

The Museum of Innocence is a museum in the broadest sense of the term. It follows the intricacies associated with staging and exhibition of the objects it holds onto its display which further contributes to how visitors engage with the artefacts leading up to the construction of a specific aura within the space of the museum. However, what makes The Museum of Innocence rather peculiar is its fictional yet authentic foundation i.e it's a fictional tale come to life, in a tangible form from the tale that was published before the physical construction of the museum. Orhan Pamuk in his text, The Museum of Innocence marks the beginning of its curation through the method of life writing on Kemal's experience with and of Füsün in a narrative form. While many researchers have analysed the themes that surround the literary text, there are no prior studies regarding the Museum and its semiotic relation with its text. The paper will provide an analysis of the different facets covered by the museum as it is represented in the primary text i.e The Museum of Innocence, the novel and the secondary text i.e The Innocence of Objects, both by Orhan Pamuk which further contributes to its variation from our traditional and pre-existing understanding of museums all over the world. The following paper will deploy theories under the larger purview of Poststructuralism and Postmodernism. My primary aim is to highlight how The Museum of Innocence challenges the conventional understanding of a museum as a space of authenticity and more importantly reinstates that no definition or fact is absolute by widening the boundaries of how emerging museums should be formed and engaged with.

THE POLITICS OF CATEGORIZATION AND THE REASON OF INNOCENCE

The definition of a museum as recorded in 1690s was : "Buildings to display objects" whereas gradually museums have been appointed a meaning and thereby the function to act as 'Storehouses of Knowledge', to provide certain information regarding history, culture, art,

science etc..Not all labels are approved by the labelled, and many are not well received at all. While labels and definitions are necessary for convenience and understanding they simultaneously create a specific framework within which the labelled has to operate while restricting the introduction of the distinct and the pioneering. The Museum of Innocence at Çukurcuma neighbourhood of the Beyoğlu district of Istanbul, Turkey is one such example and is described as a ‘house’ signifying the category of in-house museums¹ while it may not seem like it wishes to abandon and erase such categorisation, it is important to study the museum while resisting the urge to tick off boxes and qualify it belonging to only one category as definition limits the possibility of change.

Pamuk experiments with the hybridity of a museum and novel as one entity, blurring the line between fiction and reality while foregrounding his explanation within the context of art history of Asian countries. In his *The Innocence of Objects*, he writes, “The art of painting is not well developed in Islamic countries, and art galleries are not particularly popular in Asia. If only museums in these countries would try to tell people’s stories not through paintings but through objects that everyone knew and used, they could touch the common humanity of their visitors.” (Pamuk 53) While acknowledging that he speaks from a specific regional background, his belief can be used to understand that objects have played and continue to play a significant role in putting forth a substantive discourse for a museum especially a historical one, for example, Holocaust museums that induce the bodily feeling of the events that took place during that time

¹ In-house museums or Historic house museums are houses transformed into museums which display the objects according to their original usage. For example R.K Narayan’s Museum in Mysore.

to the visitors through the inanimate objects which have been preserved over centuries or contributed by Holocaust survivors themselves, while many museums function on this aura of authenticity to connect to their visitors. The Museum of Innocence gives a healthy competition by providing the same bodily feeling to its visitors through fictional objects and sounds of the Istanbul such as that focus on the aspect of individualism instead of a homogenized experience of the masses. Pamuk in his *A Modest Manifesto for Museums* draws the parallel between the framework of conventional museums with contemporary ones and indicates as to what they should entail while emphasizing on the need for propinquity between museums and the visitors beyond a pre-constructed narrative. (See Appendix A)

Moving back to the primary focus of its categorization, The Museum of Innocence with its specific construction cannot be described to fall under a fixed division however it does house few aspects from other categories of museums. They are not directly related to Pamuk's museum but it is insightful in terms of how one can understand the concept of defining the space it occupies in the larger arena of cultural and historical museums. Pamuk, inspired more by the western forms of art and literature found it easier to express himself through them which again reflects on the museum which can be seen to have a close association with two types of museums: a) Cabinet of Curiosities and b) Private Museums. Cabinet of Curiosities, owing to its name was the pride of the collectors in the Victorian era, which gave an opportunity to the bourgeois to showcase their upper-middle-class status through the object on display however it expanded itself with time from a cabinet to a room and hence acquired the name, 'Wunderkammer' or 'wonder-rooms'. These wonder-rooms also became more accessible to people and gained a reputation of museum however the luxury of collecting was only available

to upper-middle class and upper-class communities. The collectors that maintained this cabinet of curiosities did not focus on keeping a track of the past or the history through these object but instead built an inventory for the sole purpose of hoarding and were focused on being the owners of such an archive. Similar psychology can be traced to the first instinct that drove Pamuk to curate The Museum of Innocence during his visit to Prince Ali Vasib's museum: the instinct and the joy of being an owner and a guide to his own museum , which he again re-visits when explaining the process of transformation from the house to the museum. His affinity to Wunderkammer formed the basis of the primary layout of the museum through the exhibition of the objects in separate glass boxes. Further discussion on the process of curation will be provided later in the paper. The second category being Private Museums. The agency of these museums lie completely at the hands of the curator or simply with the owner of the building. What differentiates them from public museums is their lack of mission statement. These fragments are valuable in seeing the bigger picture created by Pamuk's museum which comprise both, the freedom in the artistic license exercised by Pamuk as well the mission statement which is to freeze the history of Istanbul as a separate character as well as its citizens' and display it through the use of something as mundane and personal as everyday objects all the while doing justice to the narrative that forms the basis of this medium.

Pamuk deals with museum that symbolizes the factual and the empirical along with the fictional novel in a very fluid manner, letting both merge because he knows one is never completely devoid of the other given that facts come to us only in the form of language or narrative which are further subjected to the manipulation of the historians. This fluidity seeps into his museum that is reflected by the flexibility of it's the category which occupies a certain

space, or several and how this is further received by the different section of the museum studies academia. Pamuk challenges not only the state-sponsored museums with rigid space interaction which hinder the relationship between the visitor and the narrative that they want to connect to but also the inevitable flow of time and the expiry dates that come with each moment. The Innocence of the museum resides at the representation of the objects that harmonize with the past of those people and places it within the present. “Our Museum has been built on the contradictory desires to tell the stories of objects and to demonstrate their timeless innocence” (Pamuk,141).

LETTER FROM THE CURATOR : THE MUSEUM AND THE NOVEL

To understand the nexus between the novel and the museum it is necessary to look at the form of the two texts : *The Museum of Innocence* and *The Innocence of Objects* and how Pamuk uses form as his mirror to express the story about Istanbul and its people to the readers from across countries to compensate for the absence of their physical experience of both the Museum and the city.. Pamuk draws from his lived experiences and reflects it onto a textual representation thereby calling to attention, not what is represented but rather how it is represented. we are introduced to the larger questions of understanding the implications of using the form in a certain manner through his initial choices of what *The Museum of Innocence* would entail :

In its first version , *The Museum of Innocence* was to be a novel that resembled an encyclopedia - an ordered series of entries - about love and family with its narrative built around the Keskin family's and Füsün's belongings. . . This must be how I first thought that I might be able to put together a novel in the form of a museum catalogue with long and richly detailed

notes. Just as in an annotated museum catalogue. . . I wanted to exhibit the earrings in the museum and then tell the earring's story in the novelized catalogue (Pamuk 17).

The final decision of writing the story as a classic novel stuck due to the restriction of retelling the story of Kemal in its quintessential manner if written in the form of a catalogue; which calls into question the function of the novel to the museum and whether it can still be seen as an unconventional catalogue.

The novel's form can also be seen as a hybrid of Roland Barthes's concept of the readerly and the writerly text. It occupies a liminal position between the two when understood in the context of the knowledge produced of Istanbul and its lifestyle by Pamuk for his foreign readers. Even though the concept, to a certain degree, is archaic, it still contains a certain level of synthesis between the two. Few critics have complained that he writes solely for the western audience however in his novel, *Snow*, he writes a dialogue between an eastern Turkish character and a western Turkish narrator where the former tells the latter: "I'd like to tell your readers not to believe anything you say about me, anything you say about any of us. No one could understand us from so far away." (Pamuk 54). Such ambiguity and uncertainty are absent from *The Museum of Innocence* where he provides almost a complete tour of the neighbouring area surrounding the museum and the narrative through elaborate descriptions of the Bosphorus sea, Çukurcuma, Beyoğlu etc. One of the more prominent examples of foregrounding the setting of the narrative is through the use of cartography at the beginning of the novel (see appendix B) In the initial chapters of the novel, Pamuk creates a specific meaning regarding places by fusing them with personal experiences or childhood memories which he reiterates throughout the novel in different circumstances which then results in the readers having only a limited perspective of how they

view and engage with the place. One of the examples can be taken off the Teşvikiye Mosque situated near Kemal's house whose descriptions differ with a different chapter in the novel, the following is the very first description of the Mosque where he sets the function of the Mosque in the city :

Except for my years in America , I had spent my whole life in this big apartment whose sitting room and wide balcony overlooked Teşvikiye Mosque , where one or two funerals took place everyday , and when I was a child , these spectacles initiated us into the fearful mystery of death . . . Just before a funeral of broad public interest - if the deceased was a prime minister, a famous tycoon , or a singer - the doorbell would ring and unexpected guests would appear , saying , “I was just passing by , and I thought I'd drop in ,” and though my mother never let her manners lapse , later on she would say , “They didn't come to see us but to see the funeral.” and so we began to think of the ceremony not as a comfort against the sting of death or a chance to pay one's last respects to the deceased , but as an amusing diversion (Pamuk 110).

Later in the story, Pamuk describes the Mosque in the light of Kemal's father's death which varies significantly from the initial description , this difference implies the writer's control not only in the aspect of knowledge creation but also how the readers perceive a certain place whereby the reader becomes “a mere passive recipient of meaning” (Nayar 37). However, Pamuk's novel also seems to have traces of being a writerly text where the meaning is something to be found and constructed by the reader. Pamuk shares his belief of not using the real images of the characters as book covers for, according to his readers should be able to identify with the characters and their experiences which is only possible through the work of imagining them independently (Pamuk 148). This fabrication of a fragmented narrative allows the reader to

partake in the act of collating all the objects mentioned in the previous chapters and creating a full picture of the museum by the end of the novel. This hence proves the significance of a reader's interpretive potential and the dependency of the textual meanings on the readers (Nayar 40). *The Museum of Innocence* unlike *The Innocence of Objects* does not provide the reader with the reference of images and conversations crucial during the curation rather it offers a more personal, detailed and fictional account of Kemal though fiction, as it were, is still a part of his experience and a part of a story he wishes to tell which is not possible without the intervention of the reader to act as a "space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination" (Nayar 37). I would also like to juxtapose the readerly and the writerly with the construction of the museum and visitor engagement with the museum space. As a visitor enters the museum, all the objects are arranged in chronological order in separate boxes in accordance with the chapter names (the psychology behind the position and exhibition of the objects will be discussed in detail in the later chapters.) The visitors regardless if they have read the novel or not are provided with a pre-existing narrative through the spatial setting which may then unconsciously erases the agency of the visitor to create their own meaning through engagement with the objects and the space which reflects the same thinking as mentioned by Paula Findlen in her article, *Containment: Objects, Places, Museums* where she draws the beginning of museum curation and how the visitors in the mid-seventeenth century simply acknowledged the existence of the objects on display which were devoid of any engagement (Findlen 7).

The Innocence of Objects can be treated as a textual analysis of the museum by Pamuk, securing the position of a narrator and speaking about his personal experience with Kemal. The

Innocence of objects is a text that can be seen as a rather longish catalogue accompanying the museum and providing a 'behind-the-scenes' access to the readers. When directing our attention towards the form of this text, the element that stands out the most in contrast to the novel is the use of images, therefore, the following paragraph will cover two things: (a) the use of pictures alters the way we engage with a textual narrative (b) how Pamuk through Innocence of Objects, challenges the lived experiences of the characters in the novel and people of Istanbul by attempting to bridge the gap to his textual readers who are restricted from the museum due to logistical reasons.

The text is divided chapter wise, similar to that of the novel and each chapter is prefaced with pictures and either quotation from the novel or description of the curation process substituted with the thoughts of Pamuk behind the formation of each box which display the objects (See Appendix C). The use of photographs in literary texts opens up another dimension. Even though photographs are quite commonplace in catalogues, their use will always be distinct and relative to the text aided with it, especially in Pamuk's catalogue which alienates the umbrella figure and secures a rather informal and comprehensive form under the category of conventional catalogues. For example, the graphic novel *Maus* is another text that seems to fall into several generic categories—memoir, graphic novel, historical fiction, comparative literature. In the graphic novel, the use of the one photograph of Spiegelman's father is quite significant, because it provides a face to attribute everything the reader has learnt about Vladek so far. In the middle of the extended metaphor of anthropomorphised animals that Spiegelman employs, the appearance of a human face is a jolt that reminds the readers that this is a story about the human condition, despite everything (Spiegelman 134). Similarly, the catalogue which is designed

around pictures of sundry objects put together in glass boxes also entails black and white pictures with uneven edges which most probably have been fished out of flea market shops, still provide justice to the past of the Istanbulites. They display stony streets wet with rain accompanied by bent over houses all stacked together with old bricks (see Appendix D). Such pictorial references remind the readers about the individuality of the narrative and introduce them to a new way of personalizing the history– the history of all those who have witnessed the changing of the city, from narrow streets to accumulation of traffic in the open sun. It is not that Pamuk’s book has to remind the reader to snap back from a metaphor–but the photographs perform a crucial function in conveying to the readers the very essence of Istanbul as seen from the eyes of an ordinary citizen. In one of the chapters in the catalogue, Pamuk strays away from his usual narration of the curation and instead talks about the image of Istanbul at night. It is argued quite often that photographs in fiction can restrict the prose, especially when they are used as tools for characterisation. James Wood in his book argues that whenever someone uses a photograph or describes the photograph as a way of introducing a character, it makes the prose weaker (Wood 75). This in itself is a reckless generalisation to make, but regardless, *The Museum of Innocence* revolves around real people, even if their stories might be fictionalised. For Pamuk, these pictures also represent and convey a specific Istanbulite identity to his foreign readers, he defines his own identity through what he sees in these photographs and thereby how he sees the city. The readers, more or less are provided with a first-hand narrative of the city as if it were a separate character in the novel.

The last thing that is crucial to be mentioned and argued with within the sub-heading is the letter by the curator i.e. Pamuk’s belief of the novel and the museum existing independently:

. . . all those who have come to çukurcuma and seen the museum will know, the real reason why *Innocence of Objects* is necessary is that on the day the museum was completed, I understood that it has its own spirit, existing independently of the novel . . . just as the novel is entirely comprehensible without a visit to the museum , so is the museum a place that can be visited and experienced on it's own. The museum is not an illustration of the novel, and the novel is not an explanation of the museum (Pamuk 18).

Through both the texts and the museum, Pamuk constructs and juggles a number of identities, that of Kemal's, his own and of Istanbul's. All of which work in tandem with each other and are grounded through all of the three forms which despite being structurally disparate compliment each other in the completion of the narrative initiated by Pamuk. To treat the novel separately from the catalogue and the museum is to enter any sort of weather with a winter coat and refusing to take it off, then complaining that it's too hot. The novel, though expressing a higher possibility of independence through the individuality of its textual narrative, leaves the readers with the craving of visiting the museum that Kemal so compassionately pieces together throughout the novel. What completes this curiosity towards the museum is a single ticket-like print in one of the concluding pages of the novel with the words, "Single Admission Only" (see Appendix E). This, Pamuk explains can be used as a ticket to enter the actual Museum of Innocence. The catalogue, on the other hand, is treated as an extension of the museum. In order to compensate for the readers who are assumed to have not read the novel, this catalogue attempts at sewing the absence of the understanding of the story with a passive narrative by Pamuk, for example In the catalogue one of the chapters named "The Fire on the Bosphorus" borrows fragmented quotes from the novel and is assembled together to provide a textual explanation to

the box on display (see Appendix F). Such a technique provides the reader with only half the narrative which they may not even be aware of missing, much like the debate on the book to film adaptations. Though it is very much possible for films based on books to exist and be engaged with independently, the majority still chooses to read the book first and then to watch the movie. One of the contemporary examples can be taken from the Sherlock Holmes TV adaptations. Though they preserve the overall aesthetic of the series and actors do more than justice to the characters, it is the fundamental difference in perspective that keeps the viewers from understanding the personality of Holmes in its entirety. In the books, the readers are introduced to the character of Holmes through the biased lens of John Watson however the modern TV and film adaptations are unable to do that because Watson himself is a character whom we see in the third person. The camera point of view is third-person limited but otherwise shows characters as they are thereby even if there is a bias, it isn't towards Watson's view. Hence both the novel and the museum along with the catalogue are complete without each other however they still require the other to finish what is initiated by each of the texts.

THE PLAY BETWEEN TIME AND HISTORY

In this section, the paper will attempt to cover the following topics: (a) the notion of timelessness in the museum and its significance in what it represents and (b) new construction of history and how Pamuk challenges the pre-existing.

“Why are you building this museum?” is a question that Pamuk came to be familiar with, which eventually forms the heart of the catalogue and also the museum during its curation. It is this question that didn't allow Pamuk to stray too far away from the original goal when building the

museum, similarly for Kemal in the novel, it was Fusun that formed the core of his story so that no matter how far he digressed, he never quite broke away from his starting point. This form of non-linear narrative can be understood through Aristotelian concept of time which he proposed in terms of ‘moments’ that are linked together in a straight line however Pamuk reconstructs this to explain that in his narrative time is more like a spiral with the protagonist drawing ever wider rings that signify different moments around one steady core. The museum, therefore, materializes this concept of time implying that just how the straight line connects the different moments together to form time, similarly the spiral connects all the objects together to create the story as told by Kemal. This introduces the reader as well as the viewer to a postmodern method of immortalizing the objects and therefore the past of Istanbul. Just how in traumatic situations we may not remember exactly what happened but we do remember what we feared the most, similarly the viewers of the museum who have read the book may not remember everything from the six-hundred-page novel but upon seeing the objects they do remember the emotions they felt when reading the novel. This attributes a sort of timelessness to the objects, a sort of freezing of both : the alteration in the story that objects are made to tell to the visitors of The Museum of Innocence as well as their original function before they were picked up from flea markets and junk dealers, that of the lifestyle of the old Istanbul. This timelessness further signifies what Kemal aimed for through his museum, to convert time into space as something to be engaged with and remembered through material memory.

“Hayden White suggested that all historical ‘facts’ come to us only in the form of language or narrative” (Nayar 202). Pamuk adopts a new way of creating and displaying the history of Istanbul and the way his visitors engage with it. He practices the art of personalising

the history of the people by first, drawing from his own childhood. He recollects the memories of museums in Istanbul and states they were mostly historical in nature and describes them as “. . . places with an air of a government office about them” (Pamuk 54). Without disregarding the importance of museums such as Louvre, The British Museum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Prado, The Topkapi Palace etc he suggests for the adoption of new “blueprints” for the coming museums, ones which are not constructed to represent the state but instead the people. He talks of how facts and history tear down the truth and tell nothing of personal stories, how retellings of an event organise history in our minds that are devoid any identification. He instead lays emphasis on uncovering history, through its use of varied sources—photographs, recorded history, memory, stories. This can be understood in the terms of New Historicism and how it alerts the readers to keep the “location of the historian” in mind when accepting facts and monuments belonging to a specific time period. Historical facts are always open to the alteration of the historian however it’s even more dangerous when the receiving end is not even familiar with the source of those facts. Here, Pamuk’s representation of the history of Istanbul is not only from and of the people belonging to the city but also his own. This is most prominent through *The Innocence of Objects* where he not only mentions about the museum but also how he himself came to know the city from all directions and sources, from relatives and photographs, library records and paintings, road trips and geography. Borrowing a bit from the previous sub-heading, such informal approach to history with names of places and people gives way to creating a still, timeless image of Istanbul. Such retelling and recall of the places, objects and people subject them to what Greenblatt and Gallagher introduce as ‘Textual Traces in a Culture’. These textual traces not only act as souvenirs of the past but “are also events in themselves”

(Nayar 206). Therefore, it can be seen that Pamuk's approach to history through objects and individual's people is much more impactful on the recipients of culture and history belonging to a specific place and event. Two of the latest examples can be taken from the film, "Remember Me" by Allen Coulter that revolves around the impact of the 9/11 incident and the book, "Remnants of Separation" by Aanchal Malhotra that introduces a new lens of looking at partition. Both these texts employ a similar approach as Pamuk to drive their specific message home.

A SELF-PORTRAIT THROUGH OBJECTS AND MEMORY

For the next two subheadings I will be referencing to the article: "Sacrality and Aura in the Museum: Mute Objects and Articulate Space" by Joan R. Branham. In the particular section I will be covering the following topics and juxtaposing them with that of Pamuk's narrative, (a) The collecting culture, (b) The Deracination of objects and the change in their function, (c) The question of authenticity, (d) The relation of the objects with the viewer and (e) Material Memory.

Before Museums were separate entities that represented a certain mission statement, they were limited to the houses of the elite who hoarded objects because it created an image of having a "refined taste" in the society. The psychology behind collecting can be traced prior to the nineteenth century when collecting and being a collector was a luxury that only the elite could afford. The urge to collect began from the display of "expression and power" and then "a need to possess the past" (Findlen 4). In the absence of the museum structure, the sole attention was on the objects and they were hence not exposed to the manipulation of spatial setting as the objects and visitors are today. In Istanbul, the collecting culture started somewhere before the 1990s

however the collectors of this age showed no interest in objects that belonged to the past but instead directed their attention on things “that were useful or pretty enough to find a place in the daily lives of Istanbul’s fluid, constantly evolving population - ashtrays, jugs, nutcrackers, coffee grinders, and carousel clocks for example” (Pamuk 44) (see Appendix G). The act of collecting was not directed towards the past but towards the future. The westernized middle class was more concerned in constructing a new identity through such massacre of objects by disregarding everything that was not pretty or useful (Pamuk 46). This unrefined method of collecting soon turned the houses of these collectors into ‘museum storehouses’ the access to which was difficult and resembled in a lot of ways to the “neglected museums of metropolitan backstreets” this also marked a slight shift from collecting for the sake of collecting to collecting to preserve the city and the lifestyle that these collectors have been exposed to and to sort of pause the rapid growth in urbanization. Here, we can also see a diachronic shift in the practice of collecting with the advent of the internet. Collecting began, in as far back as 15th century, primarily on foot when the collectors would roam on foot all over Europe to buy the right kind of antiques “sometimes jealously guarding their finds against each” (Findlen) however post 20th, the collectors are more updated on the origins of their collection and where to find the exact antique or object that they would want to add to their collection. Pamuk introduces us to two kinds of collectors in the context of the ships that passed the Bosphorus sea, those that were more systematic about their findings and paid a great deal of attention on the technicalities of the ships that passed through the sea however the other kind were more interested in the feeling that the photographs invoked in them, to hold on to a nostalgia of their past memories of the ships and the sea. Pamuk too relates to this feeling and though it may seem superficial he too belonged in the category of the

collectors who hoarded the objects, not for a superior reason but simply to use it in the story or because he found it unusual. Kemal as a collector reduced his collection to numbers as each new object that he took of Füsün signified each moment where he got to be with her, “the 1593 happy night by Füsün’s side” can be juxtaposed with 4,213 cigarette stubs that he preserved of her during the time when he spent eight years visiting her house. The psychology behind his collecting is purely the belief and faith of objects being able to induce memories which is what drove me to continue collecting all the years that he did. Moving back to the primary focus, Pamuk’s urge to collect can be seen to stem from his own father who maintained a cabinet of curiosities himself however Pamuk’s approach to collecting seems slightly more systematic as it was directed towards not only constructing the narrative but also towards preserving the Istanbul as he knew it, one of the instances can be taken from during the time of the construction when children would lose their balls over the walls of the museum and when he got around to returning those balls, they had already deflated which he then used to display in one of the boxes to evoke “Kemal and his friends’ end-of-summer blues and the joyful racket of our neighbourhood kids’ soccer matches” (Pamuk 40). He too, like the earlier collectors ‘imagined’ his museum before the physical act of building began. Though the mention of this different psychology behind each collector the paper attempts to piece together different memories that attach themselves to the objects collected by each individual. The juxtaposition highlights the fact that each person’s account is different from, even conflicting the other, and there will never be one concrete image of the place, event or even a person that they are longing to preserve, all we are left with a collection of wide and varied accounts. However, it is interesting to note how there is also a discovery of self that happens through others for it is only when a collector sees the

other picking up an object or an object being displayed somewhere does he get the urge to become a collector himself.

In the following paragraph, the paper will be merging the two points : (b) and (c) i.e. the deracination of objects and how they construct a space when attributed with new functions and meanings from their original, and the authenticity of these objects. This will majorly be attempted through the sources of the objects displayed in The Museum of Innocence, given that not all objects are the ones Kemal pilfered from Füsün and her family. The objects that Pamuk began collecting for the museum seem to be a muddle of sources ranging from his mother's old crockery set to the flea market to exchanges with the junk dealers however all of these share the commonality of being functional in a Turkish household which is now merely put on display. So what happens when mundane, everyday objects are devoid of their utility value? Philip Fisher calls it "The Silencing of the images" (Branham 35). The new location that the object is placed in renders it from the function it was originally created for example if a crucifix is taken from a cathedral and placed in a museum setting, people who visit the museum won't be seen genuflecting to the crucifix instead it will become a mere sight to the visitors, a part of the art gallery (Branham 35). Similarly, Pamuk's objects now displaced from their original household setting, take on the function of representing the lifestyle of the Turkish people however one may question not the authenticity of the objects, for their origins subscribe to the conventional notion of a bygone age but instead the authenticity of the very museum. Having discussed the hybridity of Pamuk's museum and its inability to fit into just one form of a museum, some visitors and critics may have difficulty in grasping what the museum is trying to convey which is to discount one concrete portrayal of the story and especially the history of Istanbul. Such questions

regarding the authenticity may arise from two observations, first is that of Pamuk's use of the artistic license and the second of the story being only from Kemal's point of view which devoids the reader from that of Füsün. Pamuk's use of artistic license to alter the story is most evident in the chapter, "The Hand of Rahmi Efendi" in *The Innocence of Objects* where Pamuk draws a difference between the novel and the museum by pointing out the replacement that he makes between the objects mentioned in the novel and the one displayed in the box, "I decided last minute to replace the mournful sleeping dog (which was in the novel) with this optimistic dog (which was not) looking up a Rahmi Efendi's hand. The more I worked on the museum and realized that I could use the objects to bring out themes beyond those of the novel, the freer I felt" (Pamuk 212). Pamuk employs artistic license quite a handful of times further in the process of curation while he affirms that the novel is word to word as to how Kemal told him, this affirmation of his alterations to his readers assures the readers regarding the authenticity of the whole narrative which is hyper-aware of its fictional aspect. The second observation regarding the readers only having access to Kemal's point of view can be seen in the light of the story being a testimony that is against the existence of the objective, and relies heavily and almost solely on the subjective, personal experience. In this context, it is quite a fallacy to expect him to write from a perspective that isn't his.

The paper will be merging the last two points in the given subheading i.e. (d) The relation of the objects with the viewer and (e) Material Memory.

For Pamuk, Kemal becomes the embodiment of an entire source of knowledge and history of Istanbul through the lens of a demonym who uses this repertoire of knowledge not only to tell his story but also of the city, which when an accidental tourist stumbles upon, becomes a sort of

memoir which is reflected through the collection of the sundry objects on display. These objects allow the viewers to be exposed to a sort of vicarious memory which was experienced by an individual and is being re-created through The Museum of Innocence. The paper attempts to draw a link between the objects and the viewer and how such engagement induces a pre-existing memory to be experienced by museum-goers and to explore the mechanism through which the museum achieves this. Branham states that an object's ability of meaning production is not purely intrinsic nor does it rely so much on the manner of its an exhibition but mostly and more importantly it "is inextricably linked to an audience's reception and perception of it" (Branham 37). To drive the imagination of such memory Pamuk accompanies the objects and the photographs with sounds which are frequently be heard if one stays in Istanbul such as the hissing of a clean work pump, the whistle of a night guard, the cries of the boza seller and the voices of the passers-by (Pamuk 233). The objects along with the sound create a bodily memory for the visitors making them question the power of the ordinary objects. One of the other instances can be taken from the 4,213 cigarette butts of Füsün on display in the entrance hall substituted by a video which becomes a sort of signification of the smoking habits followed by all of Istanbul (Pamuk 232). S. Greenblatt introduces a concept called resonance, which according to him is "the power of the displayed object to reach out beyond its formal boundaries to a larger world, to evoke in the viewer the complex, dynamic cultural force from which it has emerged and for which it may be taken by a viewer to stand" (Greenblatt 24). However, he also mentioned that for resonance to be accomplished the viewer must be completely aware of the historical and social constructs implied on the object. Pamuk's objects convey no such prior information to the viewer however not revealing the origins of the objects is a way of drawing

attention to the unreliability of each narrative told by the objects, and therefore on the fact that it is not important who says what, or who is accountable for what, but instead what they say. Branham states in his article that, “it is virtually impossible for scholars to reconstruct, in epistemological terms, any original, universal reaction to objects, it seems a frustrating aim to try to invest the twentieth-century tourist with that original, elusive dynamic” whereas Pamuk in his chapter, “An Indignant And Broken Heart Is Of No Use To Anyone”, mentions how objects can be used as a gateway to a past that has not been necessarily experienced by the viewer,

The Museum of Innocence has been made by those who . . . believe in the magic of objects. We have been inspired by Kemal’s belief in objects, yet unlike the passionate collector, we are not moved by the fetishist’s desire to possess things, but rather by the wish to know the object’s secrets. We carry in our own hearts the very same hope that we see emanating from the cinema crowd’s gaze in this autumn evening. As our soul focuses on objects, we can feel in our broken hearts that the whole world is one, and we come to accept our own sufferings. What makes this acceptance possible is enshrined in the cinema goer’s eyes. It isn’t the necessarily in the soda bottle that Kemal kept by his bedside for years because Füsün once touched her lips to it or the broken porcelain heart, we turn instead to the crowd in the background, to the other world, to a place outside of Time - to you” (Pamuk 195).

Pamuk's museum not only achieves what Branham refutes but also succeeds in maintaining a timeless status to the museum wherein there is also a discovery of self that happens through others. This is primarily done through the technique of story within a story, Kemal’s grand narrative houses all the small stories about Istanbul that only create a new experience for the

foreign visitor but also allow the citizens to connect to their past, for example in the chapter, Tailors Visiting us in our House, Pamuk writes about his childhood memory of the tailor who came to sew his mother's dresses and links it to Füsün's mother who did the same job and through this narrativization of the tailors who told the stories of their own households, Pamuk states that at the moment "all the families and all the homes in Istanbul were alike" (see Appendix H). The new generation citizens may not come to know such practices that took place in the city and their household and thereby leave with a borrowed memory. Through these memories, we can understand how the self is described within a certain space, and how the self and space interact to define and understand each other. In conclusion: it can be understood that though critics may question the foundation of the museum and the nature of its contents it is to be remembered that no aspects of the narrative are more authentic or truthful. It removes the burden of accountability from the speaker and invites the reader to suspend the need to point fingers and keep tabs, and instead take what is given to them as is. This doesn't mean they are to take the author/narrator's word as gospel, but instead means that no one is reliable, but accountability is not a parameter that needs to be met in order to tell a story.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A SPOON NEXT TO A BOTTLE OPENER

This paragraph will cover the significance of exhibition and staging in a museum and how Pamuk and his architects have played with this common technique to contribute to The Museum of Innocence being known as one of a kind. Gary Vikan introduces a concept called "experiential contextualism" he goes to explain them as presentations that are impact-defined and not are merely dependent on the origin of the object or exhibitions that reconstruct the original setting of an object to increase visitor response (Vikan 26). This can be understood

through Pamuk's decision of arranging the objects in separate glass boxes wherein some of them are substituted by sound extensions and then to be further exhibited in the order of the chapters. Each box carefully crafted to embody an abstract feeling that resides in the chapter for example in, "The Agony of Waiting" ,Pamuk describes the box as, "The clock in the box on the facing page, with its internal workings exposed and the matchsticks laid out in the front of it in an attempt to count the minutes, measures the lethargic progress of time and creates the illusion that it is moving faster than it seems. But the days when we feel as if time were refusing to pass are those that make us more aware of the essence of objects. Everything in this box is an attempt to embody waiting" (Pamuk 129) (see Appendix I) This highlights Pamuk's act of defining the personal entirely in terms of the external world so as to make it easy to relate to by the visitors,one of the other boxes, "The Hand of Rahmi Efendi" embodies guilt which,according to Pamuk ranges from the guilt experienced by Kemal towards the affair with Füsün when being engaged to Sibel to the guilt that people like Pamuk himself feel when passing a mosque due to their questionable spirituality (Pamuk 121). Along with ascribing emotion to each box that further increases the significance of the objects, Pamuk focuses on two other things that contribute to driving their impact on the visitor, the first being their positioning with each other within the boxes; even before the curation of the idea of boxes Pamuk was most interested in the notion of Wunderkammer or "room of wonders" which was previously discussed in the first sub-heading. He talks about the wonder of objects and the meaning they produce when deracinated from different places and contexts and placed next to each other,he writes, "I realized that when arranged with love and care, objects in the museum - an odd photograph, a bottle opener, a picture of a boat, a coffee cup, a postcard - could attain a much greater

significance than they had before. I had to put these strange photographs and used objects on my desk and reimagine them as pieces belonging to the lives of real people (Pamuk 52). Such rearrangement took years to accomplish and Pamuk admits that the museum was built on a trial and error method especially given the boxes. There was always a sense of uncertainty that followed Pamuk when putting it together which he constantly references throughout the *Innocence of Objects*, however this uncertainty has a postmodern characteristic to it, unlike a historical museum where the places are determined according to their sections, time periods and facts, The Museum of Innocence informs the visitor about the subjectivity of history and not to place blind faith in records of history because it is never the simple black and white story it seems on the paper or how it is shown in the museums. The second thing that contributes to its uniqueness is the architecture of the building. The interior is constructed in such a way that once in the attic, a visitor can view the entire museum and all the objects at once. The shell of the building was preserved so as to blend in with the rest of the neighbourhood. Pamuk throughout the building process made sure to preserve the essence of the building so that not only the visitors remember it as the house Keskin family lived in but Kemal as well thereby turning it not into an “intellectual” building but an “emotional” one (Branham 44).

Conclusion

This paper tried to look at how two different forms of text talk about the multiplicity of immortalizing a narrative and how they engage with each other while achieving that goal. The boundaries of a museum and museum curation are stretched and experimented with through *The Museum of Innocence*, both the novel and the actual museum. This experimentation takes place by arranging together all the fields where Pamuk challenges the

conventional notions of museum creation by merging the fictional and the factual together. Throughout the novel, Kemal explores the secrets of objects throughout the narration of the story, trying to ground his affliction to them however it is. In the last few pages in *The Innocence of Objects*, where Pamuk quotes from the notebook of Celal Salik, "I once wrote about a crown prince who threw away all of his belongings so that he could be his true self. . . the prince came to the realization that without objects, the world and his life were both meaningless. It seems that there is no way we can discover the secret of objects without heartbreak. And we must humbly submit to the truth of this ultimate secret" (Pamuk 256).

There is a spirit of postmodernism in both the texts, perhaps not in the manner anticipated. The key characteristic of a postmodern work seems to be that it questions the prevailing and subverts an existing system or attempts to do so. Pamuk might not have directly questioned the politics of the city and the forms of art explored by Turkish culture, but it does question and subverts the structure of a museum. It transcends generic boundaries. The two texts, *The Museum of Innocence*, *The Innocence of Objects* and the museum are an example of a contemporary form of materializing a narrative, in terms of both form and content. In the catalogue, there is a more direct conversation between Pamuk and the reader regarding the curation and the challenges of and by Pamuk throughout the process.

In this context, the paper does not remain a mere poststructuralist analysis, since it attempts to read in ways that address questions of postmodernism and poststructuralism while trying to ensure that at no point is the text pigeonholed into one of these discourses. In the world of contemporary literature, it will not do to give into such conveniences and overlook the subtleties of art and writing. Such an attempt would be as futile and dangerous as trying to pin

down Pamuk as only a Turkish postmodern author, nothing more or nothing less. In the field of literary studies, this topic can be studied through many lenses, for example, New Historicism in the context of Pamuk's challenge against the conventional sources of history and how he places something as factual as a museum next to fiction, all the while highlighting that all records are unreliable and subjective. On the other hand, while moving away from the literary studies, the topic can be majorly explored in the field of museology where there is no set requirement of the separation between the novel and the museum. The flexibility of the texts creates a much wider scope for further research.

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