



SECULAR VERSUS SACRED POWER POLITICS: A FOUCAULDIAN DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF ORHAN PAMUK'S NOVEL SNOW

Qurratulaen Liaqat ^{1*}, Asia Mukhtar²

¹Department of English, FCCU, Pakistan

²Department of International Relations, Pakistan

Article Info

*Corresponding Author

Email Id: qurratulaen@fccollege.edu.pk

Abstract

Creative works fabricate fictional worlds with the use of imagination but they also incorporate the figments of intricate realities around human beings. In this sense, these fictional narratives transcend the boundary of the field of Humanities and provide case studies to examine real life happenings which have implications for the discipline of Social Sciences. This paper contends that a Foucauldian discourse analysis of Orhan Pamuk's novel *Snow* (2004) illustrates the religious and political realities of contemporary world in a poetic manner. It can be read both as a literary piece of work and as a real life document to study the altercation between the sacred and secular forces in contemporary era. Currently, the global peace situation is suffering on the pretext of extremism emanating from both secular and sacred fundamentalism. Many countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq and Syria are facing militancy, terrorism and civil wars due to the tussle between these two forces. Fictional accounts of such real life realities, such as Pamuk's novel *Snow*, provide valuable insights which help in comprehending these complex social phenomena. Therefore, this is an interdisciplinary investigation which simultaneously conducts hermeneutic textual analysis of a literary text and also adds on to the field of politics of religion in contemporary milieu. The paper contends that prevailing ideology in the novel as well as of the contemporary world is neither religious fundamentalism nor secularism but the overriding discourse is the 'power-play' between these two gigantic forces which are manipulating masses all around the world.

Keywords

Globalism, Sacred, Secular, Turkey, dispositive, heterotopias, Foucault, Discourse



1. Introduction

Fiction has become one of the most popular genres to reflect upon various manifestations of social, political, religious, cultural and psychological realities in contemporary era. By depicting imaginative situations and characters, novels provide a chance to reflect upon many complex issues and debates surfacing in the twenty first century. One of the most often discussed topics of this century, in the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences, has been the continuing struggle between religious and secular forces, especially in the aftermath of 9/11. One such fictional reflection, based on the religious and political realities of Turkey is Orhan Pamuk's prize winning novel *Snow* (Pamuk 2004). This text illustrates the realistic politico-religious ideoscapes of Turkey which can be read as a case study or as a microcosmic representation of the complex conflict between religious and secular discourses in the broader contemporary milieu. This novel is not only a classic literary piece of work of our times but it can also be used as a palimpsest to understand the reality behind the never-ending struggle between these two contradictory narratives. This study contends that a Foucauldian discourse analysis of *Snow* demonstrates that the root-cause of the conflict between these two meta-discourses of contemporary world does not lie in belief or non-belief but the fountain head of this ongoing conflict is the desire to gain more social and political power in both personal and political domains. On the one hand, both these discourses subject individuals into

certain narratives with the help of certain violent and non-violent ways and on the other hand, certain individuals employ these discourses to obtain political power and hegemony over masses.

This paper will briefly describe the history and current situation of Turkey. Then the paper will introduce the novel and elaborate the methodology of Foucauldian discourse analysis. Later on, it will study the significance of places like Turkey, both as fictional and realistic heterotopias, as a battlefield for such antagonistic power plays. Furthermore, the paper will analyze multiple forms of conflicting narratives used by the major discourses of religion and secularism which are being employed and manipulated to exert power over the real lives of individuals. By conducting hermeneutic textual analysis of this novel, this paper demonstrates that this text unravels a harsh socio-political reality that mostly it is actually an overriding desire to acquire more power which makes these two forces to clash with each other.

2. Literature Review

2.1. *The Case of Turkey- A Torn Country*

Before conducting a discourse analysis of this novel, it is important to first understand the historical standing of Turkey's religious politics in the global context. In this global religious scene, Turkey has got a very unique position. Huntington, in his famous *The Clash of Civilizations* text, declares Turkey as a "torn country" (p.42) which is divided between the traditional Islam followed by middle and lower middle classes and elite class who are following modern secular trends. The

deeply rooted Islamic tradition since the Ottoman times and the instance of modernization of Turkey through Kemalism has made Turkey's religion-political space a very rich collage for the study of religious psychology of not only Turkey but many other countries which are trying to strike a balance between two discordant mega narratives of current times.

Since the early 1900s, Turkey is trying to evolve as a modern state. It all started with Young Ottoman Revolution and reached at its climax under the regime of Kemal Ataturk. Turkey has been trying to become a part of European Union for a while now but without any success. This scenario of Turkey fostered the imagination of its intelligentsia and writers like Orhan Pamuk wrote some seminal fictional accounts of the country's torn religious situation. *Snow* (Pamuk 2004) by Orhan Pamuk is considered one of the best writings in our times about the clash of Sacred and Secular ideologies. Pamuk very skillfully portrays the conflicts of various religious discourses on the terrain of Turkey. This paper intends to understand the uniqueness of Turkey's polyphonic religious discourse as described in *Snow* and its real life implications. The paper is aimed at highlighting the dominant discourses in the novel as well as subject positions created under the prevailing discourses of the novel.

As far as Turkey's religious and political history is concerned, Turkey has always been considered "a bridge between the West and the East" (Güngör, 2007, p. 72), located at a very sensitive position

geographically, historically, culturally and geo-strategically. Khan (1958) is of the view that since the very ancient times, Ottoman Empire had been very tolerant to the different nationalities and religions and this made Ottoman rulers so successful for a long period of time (p. 152). After 1923, Turkish administration has been "staunchly secular" (Shively, 2008, p. 684). It was Mustafa Kemal Ataturk who felt that secularization was essential for the "truly modern nation-state of Turkey" (Shively, 2008, p. 684). Turkey got "willing to shed the parochial trappings of religion in order to flow with global and cosmopolitan culture (Neuman, 2011, p.144). This brief review of the existent literature clearly explicates that in Turkey both religious and secular forces are equally powerful and struggling to get a stronger foothold in this country.

2.2. Snow- A Microcosmic Representation of Turkey

What makes *Snow* by Pamuk, an appropriate piece of literature to study the tussle between these two forces is its life-like portrayal of Turkey's "complex transnational attachments against the caricatured East/West dialectic" (Sakr, 2011, p. 227). It is a reflection of "Turkey's contested cultural and political spaces, the over-determined texture of its history and cultural memory, and the controversial facets of its contemporary national and international geopolitical concerns" (Sakr, 2011, p. 227). Orhan Pamuk, in another work, succinctly sums up the situation of Turkey in the lines given below:

I do not mourn for the Ottoman Empire. I am a Westerner. I'm pleased Westernization took place. What I'm criticizing is the brutality of the ruling elite – both the bureaucracy and the nouveau riche – in implementing Westernization. They lacked the confidence necessary to create a national culture rich in its own symbols and rituals. (Pamuk, 2008, p.42) The statement given above clearly elucidates the problem with other countries like Turkey, (for instance, Pakistan, India, and Afghanistan) that are facing this serious confrontation between religious fundamentalism and secularism. This novel transcends the field of Humanities because it depicts a real life fact that why some countries cannot reconcile between these two forces is because they are not trying to do it with the right amount of conviction and confidence required for such an action and the political elements embedded into the exploitation of these discourses. *Snow* is a retelling of Pamuk's views stated above. In the narrative of Pamuk "...lies a desire to refashion both Kemalist laicism and hegemonic conceptions of Islam in the name of reparative religious projects" (Neuman, 2011, p. 158). Coury (2009) has called it "transnational hybridity" through "the new symbols of clash and interlacing of cultures" which is "torn between its Islamic roots and the prospect of Western Modernity" (pp. 340-341). Therefore, this fictional narrative can be studied as a model for understanding why some countries can never come up to a reconciliation between the mutually conflicting forces of religious and secular fundamentalism.

Prior to any kind of discourse analysis, it is essential to understand the main plot of the novel. *Snow* is story of Ka, an expatriate, who has come back to Turkey after a while. He was exiled to Germany and was living a worthless life there. Now he has come back to Kars (a small town located in Turkey) in order to prepare a report on the dangerously rising girl suicide epidemic and to meet his beloved Ipek. He is a westernized mind who is confused whether he should become an atheist or a firm believer in any religion. During his stay at Kars, he meets multiple characters from every strata of life. He meets Islamist leader Blue, kind religious leader Sheikh, Muhtar Bey a religious political party leader, Kadife the leader of scarf girls and two Religious High School students. The story of novel tries to grapple with contemporary Turkey's socio-political issues. As time Passes, Ka finds himself overwhelmed by multiple political and religious forces around him and the novel ends with the climatic Army coup and murders of Blue (a prominent leader of militant Islamic group) and Necip (a Religious High School student). Ka escapes this political and religious disaster initially but ultimately he is also murdered in Germany at the hands of an Islamist who blames him for the death of Blue, their reverend leader. This fictional work is an exemplary account of multiple secular, political and religious forces present in contemporary world which are affecting the lives of masses in all parts of the world.

3. Methodology

3.1. Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis of any text is an analysis of a text beyond the meaning of the words. It is an analysis which reveals the implied meaning of a text as a whole. Griffin (2013) explains that the language of text and “discursive practices contribute to the constitution of the world”. Secondly, the discourse of any text “is both constituted by and constitutes the socio-cultural world”. Thirdly, analysis of any textual discourse is about focusing on “actual language use within a given context”. Lastly, discourse of every text is “invested” and it does not only contribute to the “(re)production of power relations in society” as well as “the interpretative schema operating within the society” (p. 98). The very act of writing is “subversive” (Freundlieb, 1995, p. 317).

In addition, Foucauldian discourse analysis specifically pays attention to the power-politics between various forces in a text. In his essay, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault (1972) puts forward his notion of discourse as a “group of statements that belong to a single system of formation”. For him, this is “discursive formation,” through which regularity is achieved from an amalgamated analysis of “objects, types of statement, concepts, or thematic choices” (p. 38 & p.107). In Foucault’s tradition (2015a), the analysis will be entrusted to “signs” (p. 27) and the “repetitive” and “redoubled” language of the novel will be observed and analyzed (Foucault, 2015b, p. 65). Objects like snow, multiple concepts and

statements given in the novel *Snow* reflect the discursive nature of the discourse construction in the novel which creates its own unique kind of power oriented discourse. Professor Gibbs, in his lecture at *The University of Huddersfield* (2015), asserts that in Foucauldian discourses, the dominant discourses are analyzed as well as the formation of subjects under those discourses is observed¹. Thus, this paper is an analysis of major dominant discourses of secularism and religious fundamentalism and construction of the subjects under these ideologies which provide insight into grappling with the reality around us.

4. Discussion

This paper contends that the dominant discourse of the novel is neither secular nor sacred. The prevailing discourse of the novel is power-play among the various forces in contemporary world namely secularists, fundamentalists, feminists and agnostics which reflect the complex reality of current world and assist in understanding the nuisances and myriad complexities of existing political and religious realities. This discussion will first undertake the textual analysis of various religious discourses which are being used to obtain power. Then, it will elaborate upon secular forces which also aim at acquisition of power over people. Thirdly, it will discuss that how Mass Media is being used as a tool and a tactic to exert power by both religious and secular forces. In the end, the paper will illustrate that some people also promote

¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E_ffCsQx2Cg.

the discourse of atheism again to improve their chances of success in the real world. In all schools of thoughts related to religious and irreligious ideologies, the common factor is the unconscious endeavor to acquire more power, be it political, social, gender-related or militant.

4.1. The City of Kars

The first claim of this study is that Kars city in this novel does not only portray the microcosmic representation of Turkey, it hints to the global power-play in contemporary era as well. All characters and groups are engaged in the fight for their share in power. The location of Kars, in the novel, is a palimpsest where the religious history of the modern Turkey is inscribed by Pamuk. The landscapes described in this novel are very significant in terms of the power structures which they evoke. Flynn asserts that contemporary era is "the epoch of space". In Foucauldian analysis, there are heterotopias which are "constant of every human group". The city of Kars is the place of contestation of the contemporary times in the novel *Snow* and demonstrates "geopolitics of the region" (Flynn, 1991, p. 169-170). It is a heterotopia on which multiple forces are contesting with each other. Moreover, Kars is a symbolic representation of our contemporary era where militant Islamists and secular state agents are in conflict with each other. Kars is a "site for the multiple voices of various political and ethnic allegiances, including secularists, Islamists, Kurds and Armenians" (Ahmet, 2013, pp. 252-253). The entire novel is a discursive discourse which is invested in the

discourse of power and the meta-narratives exploited for the cause of power enforcement in the name of religion, gender, state, secularism, liberalism and globalization.

4.2. Religious Discourse

This novel depicts multiple discursive discourses of religion existing in contemporary world which have considerable effect on the day-to-day lives of the majority of world's population. Religion is also one of those socio-political discourses which have been crafted by the people who hold powerful positions in a culture or who seek to gain and exert power. This notion of religion as a manufactured discourse has been supported by many eminent religious philosophers (Asad 1993; Kuru 2011). Asad (1993), one of the most scholarly voices of contemporary times in the religious philosophy, refutes the "trans historical concept of religion" and believes that "Experience of spiritual world is shaped by condition in the social world" while he rejects any "universal definition of religion" because that definition will be "the historical product of discursive process" (p. 116). In short, the construction of religion and its discourse is in itself discursive. Moreover, Kuru (2011), another religious theorist, contends that the religious attitudes are based on the two variables of "opportunity structures" and "normative framework" (p. 387). He believes that the more a group or individual has chances of benefits from international opportunity structures, the more its normative structure is open to global relationships and tolerance. Each character's religion normative

framework, in this novel, is based on this precept of 'opportunity'. Every character is either religious or secular because of the power related opportunities involved in the social, political, and religious set up of that fictional world which reflect the reality of all religious discourses popular in contemporary world. Every individual and group in this novel has either anti or pro secular/global attitude because they have some stakes involved on the basis of their benefits in national or international world. Ka is secular and open-minded towards the West because he has got opportunities there. On the other hand, poor masses of Kars might not have any stakes involved for the benefits from international community so majority of the community is not very tolerant towards the Western ideologies. Affiliation with local religious ideologies provides them with the illusion of power so they associate themselves more strongly with the fundamentalist religious discourses. For instance, Sheikh Afendi uses mystical religious discourse which makes people feel overwhelmed. Blue, the leader of Islamists is using religion to further his militant objectives. Muhtar Bey is contending for election not for religion but for the political power. The students of Islamic school like Necip and Fazil try to use religious discourse on Ka in order to convince him about the presence of God. In the novel, there are "multiple manifestations of Islam in Turkish life" (Ahmet, 2013, p. 253). Each character is striving to dominate the social system and coerce people into accepting his religious discourse. Basically, the agenda of both Prosperity

Party and the secular parties is same; implementation of their particular discourse and attainment of power in order to continue with their influential position in the country. The champions of religious discourse try to subjugate masses with the help of violence, torture, stalking and murdering. For instance, the education director is killed because of his decision to expel the girls with scarves from the university. The director is forced to make this statement by Islamic militant before his murder, "I am ashamed of all the things I have done. I know I deserve to die and in the hope that God Almighty will forgive me" (Pamuk, 2004, p. 47). The director is also a subject who is being exploited and stuck between the orders of state and Islamists' insistence on allowing girls to wear scarves. Ka is threatened by Turgut Bey: "If you want to save your skin, I would advise you to increase your faith in God at the earliest opportunity" (Pamuk, 2004, p. 131). Similarly, militant Islam as depicted in this novel also illustrates the violent tactics of fundamentalists depicted through the character of Blue who is the leader of Muslim militants. The Islamic militants follow him because of his militant fundamentalist discourse. Blue is also using religion as a pretext for his militancy which makes him feel powerful. Blue, the leader of Islamists is called "Master" by his admirers and he got "notoriety" by giving a threat to a TV host. TV channels invited Blue for their shows and it made him famous and powerful (Pamuk, 2004, p. 68). It was power that he enjoyed and aimed for. He just wanted to feed to his own

celebrity status. The name “master” shows that how much he loves to rule his followers and have power over them. He is an ordinary man. However, his spectacle on the media made him into something like a powerful militant figure. Another struggle of power acquisition in the city of Kars is the use of religion for political purposes and a tool for winning elections. The contending party leaders are playing the ‘religion card’ to get votes of the people. Serdar Bey exclaims “Give your vote to the Prosperity Party, the party of God; we’ve fallen into this destitution because we’ve wandered off the path of God... The new mayor will belong to God’s party” (Pamuk, 2004, p. 26). The excerpt from the novel illustrates the political power-play going on in Kars. The word God’s party gives a political connotation to the agenda of the party. These people ask for votes in the name of God and religion to fulfill their own power hungry plans. Not only characters, but also their actions are directed not by religious ideologies but by the amount of power which one gains by following a certain religious discourse. The novel highlights the struggle of scarf wearing girls who are committing suicide. The scarf is thought to be an insignia of Muslim religion. The leader of scarf girls Kadife is shown as the representative of Feminist Islam. Surprisingly, she does not wear scarf for religious reasons. Kadife tells Ka that her wearing of scarf was “a political statement”, “a revolutionary gesture” (Pamuk, 2004, p.113). She and other Muslim feminist girls like her are using scarf as a dispositive, a tool to further their political aims.

Surprisingly, throughout the novel’s narrative, Islamists blame the West and Europeans for ruining their lives but by the end they are in need of European Media in order to announce their denouncement of Army coup on the Kars city in which many people died (Pamuk, 2004, p. 227). There is an “ongoing redefinition and reconfiguration of religiosity” (Ismail, 2011, p. 23) in the novel. This shows that how Islamists can use the Western media for their own benefits. Their focus is neither Islam nor the hate for the West. They just want to promote their agenda and gain power in the national and international narratives.

4.3. *Secular Discourse*

The state in the *Snow* is more like a dictatorship which is “obsessed with making sure all groups, ideas and media outlets that are against Kemalist ideals are repressed” (Ahmet, 2013, p. 252). So, the state becomes another power hungry group and is ready to do everything possible to save its hegemony over the masses. Secular State is the counter discourse of the Islamic militants in the Kars city. Ahmet (2011) argues, “Secularism is now commonly understood to be a political formation that exercises power in authorizing certain kinds of religious behaviour and reforming others” (p. 248). State is acting like the typical panopticon. Panoptic is a term Foucault borrowed from Jeremy Bentham (Foucault, 2001). Gökner (2013) claims, “Kars is a microcosm of the nation-state as a space incarceration or even a police state” (p. 184). Every individual is under surveillance of state. Police and Army are the apparatus which state is using for political subjugation.

The entire stay of Ka in the city of Kars is closely monitored by the state. State has become “the arbiter of religion, drawing the boundaries for faith and defining the practices it may commit” (Ahmet, 2013, p. 249). According to Asad (1993), “the secular state exercises a theological function” and “liberal secularism” is “the panacea for all ills” (p.74). Similar to the militant version of religious extremists, a new violent class of secularists is emerging which Mahmood (2015) terms as “Political Secularism” and defines as “modern state’s relationship to and regulation of religion” (p. 3). In this novel, Turkey seems to be what Ismail calls as subjugation “to the dynamics of post-modernity” which “continues to maintain global pretences to homogenize and totalize the cultural identity of Muslims against the diversity of consumer cultures” (Ismail, 2011, p. 22). Religion is one of the most important references with which identities are developed. They are neither ‘fixed’ nor ‘unidimensional’ (Ismail, 2011, p. 16). But under the dominant social discourse of secularism, subjects are being created in the narrative of *Snow*. Foucault’s theory of subject is a milestone in the cause of humanism. According to Foucault, the subject is defined as “the subject of a hierarchical political order”. This might be any individual in any society “who is subjected to the laws of society, nature, truth” (Pickett, 1991, p. 452). Every character in the novel is being subjected to secular discourse and everyone is being coerced through punishment to submit. The Police men are aware of almost all the meetings happening in private. State

is also trying to control the personal choices related to the bodies of individuals. Foucault proposes the notion of “history of "bodies"; not just the body politic, nor the body of information (positivity) which a science incarnates, but the physical bodies of individuals, tamed, trained, subjected to the scrutinizes of experts and normalizers” (Flynn, 1991, p. 176). The societies subject their members to both mental and physical subjugation. The place of Sheikh, the mystical Islami leader, is bugged in order to keep track of meetings at his place. Muhtar Bey, the candidate for religious party and ex-communist of the city is arrested and beaten up by police. Blue is arrested twice and killed by State agencies. Ipek, Ka’s lover is also under surveillance because she has an illicit relationship with the famous Islamist leader Blue. Police officer informs Ka of this relationship which shows that even the personal lives are being monitored. Initially, the state induced apparatus like tortures, murders and coups forces people into giving information. Muhtar, a leading Islamist politician, is aware that the phones are tapped and surveillance is done by “bullying Policemen” (Pamuk, 2004, p. 63). Muhtar is so much subjected to torture and the tyranny of state that it seems “as if he were thinking, I deserve this beating not just for having insisted on settling in this godforsaken city but for having succumbed once again to the desire for power”(p. 64). This sentence hints at the meekness and subjugation of Muhtar as well as his confession that he has this will to attain power which is the main discourse of the novel. Ka is forced out of city of Kars by

agencies without any prior information or justification for leaving and he is not even allowed to meet anyone. His account of last hours in Kars is missing which hint at the states' involvement in the removal of all evidences and sensitive information. The climax of state's tyranny is played out in the coup.

4.4. Media Exploited by Dominant Discourses

Moreover, the use of Mass media devices is another very useful "dispositive" by the government as well as Islamists to exert their power. Brigg mentions Foucault's preposition of "dispositif" (Morgan, 2002, pp. 421-436) which might also be termed as an "apparatus, with a macro-level application of his concept of normalization" (Bussolini, 2010, p. 85). In the city of Kars, the power by state is operated by the dispositive/dispositif of secularization. This culminates in the notion of "seiz[ing] hold of life in order to suppress it" (Foucault, 1981, p. 136).

The use of local newspaper to publish news about the arrival of Ka, reports on suicide girls, the broadcast of national television and the possibility of coup denouncement in European media is a strong statement on the emerging use of media for the cause of power deployment in multiple scenarios. Every political actor is manipulating media in its own way as a means to their own ends. Media is being used both as a surveillance device as well as quick information retrieval tool. Moreover, Media gives Islamists a pretext for inflicting tyranny.

4.5. Ka- An Athiest?

The main protagonist Ka's stance on religion is also another example which illustrates that how a man can shift his loyalties towards religious and secular discourses according to the need of the hour. Ka asserts, "A man can't pray to his heart's content in this country unless he can depend on the efficiency of the atheist who's an expert at managing the West and the other aspects of worldly business" (Pamuk, 2004, p. 61).

Ka is referring to the powers of globalization and survival of the fittest in the global village. Ka has also got a mystical religious side to his personality. Snow reminds Ka of God (Pamuk, 2004, p. 60). However, he represents the case of secularism for the state which he believes is inevitable in order to deal with the international world, run the business of a country and provide a feasible system to those who want to be theist and worship God. Ka has his own version of "private religion" who is "a solitary man who believes in God ... far more wretched and sinful than a nonbeliever" (Pamuk, 2004, p. 61).

When Ka tries to reassure Necip that God is really here, Necip says, "If God does not exist, that means heaven does not exist either" (Pamuk, 2004, p. 107). Here, Necip is being agnostic and a representative of agnostic religious discourse in the terrain of Turkey. Necip is looking for heaven after death and he doubts this idea of eternal happiness. The ignorance of the true religious knowledge and unawareness of its practical side fraught each one of them with doubts and suspicions yet some

particular opportunist agenda tend to guide them towards a certain direction.

5. Conclusion

This novel is a realistic portrayal of all the religious and secular discourses present around us. A Foucauldian discourse analysis demonstrates that all religious, atheistic and secular discourses in contemporary world are politically manufactured. Fortunately or unfortunately, religion is used as a major power-player in the global and cosmopolitan politics. The major conflicts in the contemporary world, somehow involve some religious or anti-religious forces. It seems our era's wars are fought on the pretexts and alibi of religions. Wars and civil wars are going on in many countries like, Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria. In this perspective, it is imperative to understand the nature of power struggle between religious and secular discourses. *Snow* by Orhan Pamuk incorporates multiple religious discourses in the global and cosmopolitan context. The novel undertakes, sacred, secular, atheists, and gendered voices in order to illustrate the multiplicity of Turkish religious experience in the current scenario. The discourse of the novel is invested and refers to various power positions portrayed in this text. The textual analysis refers to the dominant discourses of political secular, sacred, gendered and cosmopolitan dimensions through which characters are trained and educated and they cannot get themselves liberated from these overpowering discourses. Various groups of people are subjected and subjugated to certain discourses through hegemony, ideological and state

apparatuses, threatening, surveillance and violence. This novel provides valuable insight into human ideological behavior most prevalent in contemporary milieu where majority follows the religious philosophy which provides more opportunities to be powerful and influential. This novel's Turkey is a case study which is applicable to all those places where religious and secular forces are still in conflict. Perhaps one of the most valuable lessons of contemporary religious politics depicted in this novel is that majority of the people adopt that religious discourse which suits them and makes them feel powerful. In one way, they basically lack any ideology and just blindly follow the shortest route to power acquisition. This novel is an authentic poetic statement on the politics of religion in contemporary world which needs to be understood by common man so that he/she cannot be misled by blindly following these grand narratives. Hence, this study proves that Pamuk's novel *Snow* teaches valuable lessons to its readers in terms of enhancing their political and religious sensibility in an overwhelmingly complicated socio-political milieu.

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