entire onus of creating a new rule of order, justice and unity falls on man, he begins to tire of the tension caused by the positive and negative nature of rebellion and gives in to one side completely. It is at this point when rebellion forgets its original purpose and values that it ceases to be rebellion. So, he traces that very fragile threshold on which the rebel stands and derives all his energy from the tension between the two opposing poles. The moment he abandons himself to any one side, rebellion turns into a revolution. Camus validates his argument by giving the instances of the likes of the Marquis de Sade. Camus says, “As with Sade also, the law of power is such that, if
you accept it when you are master, you cannot reject it if it turns against you. So, the key is neither to accept it nor to reject it” (The Rebel 37).

The Foucauldian act of resistance is therefore analogous with Camus’ notion of rebellion, which is aligned with the “absurd”. Camus in The Rebel raises the very pertinent question of whether it is possible to find a rule of conduct outside the realm of religion and of absolute values through revolt. Camus’ concept of rebellion is strikingly similar to Foucault’s concept of “aesthetics of existence” or “the arts of oneself”, which involves the cultivation of a self or working towards the creation of “a relationship of oneself with oneself”, as practiced in the Greco-Roman culture by means of various techniques. Just like Camus’ absurd is a reservoir, a source of creative resistance, similarly, Foucault’s resistance derives its being from the very tension pulling it apart in both directions. The moment it surrenders to either extreme, it ceases to be an act of resistance and becomes power itself. Yan Overfield Shaw has elucidated Camus’ absurd to be an intensifying experience if it is recognized, lived and penetrated through:

For Camus, the work of the philosopher (and the novelist) was no longer the creation of a system which could explain away or mitigate absurdity. It was rather one which would enable people to accept the consequences of absurdity, to face it squarely, and without hope of consolation. Camus names as lucid that reason which maintains an awareness of the absurd, and thus of its own limits, without capitulating to the twin errors of irrational hope (faith) or rational despair (suicide). Camus’ “absurd men” - the serial-lover, the actor and the conqueror - are those heroes who attempt to repeat, simulate or intensify through a Spartan and “virile” lucidity a lived, embodied
experience they know to be simultaneously meaningless and nonetheless their only alternative to the dreadful "collapse and nothingness" that lies beyond the universe. . . . [In fact] The work of art appears to the artist as the only way to preserve and concretize the "adventures" of his ephemeral consciousness. (10)

This intense awareness of the absurd and concretizing the experience of it through art seems to be the only way available to Pamuk’s characters who can be seen undergoing the pangs of an absurd experience when they live through their absurd existences and give them a face through art:

The realisation of death and thus of the absurd is a recurring theme in Pamuk's novels. In The Silent House, Dr. Selahatin Darvinoğlu’s late-Ottoman encyclopaedist project is an exercise in fruitlessness and futility. His book and ideas are plagued by his own imperious dismissal of the alternating incomprehension, indifference and superstitious hostility of his countrymen, are badly set-back by the republican change to the Latin alphabet, and are finally burned almost in their entirety by his strictly religious and murderous wife, Fatma, in a jealous rage. (Shaw 11)

Similarly, Selahattin’s wife Fatma, goes through a crisis of identity all through her life with an ensuing, stark awareness of her own absurd existence. Till the time she is alienated from her absurd existence she lives in torment, but it is only when she reconciles to the absurdity of life and celebrates it that she is liberated from her pain:

If a person can live in the same house for seventy years and still be confused, then this thing that we call life, and imagine we have used up, must be such a strange and incomprehensible thing that no one can
even know what their own life is. You stand there waiting and on it goes from place to place, no one knows why, and as it goes, you have many thoughts about where it’s been and where it’s headed; then just as you speak these strange thoughts, which aren’t right or wrong, and lead to no conclusion, you look, and the journey ends here . . . (SH 331-332)

Fatma’s awareness and consequent avowal of the absurd life gains momentum when she re-affirms her faith in books and reading. She concurs silently to herself that books are the only source of gaining an understanding of life. It is thus the activity of reading and re-reading, even in the face of confusions and perplexities that constitutes the ultimate and only means of survival for Fatma.

Similarly in TNL, Mehmet can only regain a hold over his life and instill some meaning into it by draining it out of all meaning. He devotes his life to writing and re-writing the same book repeatedly with renewed enthusiasm each day, much like Camus’ Sisyphus who can only find liberation from his eternal drudgery by immersing himself in it. However, this immersion into the meaningless by Pamuk’s characters should not be mistaken as a succumbing or a resignation to circumstances. It is an awareness of their absurdity and meaningless and an ensuing negotiation with it, instead of a surrendering to it. Foucault’s resistance is very similar to Camus’ absurd in that both involve an active engagement and negotiation with circumstances rather than a submission to the same.

For Althusser also this intense awareness and recognition of the characters’ participation in their own subjectification is the first step towards their resistance. He writes in “IIASA” that,
... to recognize that we are subjects and that we function in the practical rituals of the most elementary everyday life. . . this recognition only gives us the 'consciousness' of our incessant (eternal) practice of ideological recognition. . . but in no sense does it give us the (scientific) knowledge of the mechanism of this recognition. Now it is this knowledge that we have to reach . . . while speaking in ideology, and from within ideology we have to outline a discourse which tries to break with ideology, in order to dare to be the beginning of a scientific (i.e. subject-less) discourse on ideology. (LPOE)

Foucault has explained this ever-provisional act of resistance with reference to sado-masochism: “This mixture of rules and openness has the effect of intensifying sexual relations by introducing a perpetual novelty, a perpetual tension and a perpetual uncertainty which the simple consummation of the act lacks. The idea is also to make use of every part of the body as a sexual instrument” (Politics, Philosophy, Culture 226). Resistance in the Foucauldian schema can therefore be understood, analyzed and practiced only as a tentative, budding and throbbing potentiality which power carries within itself. It is that potential force which bears the power to defy power without succumbing to power itself. It can also be understood as an act which thrives only in the transitoriness of the present moment. Thus, Foucault suggests that, “Rather than speaking of an essential freedom, it would be better to speak of an “agonism” – of a relationship which is at the same time reciprocal incitation and struggle; less of a face-to-face confrontation which paralyses both sides than a permanent provocation” (The Subject and Power 222). This balancing act being performed continuously by resistance is nurtured and nourished by critique:
Critique . . . becomes for Foucault the means by which a subject can positively resist power through a testing of the limits of domination and subjection. . . . Critique allows us to view the field of possible action in terms of its possibility, and not only in the terms given us by power and knowledge. Through critique, through (and only through) the critical engagement with institutions and practices, we can more effectively resist our governance and our docility. (Hartmann 11)

In Snow, the theatre enthusiast and art zealot, Sunay Zaim exemplifies a critical engagement with agencies of fundamental religion or extremist military rule through the medium of art. Zaim, who aligns himself with the ideals of the great secular war-hero Ataturk, uses theatre as a medium to stage revolutions in Kars and to counter the hegemony of the fundamentalist ideologies of the adherents of the school of Political Islam. Art helps him to engage directly with the people of Kars and to address them. It is art again which helps him to critique the functioning of politics and cultural issues without submitting to any of the dominant discourses of the day. In fact, the nature of his critique is such that he converts his own life into an art form when he declares his fictitious death in the newspaper on stage while in performance, which strangely enough comes true. This can be read from the Foucauldian perspective as the highest care for the self wherein one’s entire life is turned into an Œuvre.

Sunay explains his decision to have his obituary notice published in the newspaper before his actual death as: “What I am trying to do is push the truths of art to their outer limits to become one with myth” (Snow 344). Sunay engages in a radical and active critique with the reigning fundamentalist ideology not only by sacrificing his own life but by converting his own sacrifice into a live theatrical performance.
Thus, it is only by transforming his own life into art and by blurring the boundaries between fiction and reality that Sunay is able to challenge and launch a scathing critique on the theatricality of theatre and the uncertainty of death. By way of his radical departure from the norms of conventional theatre, he inverts the discourse of the fictionality of art - his death leaving a stark message that art and life are one.

One can also view a strong current of critique in *TWC*, wherein Hoja is seen to be grappling with problems of time and space as defined by conventional parameters. Hoja’s lust for knowledge is not only limited to accumulating the existing knowledge but extends to creating new domains unknown to man. He wishes to discover new planets apart from the existing ones and wants to formulate new theories for the solar system. He problematizes man-made definitions of time and space and also wishes to remove the flaws in the current systems of time:

Hoja tried to work out how to calculate the times of prayer and fasting in northern countries where there was a great variation in the duration of day and night. . . . Another problem was whether or not there was a place on earth where people could face Mecca whichever way they turned. . . . He was thinking about how to develop a larger geared mechanism for a clock which would require setting and adjusting only once a month rather than once a week. After developing such a geared apparatus, he had it in mind to devise a clock that would need adjustment only once a year. (*TWC* 25-27)

The constant anxiety of Hoja and his inherent frustration to keep breaking the barriers of hitherto known knowledge and exploring and conquering the anonymous frontiers of knowledge inaccessible to humans is suggestive of an act of resistance. Just like Hoja tries desperately to grapple with problems of time and space, (he tries to
achieve an almost perfect synchrony and accuracy in man-made clocks and also makes a sincere effort to establish a perfect equilibrium between religious rituals like prayer and fasting and the Earth’s and planetary movements) and also tries to challenge and defy the established and received notions of knowledge in fields like astronomy and astrology, similarly in SH, the physician-philosopher Selahattin’s life is devoted to the cause of re-casting the received notions of knowledge into empirical moulds. He wants to document only those facts in his encyclopedia which are based upon his own observations and inquiries.

Hoja’s discoveries and inventions do not satiate his thirst for exploring the unknown and challenging the canons of knowledge but on the contrary, rouse it more. One of the reasons for this is that he yearns for a metaphysical, abstract realm of knowledge which is not easily accessible to the “fools” of the world. In fact, in TBB Galip’s quest for deciphering the mystery letters hidden in faces and Hoja’s yearnings for searching the ultimate truth and knowledge can be read as a radical re-assessment and a re-ordering of the normative canons of their era. It is a desire to look for knowledge beyond the human horizons of capacity and endeavor. It is this very quest which bears the potential of becoming an act of resistance when read from the Foucauldian perspective. Hoja surges himself forward into the man-defined realms of knowledge and time, disputes them, critiques them and wants to create new knowledge. While it is the reigning ideologies of art against which Sunay Zaim wages a revolution in Snow, it is man’s complacency and passivity regarding scientific knowledge which disturbs Hoja in TWC. Thus, Pamuk’s characters want to “sow the seeds of a new revival” and their anger is directed at the submissive compliance of the people and their tacit concurrence with the reigning discourses of knowledge. This anger is one of the key manifestations of the active resistance of Pamuk’s characters against a smug and ignorant mass ideology. Just like Hoja in TWC nurtures his fury against “fools”, a similar strain of anger is manifested through Dr. Selahattin’s
embittered and reclusive lifestyle in *SH*. In fact, the nature of Selahattin’s entire existence, including his “forty-eight-volume encyclopedia” are targeted at dispelling the ignorance of the fools of the East and to reclaim science as the new God.

Thus, we observe that writing and art constitute two of the most important tactical spaces within critique and serve as significant tools of resistance according to Foucault as well as Camus. Camus’ views on art render it absolutely detached from the realm of history. He believes that, “Art’s status as a possible remedy to the absurd and social ills is reciprocally dependent upon art’s autonomy from history, the market, or direct political concerns” (Simpson). In fact, Foucault’s project of the creation of selves and lives as artistic designs is analogous to Camus’ high opinion of art and the artists. Camus has aestheticized the entire project of rebellion: “The demands of rebellion are really, in part, aesthetic demands. Rebellion – and therefore the ethic of resistance to the absurd – is a mode of fabricating a universe, a characteristic which Camus believes is most clearly exemplified by the work of art” (Simpson).

Foucault has talked of “commentary” and “critique” as significant tactical acts which by their very nature engage in an active debate with discourse and resist its presupposed givens:

*Commentary* questions discourse as to what it says and intended to say; . . . to comment is to admit by definition an excess of the signified over the signifier. . . . there is always a certain amount of signified remaining that must be allowed to speak, while the signifier is always offered to us in an abundance that questions us . . . as to what it ‘means’. Signifier and signified thus assume a substantial autonomy that accords the treasure of a virtual signification to each of them separately; one may even exist without the other and begin to speak of itself: commentary resides in that supposed space. (*BC* xvi preface)
In his essay “What is Critique”? Foucault has defined critique as “... a means for a future or a truth that it will not know nor happen to be, it oversees a domain it would not want to police and is unable to regulate.” He also finds “something in critique that is akin to virtue” (42). Critique is understood by Foucault to be an attitude, “... as both partner and adversary to the arts of governing, as an act of defiance, as a challenge, as a way of limiting these arts of governing and sizing them up, transforming them, of finding a way to escape from them or, in any case, a way to displace them, with a basic distrust...” (44-45). In fact, he has accorded critical practice so much importance that he holds critique to be, “... the movement by which the subject gives himself the right to question truth on its effects of power and question power on its discourses of truth. ... Critique will be the art of voluntary insubordination, that of reflected intractability” (47).

Judith Butler has also given an extended commentary of Foucauldian critique in her essay “What is Critique? An Essay on Foucault’s Virtue”, in which she talks of the Foucauldian definition of virtue as being “... not only a way of complying with or conforming with pre-established norms. It is, more radically, a critical relation to those norms, one which for Foucault takes shape as a specific stylization of morality.” She also adds, “Moral experience has to do with a self-transformation prompted by a form of knowledge that is foreign to one’s own. And this form of moral experience will be different from the submission to a command” (6). Foucault has also noted that morality in general and moral codes in particular are fast disappearing, and therefore, “an aesthetics of existence is the right sort of thing to fill the void left by the disappearance of moral codes” (Brown 79).

11 This essay was originally published in a lecture given at the French Society of Philosophy on 27 May 1978. The essay includes questions and comments from scholars namely – Henri Gouhier, Henri Birault and Noel Mouloud. For details, see The Politics of Truth, by Michel Foucault, 1997.
This aesthetics of existence includes the practice of a stylization of one’s life and self. Thus, in the Foucauldian idiom, virtue can be understood as something with which we are not born, but which we can cultivate by practicing it in order to expose the limits of the epistemological field. We can observe a similar stylization of the self and morality and a practicing of a Foucauldian virtue in Pamuk’s characters whether in the Osman of TNL, Ka of Snow, the miniaturists of MNR or the Venetian narrator of TWC. The characters are seen to practice intentional techniques in which they practice virtue and stylize their lives.

This Foucauldian trait of cultivation of a virtuous and aesthetic being can be observed in MNR where ultimate freedom from a normative and submissive life for the miniaturists is envisioned by Enishte Effendi. He very well understands “how submission to the endless attacks of hojas, preachers, judges and mystics who accuse [them] of blasphemy, how the endless guilt both deadens and nourishes the artist’s imagination” (MNR 200). The life which the miniaturists strive to attain is one involving a critical relationship with the normative codes and institutions of their times, wherein their own life is liberated from the fear of living under submission and compliance. Enishte Effendi names this point as one of “genuine painting”. He defines “genuine painting” as, “hidden in the agony no one sees and no one creates. It’s contained in the picture, which on first sight, they’ll say is bad, incomplete, blasphemous or heretical. A genuine miniaturist knows he must reach that point, yet at the same time, he fears the loneliness that awaits him there” (MNR 201).

Thus, the Foucauldian self-transformation which the miniaturists in MNR desire to attain is by reaching this elusive point listed by Enishte Effendi of the “genuine painting” which ironically none of them has the boldness to “see or create”, and if a miniaturist desires to reach at this point, he must do so by becoming a murderer. Violence thus becomes a tool aiding in this process of self-liberation. In
fact, the murderer in MNR confesses the potent force of great art which contains within it the power to challenge long-standing discourses and resist the disciplinary apparatuses of power by establishing new parameters of beauty, love, grief and life: “A great painter does not content himself by affecting us with his masterpieces; ultimately, he succeeds in changing the landscape of our minds. Once a miniaturist’s artistry enters our souls this way, it becomes the criterion for the beauty of our world” (MNR 195). This claim by Olive is substantiated by the story of Sheikh Muhammad who “spent the last thirty years of his life hunting down his own works. However, in the books he perused, he increasingly discovered imitations inspired by him rather than his original work.” What he discovered was a deluge of “two generations of artists” who had adopted Sheikh Muhammad’s style of illustrations and had “reproduced them in countless books” thereby not only mocking the Sheikh’s desire to completely annihilate his own art, but also paradoxically overturning it. The Sheikh realized “that his work, instead of disappearing, actually proliferated and increased; he understood that everybody now saw the world the way he had seen it” (MNR 195).

The episode of Sheikh Muhammad encapsulated in Olive’s claim about great art altering the very “landscapes of our minds” is significant in that it tells us about the liberating and revolutionary powers inherent within art. In Pamuk’s worldview, art contains tremendous powers to dislodge and de-stabilize the disciplinary apparatuses.

Foucault has envisaged an active self-creation which can resist letting the self be transformed into a subject. He proposes a variety of techniques for this which he has broadly categorized under the terms “aesthetics of existence” or the “care of the self”. “Caring for oneself involves intensifying experience. . . . Intensifying experience, in turn, requires noticing that experience is constructed outside of
ourselves” (Brown 83). In fact, Foucault’s entire corpus rests on the concept of “exteriority”. In his view, there is no interior agency or intentionality within us, to the extent that our minds do not create or add on to knowledge; it is rather the other way round. As the famous surrealist painter Rene Magritte has put it, “[Thought] becomes what the world offers it” (This is not a pipe 47). Deleuze has also explained the concept of exteriority as: “The outside is not a fixed limit but a moving matter animated by peristaltic movements, folds and folding, that together make up an inside: they are not something other than the outside, but precisely the inside of the outside. . . . The unthought is therefore not external to thought but lies at its very heart” (Foucault 96-97). This “unthought of” is what Foucault is interested in. It is a space beyond intelligibility which must be experienced if one is to actively resist subject-formation.

Extending the same line of thought to resistance, we need “...to understand how one can find pleasure without the intense self-awareness our culture tells us exists” (Brown 83). Thus, an active creation of alternate discourses of understanding is followed by Pamuk’s characters. For instance in TBB, we can observe Galip creating an alternative discourse for himself through the Foucauldian technique of “askesis, that should be understood as a training of the self by oneself” (Ethics 208). Within the broader technique of askesis, the Hupomnemata is an extremely significant tactic. The Hupomnemata which according to Foucault are “...a material record of things read, heard, or thought, thus offering them up as a kind of accumulated treasure for subsequent rereading and meditation” (Ethics 209) is also practiced by Pamuk’s characters as a means of understanding their selves better and for liberating themselves from the dictates of disciplinarian regimes. “The Hupomnemata, whose role is to enable the formation of the self out of the collected discourse of others...”
(Ethics 217) functions as an active device in TBB which helps Galip - who pores over Celal’s writings and absorbs and assimilates them as his own - to invent his own self. In fact, TBB is nothing but Galip’s search for his own self, a self which is unencroached upon either by his alter-ego as symbolized by Celal or by his world of illusory dreams as symbolized by Ruya. However, in “Self-writing” Foucault makes it clear that the Huponnemata do not constitute narrating about oneself and the practice sharply differs from a regular confession aimed at having a therapeutic value. The purpose of the Huponnemata is not “... to pursue the unspeakable, nor to reveal the hidden, nor to say the unsaid, but on the contrary to capture the already-said, to collect what one has managed to hear or read, and for a purpose that is nothing less than the shaping of the self” (Ethics 210-211).

Thus, Galip invents a de-subjectified self for himself by engaging in an active critique with all the normative institutions dictating his life. It is at this point that he makes use of intensive writing and reading through which he invents a self which is free of discursive controls. We can also observe Mehmet of TNL using the constant re-writing and re-reading as meditative tools in order to invent his true self. In fact, Foucault has explained Huponnemata to be most effective when it is based upon a “correspondence”:

Practice of the care of the self is similar to the practice of playing sports, or playing a musical instrument. In all three cases, the support and advice of another is a valuable tool for improvement. The care of the self is more effective when two people engage in a reciprocal relationship, each one helping the other with the “soul’s labor upon itself.” Correspondence was one of the ways in which this reciprocal relationship was possible. (Swonger 22)
Thus, we can observe Galip engaged in an intense correspondence with Celal’s writings in TBB, Mehmet dedicating his remaining life to re-reading and re-writing the same book in TNL, and Hoja and the Venetian caught up in the frenzy of establishing a connection with each other’s thoughts, memories, guilt, fears and past life in TWC. All these characters keenly desire to “reveal their souls” to their partner wherein, “The final goal for both people involved in a correspondence is care of the self” (Swonger 22).

In TWC, Hoja is the restless scientist who wants to “dispute Ptolemy’s system” and wants to include “a number of new planets in his observations for a much wider cosmography, producing theories for a new system” (TWC 24). Hoja’s character manifests the perfect instance of one who resists being a channel and an agency of the discursive formations by inventing new and alternative discourses. Hoja also proposes, “that the Earth might, like the sun, be revolving around something else, perhaps all the stars turned around some other heavenly centre of whose existence we had no knowledge” (TWC 24). Ptolemy was a Greco-Roman mathematician and astronomer and by contesting his findings and theories, Hoja intends to create and disseminate new and uncharted knowledge which eventually becomes a very important tool of his resistance.

As Foucault in volume II of HS describes how individuals participate in discursive structures to “transform themselves, to change themselves in their singular being, and to make their life into an oeuvre that carries certain aesthetic values and meets certain stylistic criteria” (10), we can observe a similar struggle in Pamuk’s MNR. The miniaturists’ compulsive obsession with blending and merging their own lives into their art thereby eliminating all distinctions between the two is evidence to Foucault’s argument.
Heterotopia or Spatial Resistance

Heterotopia or the interstitial spaces of resistance and transformation abound in Pamuk’s works. Foucault defines Heterotopias as spaces which are characterized by their exteriority to everyday social and institutional spaces. Some of the examples which Foucault gives for Heterotopic spaces are trains, motels and cemeteries. These are interstitial spaces, which lie between two entities and undermine all possibilities of language formation, syntax and meaning, while also threatening all previously defined certainties.

Pamuk’s characters exist in multiple spaces owing to their travels, exiles or journeys undertaken within their own cities. They are not rooted to any single space as Pamuk lets them wander through multiple locations which is a very important factor facilitating their eventual freedom from the rigors of being tied down to a single space and the discourses governing that space. Their experiences and identities also exist in a state of flux owing to their being suspended in a space which does not fall within any institutional, social or political space. Their alienation from their place of birth, whether voluntary or externally imposed, marks a rupture in their existence, identities, thought and their relationships with the discursive apparatuses. This rupture or break is very crucial for them as it helps them look at the world around them with different eyes. Also, the characters once displaced from their homes can never manage to find a way back to their roots. However, it is this very rupture or dislocation from the roots of their homelands which nourishes and nurtures their creativity. In Snow, Sunay Zaim confesses to having toured and travelled through the remotest regions of Anatolia with his wife, working as “theatrical entertainers at weddings and dance halls”, and having suffered the worst forms of torture and abuse. Yet, he also realizes that with all that disruption in his life, he was bestowed with a

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new-found creativity: “. . . they learned to love my plays and the freedom and
happiness that my theatre company brought them” (Snow 199).

Similarly, in Snow, “Ka’s spatial alienation, as a melancholic metropolitan
intellectual, from the people of the Anatolian . . . ‘provinces’” (Erturk 637) makes him
a complete outsider from his own land and therefore an exile in every sense –
physical, spiritual and psychological. He is not only physically alienated from Turkey,
but also emotionally and spiritually: “Ka is a drifter whose politics are well
overshadowed by his poetry and by his obsessional love for Ipek . . .” (Battersby).
The crisis which Ka goes through regarding the acceptance of a Turkish religion or a
Western God is one of the fallouts of his scattered roots. Similarly in TNL, the
characters, Osman, Janan and Mehmet deliberately uproot their secure existences and
start leading their lives through travels in buses. In SH too, the physician Selahattin
and his wife Fatma are political exiles in Cennethisar and they can never get back to
their city. TWC again is based upon the life story of the captured Venetian in Istanbul
who makes the city his new home never to return to his own country.

Therefore, the window through which these characters see the world is no
longer the same as everyone else’s. It is this spatial dislocation of the characters
which make their bodies and minds slippery for the disciplinary apparatuses to lay a
control over. This rupture in space emerges as a point from which the journey of the
characters towards their de-subjectification begins. In fact, Pamuk not only makes his
characters suffer a spatial dislocation, but also his readers. The readers of Pamuk’s
fiction cannot afford to passively consume his stories and characters while
maintaining a distance from them. In works like MNR, SH and TBB, the readers must
grapple with various perspectives and voices without according any privileged status
to any one of them. The readers must not allow their reading to condense into
opinions at any time and must keep shedding off their understanding of a character’s perspective when the new perspective comes on. This continuous juggling of various perspectives leads to a spatial dislocation for the readers as well, and prevents the readers from fossilizing any particular discourse or perspective. Esra Almas explains this oppositional tactic used by Pamuk with reference to MNR as:

In this novel, which is narrated through multiple voices, perspective is neither transparent nor does it offer direct access to its object. On the contrary, the use of multiple perspectives draws attention to perspective itself, encouraging us to look “at” it rather than “through” it. The novel invites its readers to adopt an unsteady vantage point that requires constant reconfiguration and readjustment. (79)

In almost every chapter of TBB, there is a fixation with identity plagiarism and the need to construct an identity which is unadulterated by any encroachment from the outside. TBB contains the story of a prince who is obsessed with his quest for an authentic identity, a mannequin maker who is tormented by the changing scenario of Istanbul where the identity of the Turkish people has been appropriated and influenced by models and figures from Western countries, and a brothel in which Turkish women pretend to be well-known film actresses. All these stories point towards just one direction – the jumble of identities out of which one has to extricate and re-invent one’s own identity.

In the chapter “The Story of the Crown Prince” in TBB, Prince Osman Celalettin Effendi struggles against his own thoughts which he feels, are merely a repository of other people’s thoughts. He contains the painful awareness that his own mind is a warehouse built up of traces of other people’s minds and that his own identity can never be disentangled from the clutter of other people’s identities unless
he demarcates his own thoughts from the others’. The prince engages in a complex battle against wiping out all traces of other voices from his own voice: “the only way to find one’s own voice was to produce a voice that could shout all the other voices down . . . . So to dictate his thoughts was to create a battlefield in which he held the advantage – or so he thought” (TBB 419). The “battlefield” is the space where multiple voices meet and clash and on which the prince desires to have his own voice emerge victorious. However, what he fails to realize is that in any resistant space the relations amongst the various agencies could be equal or unequal and do not remain static for any given time. Just as power is diffused and operates through various points and flows across grids in all directions, similarly forces of resistance, since they emanate from power in the first place, also cannot flow in unilinear directions.

In *Snow*, Ka meets Necip to have a dialogue with him regarding atheism in the men’s rooms amongst the urinals. It is in this out-of-bounds space, lying beyond the places governed by discursive rules of secularism or religious fundamentalism, that an alternative discourse and a creative exchange of ideas flows between Necip and Ka. It is in this fecal and ignominious space that the fearful and imaginary landscape of the place where God does not exist as imagined by Necip, becomes a part of Ka’s celebrated poem “Snow”. The urinal space brings about a crisis and disruption in the normative flow of power and knowledge relations. It also becomes a sort of blasphemous and rebellious gesture to hold a discussion regarding God and religion or the absence of them in a space indicative of scatology.

In *TNL*, before making up his mind to kill his ghostly double Mehmet - the man who had managed to understand the meaning proffered by the “new life”, Osman ruminates: “I was nowhere and everywhere; and that is why it seemed to me I was in the nonexistent center of the world” (TNL 209). When Osman hires a room in a hotel opposite the room to where Mehmet is staying, he seems to exist at the exteriority of
events. A “nonexistent center” implies a space lying at the exteriority of everything, a space which is created by the resident himself. It is a space which reminds us of the Deleuzean concept of the fold,\(^{12}\) in which the inside is merely the outside folded in. This stark realization by Osman of his own self as being a production of the outside world is very significant in his final understanding of the promise held forth by the “new life”.

Since the first step by which Pamuk’s characters begin to understand their subjectification is their realization and awareness of the same, it becomes important to understand what Foucault had exactly meant by the discursive practice of meditation. In “My Body, This Paper, This Fire”, Foucault has dealt with the subject of meditation in order to better understand the title of Descartes’ work *Meditations*:

A “meditation” produces, as so many discursive events, new utterances that carry with them a series of modifications of the enunciating subject: through what is said in meditation, the subject passes from darkness to light, from impurity to purity, from the constraints of passions to detachment, from uncertainty and disordered movements to the serenity of wisdom, and so on. In meditation, the subject is ceaselessly altered by his own movement; his discourse provokes effects within which he is caught; it exposes him to risks, makes him pass through trials or temptations, produces states in him, and confers on him a status or qualification he did not hold at the initial moment. In short, meditation implies a mobile subject modifiable through the effect of the discursive events that take place. (405-406)\(^{13}\)

\(^{12}\) Deleuze introduced the concept of the “fold” in his book on Leibniz titled *The Fold.*

The spatial dislocation can also be traced in all of Pamuk’s works in the form of a vanishing act which is achieved with much finesse by any one of the principal characters in the novels. F.M. Ucuncu’s writings revealed to Galip in TBB, encapsulate this very spatial dislocation of the characters or “to vanish without a trace” as one of the fundamental prerequisites of “reestablishing the mystery that had been lost” (TBB 305). In effect, the very vanishing of Celal and Ruya from the narrative and from Galip’s world can be read in Foucauldian terms of a spatial dislocation of sorts. Understanding it from this perspective, the reader comes across many instances of “spatial dislocation or re-ordering” strewn across the landscape of Pamuk’s novels.

Not only can the discursive structures be seen as shifting, adjusting and fighting to lay claim to the subjects’ bodies, but the spatio-temporal structure of the narrative can also be seen as re-allocating itself in terms of past, present and future. Asli Ozgen Tuncer has observed in her article on Orhan Pamuk:

Pamuk meticulously sets up his multilevel narratives that shift between rooms, observe the world through windows and mirrors and burrow deep into the soil and sea-beds upon which his cities and towns are built. In postmodern style, this architecture is reflexive insofar as it is labyrinthine and folds back on itself . . . . To the extent that it articulates paradoxical spaces, Pamuk’s MNR may be considered an exemplary postmodernist narrative, which deconstructs representational demarcations of space and surface. (10)

A paradoxical space can be understood then, as a space which simultaneously lodges two or more spaces or one which straddles multiple spaces only in order to lend an existence to its own self. These spaces can also be read as the Foucauldian
“heterotopias” whose role Foucault claims, “is to create a space of illusion that exposes every real space, all the sites inside of which human life is partitioned, as still more illusory” (“Of Other Spaces” 27).

One of the significant instances of such paradoxical spaces in MNR is the realm of darkness which each of the miniaturists desire eagerly to enter. This realm of darkness is symbolic of the privileged domain of the most talented miniaturists, and a reward personally conferred by Allah. This space of darkness can only be gained an access to by losing one’s eyesight and is symptomatic of the excellence attained by the miniaturist in his field. Thus all the great miniaturists long to “seek that profound void within color and outside time”, as they have understood “that color and sight arose from darkness, and [they] longed to return to Allah’s blackness by means of color” (MNR 92). The masters also believe that only the miniaturist who had attained this glorious tribute of blindness could see the colors and glories of the world in their “purest form”. Olive narrates a similar story of the great master miniaturist Mirek’s blindness to Black and sums up by saying, “Blindness is a realm of bliss from which the Devil and guilt are barred” (MNR 99). The story of this yearning of the great masters of miniature art to willingly disrupt their sensory pleasures of sight in order to see and know more and better can be read as a paradoxical space or a spatial dislocation in Pamuk’s MNR. This realm of blindness and darkness is represented and understood as a space inhabited by a “blind memory”. As Olive explains to Black through his narrative of the miniaturist Mirek, painting can only happen through memory and “for even the most miserable illustrator, a picture is possible only through memory” (MNR 97). Thus, the great miniaturists according to Olive spent their lives in “preparation for both the resulting bliss of blindness and blind memory” (MNR 97). This space of “blind memory” constitutes the heterotopic space in MNR.
where all great miniaturists and illustrators desire to reach and which they equate as being synonymous with Allah’s abode.

Another instance of this heterotopic or a paradoxical space is the “stage” in Pamuk’s *Snow* which stands in exteriority to all other real spaces in Kars and yet shows those spaces to be illusory through its own theatrical and artistic representations of religion, politics and individual identity of the people of Kars. Sunay Zaim stages all his violent and bloody, revolutionary coups on this heterotopic space of the stage, which not only effects a massive spatial dislocation of the events in Kars but also brings about a re-ordering and dislodgment of the way these events are comprehended and dealt with by the people of Kars. A major conceptual re-alignment of religion and politics is brought about by Zaim in the people’s minds through the medium of the stage. While the plays which are staged are revolutionary in fervor and are infused with the spirit of secular ideals, they also remind us of the very tenuous lines between violence and art and between revolution and life.

The desire for liberating the self through a heterotopic space can also be read as a powerful undertone in *SH*. The angst-ridden historian Faruk wishes to occupy a space from where he can “portray the world from start to finish” (*SH* 231). He envies the guilt-free travelogues of Evliya Celebi and “wished [he] could put [himself] in his place” (*SH* 230). Faruk is a confused historian who is subjectified to “the strange worms of history . . . wandering through the folds of [his] brain.” He wishes to reconstruct and document history in the form of “a seamless picture of things”, “without inserting [his] own judgments at all.” Faruk wishes to seize “the naked reality of everything” and to describe things as they are. (*SH* 232) He wants to cleanse the documentation of history from the “worms” of judgment and opinion. This point where Faruk wishes to reach and liberate himself all throughout the narrative is
metaphorically expressed in the form of the mountain peak where he drives along with his sister Nilgun. He expresses his desire of attaining that stark view of things, reality and history, free from all viewpoints and stories, by confessing to Nilgun: “Wherever we can have the best view of everything. All of it together . . . . Maybe if I can see everything at once” (SH 236).

Faruk enviously wonders how Evliya Celebi “managed to see himself from the outside, as though looking at someone else.” Faruk realizes with heavy guilt that how much ever he tries to render reality as it is, without a beginning and an end, he always fails: “What I’d wind up doing and what I’d intended, the things as they are and my judgments of them, they would all get mixed up together, and no matter how painstakingly I pressed my nose against the surfaces of things, I’d never be able to establish as direct and true a relationship as Evliya had” (SH 230, 231).

The realization that the world is a place to be described and experienced as it is, gnaws within Faruk as that heterotopic space from where he can liberate his self which is inextricably bound with history. This potential site of liberation where Faruk strives to reach, glimmers all throughout the narratives of Pamuk’s works as a space of resistance.

**Problematizing Identity**

Pamuk has problematized the quest for a unique identity almost to the verge of making his characters go berserk with this chase – “I must be myself” (TBB) and “Why am I what I am?” (TWC). The identities conferred on them by the various institutions of power and knowledge are acknowledged painstakingly by his subjectified characters, who go on to embark on a journey of inventing their own, unencroached and unadulterated identities. This quest of Pamuk’s characters is very Foucauldian, in the sense that Foucault believed in “self-becoming” and not “self-
discovery” as a tool to invent one’s own identity. However, Foucault’s politics of resistance is one which leaves people alone “... to be as self-inventive or as banal as they liked. In an interview he said, “The search for a form of morality acceptable by everyone in the sense that everyone would have to submit to it, seems catastrophic to me.”14 Foucault’s agendas for a resistant politics are thus never coercive and do not force people “to become more autonomous” (Rorty 194). Therefore, the desire to search and define one’s own identity though a compulsive and obsessive quest for Pamuk’s characters is not defined by any common, systematic and organized strategy but their very own suffering and their stark awareness of the same. Each one of the characters adopts his/her own unique tactics in order to resist his/her subjecthood.

The metaphor of the doppelganger or the ghostly double of the protagonist can be seen operating in TWC, TBB and TNL as a glimmering potential of the de-subjectified self of the subject protagonist, which can be read as a kind of an “ethical self” in Foucauldian terms. The protagonist subject in all the three books mentioned above, embarks on a chase and his body double exists only in so far as to lead him and guide him in his journey. The body double is not a concrete character but a personification or a reflection of the de-subjectified psyche of the subjectified protagonist. For instance in TBB, Celal can be read as the doppelganger or the ethical and de-subjectified self of Galip whose own body is turned into a floating signifier by various discursive struggles. Thus, “In terms of conspiracy, the double, traitor, or mole functions to subvert fixed sites of identity” (Goknar 189).

One of the significant tools which Pamuk introduces into his narratives is “style”, specifically “personal style” which becomes a recurring and pertinent metaphor for the discovery of one’s true selfhood, as in TBB, the anonymous voice

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reminds Galip on phone (taking him to be Celal) that, “style was your way of thinking. Style was your true self” *(TBB 354)*.

In *MNR*, the polemic of whether or not a miniaturist should possess and flaunt unapologetically a personal style, runs through the entire text. In fact, possessing or rather discovering and then maintaining one’s own personal style becomes redolent of the creation of one’s selfhood, which is untainted by the trappings of the socio-cultural milieu. However, it is also ironical that once this creation of a personal selfhood has been made, it must be guarded more than one’s life. It must be protected from the onslaught of cultural conditioning and it is for this reason that the miniaturists – who have managed to discover and maintain their personal style – keep it safeguarded and masqueraded within the intricacies of their miniature art.

It is certainly not something which if once invented will be flaunted and brandished by the miniaturist. It must be kept secretly hidden lest it too becomes a part of the characters’ subjectified existence. Personal style or selfhood thus functions as a detachable and privileged signifier of access of a subject to his de-subjectified self.

**Erasing Time and History**

The flow of time is challenged in Pamuk’s fiction as the past, present and future merge into one atemporal surreality. In fact, the sequential passage of time and its conventional division into the three zones is disrupted, so much so, that the characters find themselves existing and operating freely across various time zones.

Temporal disciplining works on a much more complex and psychological level as compared to spatial disciplining as it involves keeping alive and in good shape, the entire cultural collective consciousness of the people. Memories and
traditions become the two most important abstract components of a cultural collective consciousness of a people and as long as the two are preserved and passed on intact from one generation to the other, at least the rules of discursive formations will continue to function as status quo.

It is these very two components of memory and tradition which are shown as disintegrating and collapsing in Pamuk’s works thereby threatening the delicately preserved normative order. In TNL, Osman desperately yearns to suffer a spatial and temporal dislocation which he thinks would yield to him “the threshold of another kind of life” (TNL 57). Osman frantically goes in search of moments of crisis and pure eruptions. He wishes to exist in the meta-spatial and meta-temporal hemispheres which lie beyond human control. He wants to experience moments which promise nothing except a continuous transience and uncertainty. He wants to straddle the tentativity and precariousness of a moment of crisis: “I really wanted to be someplace else, in a time other than this, like that felicitous moment of being when one has not yet chosen between life and death . . .” (TNL 54). Although, the moments of crisis or ruptures do not yield any promised land of hopes to Osman, yet he does eventually manage to achieve the delicate balance between the two extremes of meta-spatial and meta-temporal encounters and worldly space and time, and liberate himself from the discursive apparatuses of time and space.

“The hour of zero gravity” and “the peaceful garden that exists between the two worlds” is sought after by Osman all throughout his bus journeys, but they never yield to him anything except an elusive “whiff of new life and death”. Osman realizes that his alter-ego Nahit’s transformation into a new self is the result of an “equilibrium where things would remain in stasis for good . . . The composure that came from the equilibrium he had discovered had granted him infinite time” (TNL
This “infinite time” which Osman enviously yearns for is the breaking point of temporal disciplining. It is at this point that one’s self is liberated from the normative restraints of disciplinary time. Osman manages to grasp the secret of Nahit’s transformation as one in which he would be unaffected even if Osman pulled the trigger and killed him because he “had arrived at the stillness of eternal time through the act of writing. He would only proceed on his way, albeit in a different form, within time that was at a standstill” (TNL 214-215).

This desire to exist in a meta-spatial and meta-temporal world is one of the fundamental contradictions in man. Albert Camus in The Rebel explains this contradictory desire within humans as one,

... to control the course of the river, to understand life, at last destiny.
... But this vision which in the realm of consciousness at least, will reconcile them with themselves, can only appear, if it ever does appear, at the fugitive moment which is death, and in which everything is consummated. In order to exist just once in the world, it is necessary never again to exist. (226)

This “fugitive moment” or the “angel” as Osman, Janan and Mehmet call it, lies at the threshold of life and death and is sought for desperately by Osman in TNL. He eagerly awaits accidents which he feels would take him “to death’s door” so that he “may become someone else.” In order to invite accidents and to lessen the play of probability, he “looked for the least safe bus, chose the route with the most curves, and canvassed the personnel coffee shops for the driver who was the most sleep-deprived...” In fact, Osman ends up deducing a “simple logic” from his muddled head filled with ideas of a “new life”: “What is time? An accident! What is life?
Time! What is accident? A life, a new life! ... I resolved to forego bus terminals, O Angel, and go straight to the scenes of accidents” (TNL 55, 56).

However, it is ironical that only in that split-second intersection between life and death, Osman encounters the “angel” for whom he has waited all his life: “I knew from the sense of playfulness, the sense of lightness, the sense of freedom I felt inside me that I had recognized the angel” (TNL 294). The irony becomes even starker as Osman realizes only on the verge of his death that all his questions searching for the new life will forever remain unanswered, but it is precisely this very realization of the perpetual uncertainty plaguing human existence, which comes as an answer to him: “The angel was as pitiless as it was distant and wondrous. Not because it wished to be so, but because it was only a witness and could do nothing more . . . . I felt the unbearable power of what was merciless and inevitable” (TNL 295). The “angel” which can be read in terms of the ultimate signified or a divine manifestation, an absolute signified which would decipher all signifiers with certainty once and for all, tricks Osman and many others like him into believing in its existence and ability to provide “a new life”. And when Osman has realized the deceptive nature of represented manifestations of the ultimate meaning, it is too late. His knowledge of the new life is only gained by “crossing over into the new life” that is death, of which he had absolutely no wish or desire for. (TNL 296) Similarly, Galip’s journey to search Celal and his wife Ruya in TBB is not so much a journey of search, but his desire to obtain an inter-temporal and an inter-spatial insight of getting to fathom the pre-discursive experiences or to understand the workings of the epistemic configurations of the day.

In TBB, Galip is sporadically threatened by bouts of amnesiac attacks and Celal suffers from almost a complete memory loss. Celal happens to meet an old
pharmacist who was also “suffering from insomnia and memory loss” (TBB 134). The pharmacist as Celal recalls, found “himself caught inside a nameless, featureless, odorless, colorless world where time itself had stopped; it was, he said, something akin to what foreign magazines call “the other side of the moon” (TBB 134). This “drying” up of the memory is a fruitful sign which bears within it the potential of liberating the subject from the clutches of the historical past. Unless and until, all traces of history are expunged from the body and soul of the subject, he will always remain slave to his past, thinking and acting out his present only in terms of the fossilized past.

In Celal’s case, the traces of history are in the process of being wiped clean: “What a pity I can no longer avail myself of my “secret archive, now that my memory is failing me” (TBB 178). The past or the historical essence of the subject’s body, soul and psyche must be completely obliterated before any new experience, emotion, feeling or sensation can be undergone by the self, sans the historical ethos appended to each of them. In order to withstand the rigid classification of the time-tables of a disciplinary society, Celal in TBB blurs timelines. The past, present and future is blurred and mixed up in an effort to re-create and re-organize time according to his own self: “Because it was one of Celal’s trademarks to mix objects dating back centuries with those from his own past” (TBB 21).

In fact, even if we see the web of stories within stories in TBB, their characters are all seething with the same desire of wanting to escape their own selves and the tremendous burden of their own memories. Memory, instead of becoming a sanctuary or a museum of the past life of a person, which he/she could re-visit anytime and feel happy, becomes a suffocating and constricting presence against which a person must battle every moment of his/her life. In “The Story of the Crown Prince”, Prince
Osman Celalettin Efendi spends his entire life waging war against all those thoughts, books, objects and memories which prevent him from becoming himself and lure him to lose his own self: “The Scribe would then write how, even as the Prince was getting rid of his furniture . . . he was also going for the throats of all the memories that made him into someone else.” The characters of Pamuk’s fiction realize that it is imperative for them to “resist the haphazard drift of random memories that might keep [them] from remaining [themselves]” but they are nevertheless sucked into the abyss of memory against their will. *(TBB 428)*

Thus, we can find that the traces of human history are not only deeply embedded within the constructed subject’s psyche but constitute its very core. Now, if the subject has to re-construct and re-figure itself anew, it must dismantle its very constitutive elements, the most significant of which is human memory. Past reminiscences occupy the position of a normative keyhole through which we must all look, if at all we are to make sense of our present. Our present is always a kind of a poor legacy of the good old past which can only be constantly re-introduced into our everyday existence by means of the human memory. Human memory thus becomes a sort of an extremely efficient enabling mechanism of homogenizing the variations in time and of facilitating each one of us to get access to the fossilized codes of human life and experience. Human memory acts as a normalizer of the past, present and future, thereby thwarting the self to living any experience through an ahistorical or an atemporal consciousness. Celal’s memory in *TBB*, though failing of its own accord, yet acts as a very conducive function of bringing about and accelerating his de-subjectification.

Challenging and de-stabilizing this notion of time is a very important technique of deliberately inducing chaos into the lives of the subjectified characters
and provoking them to question and finally overthrow all their bonding to the linear perspective of history. In other words, Pamuk’s characters move towards de-subjectifying their selves by ahistoricizing and atemporalizing themselves.

Elaborating this perspective of time and history, Christopher Nash has observed in *The unraveling of the postmodern mind* that, “In Postmodern narrative, time-driven existence may give way . . . to a vision where events are flattened out into a ‘still life’, a tableau, a surface without depth or perspective. (Realism with its sense of perspective thus becomes a ‘hiccup’ in the history of human understanding).” Nash further states that other historically objective and universal co-ordinates of “space” and “sight – ‘the realistic sense’” are challenged in a postmodern fictional narrative. Nash talking of “sight” says that, “That privileged faculty in realistic fiction – can become compulsive, and stretched to the limit” (15). This questioning of the authenticity of one’s own senses is a recurring device which is employed by Pamuk to help de-stabilize his subjectified characters. As Osman in *TNL* ponders: “How magical it is to see the world not through the keyholes we call our eyes but for an instant through the logic of another sort of lens” (*TNL* 255).

Another very important symbol which is used in a postmodern narrative and especially in Pamuk is the “mirror”. The mirror acts as a perfect device for inventing and doubling the self and reality and creating a hyper-real which ultimately helps the character to question the reality and truth of his own self. Nash talks of the function of a mirror in a postmodern narrative as, “. . . showing never our self but its double and in reverse, a negative we can never put right without a further mirror, ever distancing us from ourselves . . . .In mirrors characters see their doubles, their ‘others’; characters lose time, shatter, go mad, pass out of reality, dissolve” (15). In *TBB*, there
are many instances of the mirrors functioning as postmodern devices which further the dissolution of constructed social identities, like the chapter “Mysterious Paintings” in which Beyoglu’s famous gangster holds a painting competition in which his pleasure palace is to be decorated with a painting of unsurpassed beauty reflecting the “scenes of the city.” Two artists come forward to compete with each other and after a period of one hundred and eighty days, with a partition of a “thick curtain” between them, they emerge. One painting depicts a “splendid view of Istanbul”, while the other artist has merely put up a mirror opposite the first painting reflecting the former. However, it is unanimously decided that the scene in the “mirror painting” seemed “brighter, finer and more beautiful than the original.” Following this, whoever happens to cast their eyes on the two paintings re-affirms that the objects in the mirror seem brighter, lighter and more real than those in depicted in its original. To many, the mirror painting also contains objects different from those in its original. There are numerous instances of discrepancies being noted by the customers and viewers of the two paintings, which remain unsolved. (TBB 397-402)

In the chapter “Look Who’s Here” in TBB, when Galip has a sexual encounter with a lookalike of a famous Turkish actress called Turkan Soray, they both observe each other and their lovemaking in the mirror which yields a realm of hyper-reality and stretches Galip’s imagination beyond what his worldly sense of sight can offer him. He feels that, “the woman’s back [in the mirror] was more beautiful than the original” (TBB 144). Thus, a glance into the looking glass launches forth a world of infinite possibilities and alternatives for the characters who get these glimpses repeatedly through the constricting and ordered nature of their lives.

However, the employment of this typically postmodern condition of an “irresoluble hesitation and aporia” (Nash 17) is not merely done by Pamuk for
generating doubles and an eternal chaos. Re-reading these postmodernist signs and emblems of self-referentiality, self-reflexivity, dissolution of the self and reality into a mass of linguistic signs and a perennial "estrangement from ourselves" (Nash 15) and many others from a Foucauldian point of view, gives them a significance and a raison-d’être which is much more than merely reflecting the indeterminacy of the age in which we live. These postmodern symbols become tactical assemblages or strategic, focal points or in Foucault’s terminology, the technologies of power which serve to de-stabilize, de-temporalize, de-historicize and de-spatialize the subjectified characters. These metaphors make the characters lose their grip on sanity and memory and their subjectified selves are disordered and disorganized, in order for them to realize and re-invent their own selves.

In TBB, Celal very unapologetically and ruthlessly plagiarizes from his own writings, which is seen in the Foucauldian frame as symptomatic of a subject being an unsuspecting product of the epistemic configurations of his own era and yet wanting to re-configure his own foundations. Celal’s self is a de-subjectified self which re-iterates or replicates his own writings, that is, which produces truth or rather the “games of truth”, but the repetition is each time with a difference. In TNL for instance, we can observe a similar creation of a difference by means of a repetitive act:

... the protagonist keeps reading and rereading a book (which also happens to be the book we are reading) whose meaning can only be understood in terms of other works. In its madcap multiplication of texts that ricochet off each other, Pamuk’s book shows that difference is created out of similarity. There are thirteen Mehmets, each of whom is a different person, even though they all share the predicament of
being the original readers of the book who were mesmerized by it.

Reminiscent of Borges, one of the Mehmets, who was originally Nahit but then became Osman, argues that when he copies the same text over and over, even though the text may remain the same, he still produces an original book. Each repetition yields difference by virtue of the very act of repetition itself. (Erol 408-409)

Extending the same line of thought to TBB, “Celal threw in an image plundered from one of his own earlier columns” and, “Galip discovered that Celal had lifted several sentences word for word from his own column . . .” (TBB 256, 257).

Celal talks of simulations and repetitions, as he tells Galip that, “all murders are copies of other murders, just as all books are copies of other books. That’s why I’d never think of publishing a book under my own name.” The legacy of “how to commit a murder” or “how to write a book” is said to be normalized, fossilized and canonized and passed over to the subsequent generations. In fact, Celal’s view that, “we learn about murder from literature. Even the simplest murder . . . is an imitation, a literary imitation, even if its perpetrator doesn’t know it” (TBB 244, 245), corroborates the appropriation of literature by discursive fields and disciplinary apparatuses. This duplication, simulation and repetition and the handing down of certain socio-cultural, linguistic and literary mores functions as an important tool of resistance in all of Pamuk’s works – “[as they all] love . . . imitations of imitations”, - which helps the characters to resist their subject-formation. (TBB 245)

The characters of Pamuk’s fiction find themselves precariously perched on the verge of an abyss, on one side of which there is the immediacy and purity of an event or a performance, while on the other side of which there is meaning. It is certainly a
dangerous point on which they are located because if they decide to submit themselves to performance and the event, then they would have to embrace a “literature [which] accepts and enacts the impossibility of its own project – that of replacing language by experience, by sensation, from within language, of moving towards the real by a relay through other texts.” On the other hand, looking back would amount to willingly subjectifying their beings to the crisis between word and meaning, to the catastrophe of living in a meaningless universe. Thus, according to Foucault, “modern fiction . . . remains inseparable from . . . transgressive . . . thought . . .” (During 87-88). In this new and dangerous world, “performance takes priority over, and becomes disjunct from, meaning” (During 85).

Pamuk’s characters inhabit this world, in fact this critical juncture of realizing the collapse of the omniscience of homogenous and fixed meaning and its replacement by the “utterance” and “performance”. They become witnesses to this disappearance of “the fictionality of fiction” (During 85). It is at this point where performance gets divorced from meaning that the subjectified characters of Pamuk’s fiction are greeted with this shocking yet only reality of the world. They begin to make their choice which is clearly the one that supports relativism over realism. A brilliant instance of this choice can be seen in how certain characters like Mehmet, Hoja and Celal begin to write their way out of language and accept the exteriority of language. It is this act of their transgression which ultimately aids in their de-subjectification. Foucault in his essay on Bataille, “Preface to Transgression” has explained the relationship of “transgression” with the subject. According to Foucault, “Transgressive thought dissolves the subject because it finds its finitude not where an “inside” is separated from, grounded on or reflects an “outside,”” but where the movement towards otherness begins to repeat what is not other – the Same” (During 82).
This strand of thought wherein the writing subject enters into his own death owing to transgressive thought is majorly redolent of Pamuk’s *TNL* in which Mehmet escapes his subjectification by re-writing the same book over and over again. Thus, Foucault has explained how “transgressive thought occupies the open rather than the closed border at which the Same and the Other interact with and repeat each other.” Therefore, the “explanations or interpretations of events and texts . . . can only finally repeat that which they are designed to explain or interpret” (During 82). Thus, whether it is *TNL*’s Mehmet re-writing the same text infinitely or Hoja and the Venetian slave of *TWC* dwelling over and writing varying answers to the same question: “Why am I what I am”?, Pamuk’s characters strive for linguistic transgressions “not outside language but at the inner core of its (language’s) possibilities” (During 82). The question of transgressing the horizons of language in order to escape its absolute authority and to create alternative meanings can also be addressed from Paul Ricoeur’s perspective of looking at language which contains:

. . . a linguistic productive imagination that generates and regenerates meaning through the power of metaphoricity to state things in new ways. For him, fresh metaphors, metaphors that have not been reduced to the commonplace, reveal a new way of seeing their referents. They creatively transform language. . . .Thus to become aware of the metaphorical and narrative resources resident in language is to see that, notwithstanding the many rules and codes that govern language usage, it is always able to be used creatively, to produce new meanings. (Pellauer)
Thus, an alternative reading of the existing narratives becomes a powerful tool which aids the release of Pamuk’s characters from their subjecthood. For instance in TNL, the phase after which Janan has vanished forever, offers glimpses into the potential de-subjectification of Osman’s character. The new reading, unlike the earlier ones in which Osman was swept off his feet, is one in which, “he was never carried away by any intellectual pretensions” (TNL 243). Osman starts reading “voraciously”, not only the Book, but other books as well. What has undergone a transformation is not Osman or the books’ content but his approach towards reading and comprehending. It is not the word which changes but the perspective to and interpretation of the word. This implies that the word in its own self does not contain any meaning. Meaning is infused into the word by the reader and therefore this meaning is subject to a continual transformation.

Osman interprets this changed perspective towards the word in the following words: “When I read, I never attempted to assign some deep meaning to my broken life, or to look for some sort of consolation, not even to search for some beautiful and admirable aspect of sorrow” (TNL 242). This understanding which has newly dawned upon him makes him realize the irony that there is no “deep meaning” in words. He realized that the word was not “a means to an end”, but a hollow vessel which had the capacity to contain any meaning and also render that meaning as ultimate and sacred.

Thus, Mehmet’s and Osman’s lives are in the end, completely removed from what the book had seemed to promise to them at the beginning of their journeys. The promise offered by the book however rings hollow; it is only the interpretation of that promise which alters in its definition for Mehmet and Osman. They had initially understood the new life to be one which would be the opposite of their drab and
monotonous lives. However, what their journeys reveal to them is a life which is far more monotonous and repetitive than their current lives. Mehmet’s re-writing of the book “goes beyond simple duplication” (TNL 212). It is a passionately and “arduously” undertaken task in which the narrative of the “new life” needs to be incessantly written and re-written and believed in. This entire activity constitutes the new life. The new life does not stand apart from the old life; it is a tentatively balanced state of a continuous belief nurtured by constant writing and re-writing. It is a delicate state in which one does not succumb to any hope for a promised land, nor does one fall prey to the mundanities of everyday existence. It is a condition of being constantly alive and throbbing in the immediacy of the present moment and its vitality. The discovery of the meaning of the new life hits Osman anti-climactically but nevertheless with an envious realization of its truth. A complete surrender of past and future and of memory and imagination, the two co-ordinates of past and future is the key to a new life.

In fact, the overarching question of duplication, simulation and imitation in Pamuk’s novels can also be looked at from the perspective of a book as existing only as a kind of a “machinic assemblage” and the machine as having its connections and relations with other assemblages that exist outside its own being, thereby liberating the characters caught within the contents of the book as its subjects, as in the opinion of Deleuze and Guattari, “A book has neither object nor subject . . .” (Thousand Plateaus 3).

Deleuze and Guattari have revolutionized the concept of a book as an assemblage of a multiplicity of shifts and movements. According to them, “A book exists only through the outside and on the outside . . . when one writes, the only
question is which other machine the literary machine can be plugged into, must be plugged into in order to work . . . Literature is an assemblage. It has nothing to do with ideology” (Thousand Plateaus 4). This machinic nature of the book becomes clearly evident in all of Pamuk’s works. In fact, Pamuk’s writing style itself is reflective of this concept of the space of exteriority which a book occupies. Pamuk accords a separate narrative space to each of his characters in most of his works which testifies not only the complete absence of the author from the narrative plot, but also the annihilation of the book as a unified and homogenous entity. The book as one entity is broken down into an “assemblage” of various other devices and agencies through which the book gains an existence. So, the book no longer stands as one agency of unified control but merely as a meeting point for various other relations to pass through. In TNL, the mysterious book is on the one hand a device of subjectification for its readers while on the other hand it ceases to lay any control over its readers as it exists in a space of exteriority itself. Once the book has ceased to lay a cohesive control over its characters, the characters in Pamuk’s works are left free to determine their own destinies.

Works like MNR and SH cease to define their own boundaries of authorship and therefore liberate their characters from the confines of their own space. Pamuk’s works become spaces for the unfolding of events and characters. Truth becomes a game and it becomes increasingly difficult to determine the true nature of any character, story or event. In such a scenario, where the book is merely a juncture for various voices to meet, and the edifice of a monolithic truth has crumbled, falsehood and forgery dismantle whatever traces of truth abide.
The preponderance of aliases or false names used in Pamuk’s works and even the characters assuming false or other identities and writing under imagined selves – for instance Celal in *TBB* or Hoja and the Venetian narrator in *TWC* – become powerful techniques of “literary forgery” which “destabilize[s] the fragile economy of literary accreditation by drawing attention both to its conceptual shoddiness and the expediencies that characterize its operations.” They also “constitute a powerful indictment of such cultural practices as literary reviewing . . .” (Ruthven 4).

In Ruthven’s view, “literary forgery is not so much the disreputable Other of ‘genuine’ literature as its demystified and disreputable Self” (3). He also asserts that, “literary forgery [ought to be re-valued] as an antinomian phenomenon produced by creative energies whose power is attested to by the resistance they engender . . .” (3). In other words, “literary forgery” or “faking literature” is one of the powerful tools of resistance which are being used by characters like Hoja and the Venetian narrator of *TWC* and Celal of *TBB* in order to de-mystify the historical origins of stories, myths and narratives and to re-order the past traditions of identity and authorship, which ultimately aids in their managing to extricate their subjectified selves from the monopolistic claims of history, tradition and constructed identities and authorship.

This fraudulence or forgery in literature with a perpetual lack of a transcendental signifier or referent “revels in its own fictiveness” (Goux 5). Ruthven goes on to prove how conventional wisdom which takes “the structure of temporality [to be] unilinear, [and that] the genuine always precedes the spurious” is a culturally concocted myth and he establishes how the origin or the genuine may just be “a wholly imaginary state, like utopia . . . extrapolated from the spurious as its imagined opposite, and the retrojected as its equally imagined antecedent . . .” (71).
Ruthven substantiates his theory with examples of book reviews which have preceded the book written, such as “Stanislaw Lem’s Imaginary Magnitude”[15] “...[which] contains introductions to books not yet written, such as A History of Bitic Literature (2009), which includes any work of literature ‘whose real author is not a human being’ but a computer” (Ruthven 71). Ruthven adopts Foucault’s technique of reversal in which the normal is socially constructed after the deviant has come into existence, which then “becomes a spectral presence... [to] the subject which abjects it... [and always] returns to haunt it” (Ruthven 72).

It can also not be denied that this repressed other which is expelled by the subject, enables the subject to define its own existence. All these theories can be pinned down to one focal point, which Ruthven has explained to be Foucault’s theory of the “author-function”. Ruthven writes:

In terms of the theory of discursive effects, the appropriate question to ask of such texts is not who wrote them... but what author-effect they produce in their readers, which signals a destination and a gender. Any text marked by those discursive features which are recognized as ‘feminine’ will be read as feminine, even if its author happens to be biologically male, and whether or not he claims to be pro-feminist.

(73)

The theory of constituting the self with respect to the expelled or repressed Other which inevitably becomes a part of the self, just as every thesis exists and gains meaning only in relation to its anti-thesis, can be read in Pamuk’s Snow for instance,

15 Imaginary Magnitude, published in 1973 comprises “a collection of introductions to books supposedly to be written in the future, in the 21st century. One of those Lem eventually developed into a book by itself: Golem XIV is a lengthy essay on the nature of intelligence, delivered by the eponymous US military computer. Thus, it contains a “fictitious criticism of non-existing books” (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imaginary_Magnitude).
in the “Signing of the declaration” scene in which “what each of the signatories addresses, in this scene, is less a referentially existent “Europe” than a projection in relation to which one makes sense of oneself: an imaginary reciprocated by Ka in the fabrication of Hans Hansen, the declaration’s impossible – because nonexistent – implied reader” (Erturk 642).

In *TBB*, art in general and literature in particular are shown by Pamuk as being powerful tools of resistance which help the subjectified characters to re-align and reorganize their docile bodies. In fact, a Foucauldian reading of the use of literary conventions or the questions of genuine and fake authorship in Pamuk’s works enable us to understand the very occurrence of these questions in Pamuk’s works in the first place. This can be explained by understanding Blanchot’s theory and functions of literature as understood and reviewed by Franson Manjali in his book, *Language, Discourse and Culture*. Manjali writes:

For Blanchot, the space of writing is pervaded by an interminable ‘impersonality’. The responsibility implied in writing is not limited to the place, time or the social position of the writer or the reader, but is an infinite responsibility, where each act of writing and reading is also an act of transgression that undoes or deconstructs the previous state of discourse in the world. Writing involves, for Blanchot, an impersonal and a permanent transgression without any possibility of transcendence. (67)

Manjali further explains: “According to Blanchot, literature like death, eliminates a person’s virile and active subjectivity, and that is why writing is a sphere of activity where power can hardly be exercised” (67). Thus, “Blanchot suggests a . . .
disappearance of the literary subject from the subject in the real world . . . In the process of entering literature, the writer essentially de-subjectivizes herself” (68). This loss of subjectivity from the writer’s own person, according to Blanchot results in “an impersonal, anonymous, exteriorized and powerless ‘he’ . . . .” (69). Foucault was particularly interested in “. . . this literature’s evocation of ‘limit-experiences’, which push us to extremes where conventional categories of intelligibility begin to break down” (Gutting). The testing of the limits of literary experiences in particular and artistic experiences in general have been proposed in order to challenge the regular binaries and codes of logic and conventions. Talking of impersonality in literature, Manjali further states that: “[Paul] de Man suggests that the impersonality in literature is obtained through a rigorous process of self-denial or askesis. It involves freeing [one’s] consciousness of the insidious presence of inauthentic concerns” (78). It also results in an extreme purification or “epuration” which allows the writer to join the ever moving, never settled, “murmur” of literary language which has always and already preceded the language of everyday communication” (Manjali 78). Thus, “According to Blanchot, this impersonality and bad faith is essential for a writer to maintain the imposture, dishonesty and ambiguity which make up the stuff of literature” (Manjali 78). This strain of thought wherein writings becomes a powerful space which negates and opposes all conventional agencies of power is strongly advocated by Pamuk.

Throughout Pamuk’s work runs an undercurrent of the discourse of representation and recognition. The problematic of why is someone represented and given a voice which is recognized instead of the other and why does the non-represented and non-recognized have such a status, lies embedded within Pamuk’s
work and runs parallel to Foucault’s critique of the statements which ought to be uttered and ought not to be uttered within an epistemic configuration. This concern is portrayed in vivid hues in novels like *Snow* which can be “best understood as posing a problematic of representation and recognition – hearing, giving, or appropriating a voice, or refusing to speak – in a mass-mediated transnational context” (Erturk 640). Since Foucault has not given any definite strategies for resistance, they must be traced along the interstices and ruptures of discursive fields using Foucauldian tools. For instance, in *Snow* “staging” becomes a powerful metaphor of resistance which ensures maximum visibility of personal agendas, a lending of voice to the feeble, subjected masses and tactical resistance by individuals.

However, Pamuk’s fiction is a stark reminder of the fact that intellectual representation has breathed its last in this era of story-telling which is why the most useful practice to represent social and political reality comes across through its conversion into art. Art plays a very major role in this transition of representation from the voice of the intellectual to the stories of the story-teller. In fact, it is art and the numerous mediums of art which become very important practices in rendering social and political reality and staging an effective resistance to the power structures of the era. As Pamuk states in his acceptance speech “In Kars and Frankfurt”: “The history of the novel is the history of human liberation: by putting ourselves in other’s shoes, by using our imaginations to free ourselves from our own identities, we are able to set ourselves free.”

The conversion of socio-political reality into art and the changed nature of representation of reality in the postmodern era can be observed in *Snow* in Ka’s unequivocal proclamation that, “I have no interest in politics” (170). Ka’s poem
“Memory” is analyzed by his friend as containing the kernel of Ka’s thoughts: “One of the important themes in the poem is the poet’s ability to shut off part of his mind even while the world is in turmoil. But this meant that a poet had no more connection to the present than a ghost did. Such was the price a poet had to pay for his art!” (Snow 171). In fact, Sunay Zaim articulates this very social responsibility accorded to an artist in the modern times, of resisting the onslaught of power relations: “A good actor . . . is a man who represents the sediment, the unexplored and unexplained powers that have drifted down through centuries . . . ; no one may know how powerful he is until he strides on to the stage. All his life, he travels down unfamiliar roads, . . . and everywhere he goes, he searches for a voice that will grant him genuine freedom” (Snow 206). This genuine freedom which Sunay Zaim refers to is the de-subjectified self which every subject in Pamuk’s fiction strives to attain. Nergis Erturk speaks about this inherent character of voice representation in the novel by calling the novel “a stage . . . on which local characters assume, deflect, defy or bring into crisis the “voicing” or agency available to them” (641).

The novel *Snow* thus comes alive at this highly dense and crucial junction that offers an interplay of aesthetics (theatricality), the politics of representation and the articulation of a subjected self. The subjected bodies of the characters of the novel are engaged in a continuous struggle to render their voiceless speech recognizable and heard. Since we have already de-mystified all claims of representation or intellectuals who vie to represent the voice of the multitude, the only mediums which we are left with are spinning tales, writing poetry and story-telling. However, these are dangerous and slippery mediums themselves as it has already been discussed in chapter two as to how story-telling emerges as a powerful device of subjectification of the characters.
and of aiding in the creation of cognitive maps. Therefore, we can observe that characters like Galip in *TBB* are plagued by an anxiety of surrendering themselves completely and losing themselves in the abyss of stories, which is why they wish to extricate themselves from the fantastical world of stories. The characters of Pamuk’s fiction contain within themselves a painful awareness of the insidious and hypnotic influence of stories. Whilst they are in the process of narrating or writing stories or listening to them, they do understand that it is a dangerous medium they are dealing with, and one which will eventually end up controlling their lives and existence completely, and it is this constant and heightened awareness of their own dilemma in which they are caught, which makes them somehow resist falling into the abyss of stories. The characters begin to knowingly straddle the thin line dividing their subjecthood and their liberation. This painful awareness which the characters of Pamuk’s fiction contain of the dilemma of becoming hapless victims to stories is rendered in precise words by Osman, the narrator of *TNL*: “Getting duped while being fully aware that I am being duped, or not being duped yet wanting to be duped” (245).

Similarly in *TBB*, when Galip is explaining to Belkis the meaning of the jottings which he has taken down beside Celal’s columns, he unknowingly starts weaving a story but then suddenly realizes the futility of his act. “He thought hateful thoughts about people who made you tell the same stories over and over. If people would only just be themselves, he felt like saying. If only they would stop telling stories!” (*TBB* 212). Faruk in *SH* also expresses this dual life which most of us live and which is a result of living in a world of stories: “That passion for listening to stories leads us astray every time, dragging us off to a world of fantasy, even as we continue to live in one of flesh and blood . . .” (*SH* 164). Ka’s poetry in this sense can
also be read as a tool which aspires to assume the status of a device of attaining self-recognition for his subjectified and voiceless self, and also voices a deep-seated frustration of the realization of being subject to the discourses of religion, politics and language for too long.

Talking of tactics which can resist the discursive regimes of identity, power and knowledge and push the boundaries for the characters to re-invent their selves anew, the pull of death plays a very significant role in nullifying the effects of disciplinary controls and discursive apparatuses. The exotic, strange and mystical draw of death functions as an important device of potential resistance for subjects. Chapter three illustrates how plague replaced leprosy as the absolute model of disciplinary and uninterrupted control in 18th century society. However, Foucault in his lectures has explained that plague functions as that crucial point at which the conflict of the disciplinary power of the State and the resistance of the individuals takes place. Plague according to Foucault, constitutes the collision of power and resistance and of life and death. It is that frenzied moment of accidental contact between life and death wherein “individuals, threatened by visitations of death, abandon their identities to the great debauchery of those who know they are going to die” (Foucault, AMF 47). So, while on the one hand, “plague is the moment when the spatial partitioning and subdivision of a population is taken to its extreme point”, it is also on the other hand a moment of great lawlessness. “Plague overcomes the law just as it overcomes the body.” Thus Foucault believed that, “There is a literature of plague that is a literature of the decomposition of individuality; a kind of orgiastic dream in which plague is the moment when individuals come apart and when the law is forgotten” (Foucault, AMF 47). This “orgiastic dream” or the dance of death is that
tentative, throbbing moment when there is a collision between the maximum disciplinary control and a celebration of the oncoming death and collapse of fear of State control in the individuals. The individuals while becoming increasingly fearful of their approaching deaths shed their fears of the exhaustive power of the State. There occurs a clash between two fears – fear of the unknown v/s fear of the known, and at this juncture it is the fear of the unknown, i.e. fear of death which ultimately liberates them from the fear of the known which is from the all-inclusive controls of the State. This collision of power and resistance stand as significant ruptures in the form of plague in 

TWC
demonstrates the characters’ complex critical engagement with the breakout of plague in the city. There are moments of genuine fear felt by the Venetian narrator: “Whatever the reason, I now thought it was just an insect bite, but still I was afraid” (TWC 74). These interlace with moments of willful induction of fear by Hoja into the mind of the Venetian: “While he tried to infect me with the disease and the fear of it, he kept repeating that I was he and he was I” (TWC 74). The Venetian realizes that, “. . . he was talking not to discover something but only to frighten me, to play upon his own fear, to make me share the burden of that fear” (TWC 71). But once the narrator comes to the realization that his fear of contracting the deadly disease has been essentially incited by his master Hoja, a key part of his fear is thrown to the winds. The deathly fear aroused by Hoja in the mind of the narrator is a perfect instance of power exercising its control upon the other. However, with the same awareness, the narrator is liberated and the demonstration of this liberation and awareness that his fear up to now has been inflamed by Hoja is rendered by means of his desire to participate in the whirlwind of the plague. He
decides to let his fear of death be conquered by the desire to cast off all controls and regulations associated with the disease. A celebration of the awe and admirable terror wreaked by the disease and a disruption of discursive controls makes the narrator run out into the streets and dispose of all worldly controls on his life and expose the nakedness of worldly truths: “The next morning he went to the palace, and I into the plague-stricken city. I was just as afraid of the plague as before, but the raucous movement of ordinary life, the ubiquitous desire to gain something of the world, even if only some small share, made my head spin” (TWC 79). In fact, the Venetian realizes the importance of his life even if it is spent as a slave, only during the outbreak of the plague: “… as I wandered among the dead and the dying I thought how it had been years since I had been able to love life this much” (TWC 79).

A similar celebration of the horror of death and the morbidity of accidents is keenly desired and experienced by Osman, the narrator of TNL. He willfully embarks upon risky journeys in rickety buses with reckless drivers and on the most dangerous of routes so that he can experience moments of crisis, where life intersects with death and where all worldly controls cease to function. The entire narrative becomes a longing for these moments of pure abandon where death’s charming embrace seems to overwhelm and expunge all disciplinary controls. These moments are the ones where resistance comes alive in its fury, for howsoever short a period of time it may be. Osman seeks to stand on that verge of death where one’s self and life are born anew. He plays with death as the lure of death tantalizes and numbs life.

**Representation Bursts into a Multiplicity**

What Pamuk wishes to demonstrate in MNR is the unavoidable co-existence of a multiplicity of truths in the postmodern era. Pamuk’s underlying endeavor lies in
trying to favour a plurality of practices and truths by which individuals can avoid
becoming the unwitting targets of the crisis in representational systems. This endeavor
of Pamuk can be best understood by referring to Ruth Merttens’ effort at explicating
the non-essentialist nature of post-structuralism. Merttens states: “the unifying idea of
a common ‘us’ or ‘we’ which underlies such groupings as ‘parents’, ‘children’ or
even ‘teachers’, has been rejected in favour of an emphasis on the plurality of practice
and of experience . . .” (62).

Just like Merttens wishes to draw our attention to the fact that in a post­
structuralist universe we can only dwell in the contingently specific, Pamuk also
subjectifies his characters to the warring zones of multiple forms of representation or
multiple forms of truth, with no one emerging as the winner. Just as Merttens rejects
the concept of a grouping of parents or children, the hostile and conflict-ridden
assemblage of the miniaturists in MNR can only survive as a continually shifting
entity, which can only be recognized and understood with respect to the practices
adopted by and the experiences undergone by each of the miniaturists. This collective
yet provisional plurality forms a network of various truths which ought to be
celebrated for its multifarious existence rather than striven to be brought into
uniformity. Thus, it is the invented and extremely heterogeneous nature of truth which
Mehmet in TNL, the murder er Olive in MNR and Faruk and Fatma in SH have come
to realize. Truth for them becomes an entity which is highly personal, dynamic,
evolving and contextual. Truth is the tentative result of the meeting of various forces
of power and discursive relations in one field, which is highly volatile, fluid and open
to changes in those relations. So, the once worshipped monolithic deity of truth
collapses and reduces into a mercurial collection of relations of power which is
constantly flowing. It is evident from the conclusion of *SH* that Fatma comes to realize the highly subjective, private and ever-shifting nature of the written word and truth. She slips into a reverie and is reminiscing about her childhood when she had stubbornly borrowed a copy of *Robinson Crusoe* from Sukru Pasha’s home. A realization dawns on her that the written word is highly prone to yielding a different meaning when read each time. That is because, “... with a book in your hand, no matter how confusing and perplexing it might be, once you’ve finished it, you can always go back to the beginning; if you like, you can read it through again, in order to figure out what you couldn’t understand before, in order to understand life, isn’t that so, Fatma?” (*SH* 334). Fatma realizes that the written word offers no stability of meaning and also the fact that her own understanding of the word is precarious and open to change. This new-found openness in Fatma in which she acknowledges her own failings as a reader and welcomes change, expunges her stiffness of temperament. Thus, Pamuk’s characters carry in them a strong potential for re-inventing their selves as ethical selves. For Foucault, “intellectual work is related to aestheticism” and “the transformation of one’s own self by one’s own knowledge” and this remains Foucault’s most powerful technique of “disassembling the self” or “releasing oneself from one self” (*Ethics* 130-131).

As Sunay Zaim tells Ka in *Snow*, “A good actor is a man who represents the sediment, the unexplored and unexplained powers that have drifted down through the centuries. . . . His self-mastery is awesome; never does he bare his heart; no one may know how powerful he is until he strides on to the stage” (206). In fact, Zaim is successful in building up a counter-discursive struggle involving art as his primary weapon. The sight of violence blending and merging with art on stage is a frenzied
zeal for secular art, which Zaim had always dreamt of instilling his audiences with and he successfully ends up doing it though at the cost of his own life. The revolution is rendered poignantly with a stark and moving irony, though not without enlightening the readers about the revolutionary powers of art. Thus, Zaim manages to create a new self in death, a self which is beyond mortality. This self-mastery which Zaim refers to is the Foucauldian “ethical self” to the core.

The Foucauldian notions of resistance or means used to de-subjectify a self bear a strong analogical connection with Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of the “virtual” as a means which, “. . . opens up new and possible worlds for actualization . . . possibilities for new experiences, for new encounters, for new steps to be taken” (Rushton 227). This “virtual” according to Deleuze is “the ground upon which the actual proceeds; or, to put it another way, the virtual is the very proceeding of the actual . . . . In fact, the real would be impossible without the virtual” (Rushton 226). Deleuze’s concept of the virtual can thus be understood as a horizon of infinite possibilities, out of which we keep striking out those which appear to us as non-beneficial. The virtual in fact becomes so indispensable to our lives that we all must take innumerable virtual decisions before taking one actual decision, in order to be sure that our actual decision is correct.

However, just because the virtual contains the possibility to open up multitudes of alternatives for each one of us, “such openings will not automatically lead in the direction of freedom” (Rushton 227). The path we take will ultimately rest upon our choice out of those multitudes of possibilities. So there is a great role which our choice plays here - the exercise of our will to freedom. The concept of the virtual
nevertheless functions as an extremely powerful device by means of which a subject can break free of its subjectified self.

In his essay, “What Can a Face Do? On Deleuze and Faces”, Richard Rushton elaborates and explains Deleuze’s theory of the virtual in terms of faces. In Rushton’s words, “Deleuze and Guattari . . . consider the face in terms of the emergence of “possible worlds”; that is, they interpret the virtuality of the face in terms of our relations with others” (227). Deleuze and Guattari explain the “realm of possibility, of possible connections, of possible confrontations, expectations, creations” when they “come before another person” as an experience of entering into “an endless possibility.” This limitless “possibility is however, channeled by . . . the experience of the face.” In their opinion, the face curtails and reduces the infinite possibilities to the finite possibilities because ultimately, “it is quite impossible to do anything in a world of infinite possibility if that world maintains its infinity.” However, this entire “potential” which a face contains in “reduce[ing] infinite possibility to finite possibility” (Rushton 228) is the sum total of all the latent actions which a face can give rise to. The face or the facial expressions thus hold a very significant position in Deleuze and Guattari’s thought and contain within them the power to pave the way for their respective expressions to be translated into action.

This interesting line of thought given by Deleuze and Guattari can be traced to Pamuk’s works in which we can observe this power of the face as a significant tool of transforming the world and bringing about the potential de-subjectification of the subjects. The Deleuzean theory about the power of faces to change our interpretations of the world can be summed as:
The face reshapes the world so that we think or feel differently. When confronted by a face . . . we must re-coordinate our view of the world and subsequently our actions in that world. It is . . . a question of what a face does, and not a question of what a face represents. The face, more than anything, makes us approach the world anew. (Rushton 234)

It is this power to transform our view of the world on being confronted by a face eventually leading us to interpret the world around us differently than what we had thought before and also to assign different meanings to the happenings around us that makes us devise and take actions which are based on a virtual set of alternatives rather than on the basis of the reality which we encounter.

This potential of liberating the self from the real and taking actions on the basis of a virtual storehouse of immense probable alternatives comes across as a very powerful tool of de-subjectification in Pamuk’s fiction. For instance, there are numerous references in TBB which explore the power and potential contained in faces to de-stabilize the subjects’ composure and their traditional understanding of reality. The faces compel the characters to see the “world turned upside down” (TBB 290). When the dreaded executioner Black Omer is sent on a mission by the Sultan to execute the fort’s commander Abdi Pasha, he performs his task with professionalism and sets out on his journey back with the head of the pasha in a honey-filled, mohair sack. However, the sad expression on the weeping face of the pasha, before the executioner had strangulated him is frozen on the face and begins to haunt the executioner on his journey. Consequently, the executioner finds everything around him changing in meaning: “For now the truly shocking thing was the world itself. It was a new world, and he’d just discovered it, just noticed it for the first time” (TBB
In fact, everything, “... the trees, shadows and stones around him slowly began to point again to a mystery that could never be solved. ... It was as if the world were trying to tell him something, lay itself bare, but its voice was lost in a mist he could barely see...” (TBB 289). Out of sheer desperation and in order to escape this sudden and frightful change in meanings of everything around him, and “restore” the world back to its “order” the executioner decides that he would have to “wipe this expression off its face” (TBB 290). He uses his knives to “disfigure” the weeping expression on the dead pasha’s face into a forced smile but eventually the narrative takes a strange turn and we are told that the face was not Abdi Pasha’s but of a sinless shepherd’s. Whatever the consequences of the incident, it is clear from the story of “The Executioner and the Weeping Face” that an expression on a face can indeed transform an entire world and the meanings assigned to it.

In fact, the “thousands of photographs” of people’s faces which Celal has collected and curiously enough, marked out letters of “the Arabic and the Latin alphabets” on them and scribbled notes underneath them are the most important part of Celal’s monumental collection which Galip gains access to and through which he painstakingly transforms his understanding of the world around him and strives to achieve his de-subjectification. The anxiety with which Galip strives to ferret out and decode the mystery letters inherent in his own face as well as in the faces around him, can be read as a positive sign of his desire to break free of the normatively deployed categories of facial expressions and emotions and to open out multiple vistas of human emotions. All the photographs and pictures in Celal’s collection which Galip pores over seem to talk to him and tell him things which he wouldn’t have been able to understand in writing. Each face tells a story to Galip: “He could almost hear these
faces telling him why they existed, why they’d been saved. Can there be anything more profound, more satisfying, more curious, Galip thought, than a photograph that captures the expression on a person’s face?” (TBB 280). In fact, Galip is of a strong opinion that he would “become himself” the day he understands and reads the letters in his face.

It is with the aid of some of these tactics, like an awareness of the multiplicity of representation and the necessity of creating alternate forms of truth in order to oppose the dominant epistemological structures, that Pamuk’s characters are able to understand and defy their own complicity in the structures of domination and relations of power. They work upon their selves and try to re-create their selves in an aesthetic manner. This recognition and effort made by Pamuk’s characters is accompanied by an agony which precedes any work of creation and resistance.