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Orhan Pamuk , ?????? ????(??????), ??? ??? ???? (??????), ??? ??????? ??? ?????(??????)

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## ?????? ???????

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### ?????? ??????? Details

Date : Published 2007 by ?????? ?????? ?????? (first published 1994)

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Author : Orhan Pamuk , ?????? ??? (??????) , ??? ??? ??? (??????) , ??? ??????? ??? ?????? (??????)

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## From Reader Review ?????? ?????? for online ebook

Hamza says

**Brian says**

*'I read a book one day and my whole life was changed. Even on the first page I was so affected by the book's intensity I felt my body sever itself and pull away from the chair where I sat reading the book that lay before me on the table.'* Light surging from its pages illuminates his face: *'Its incandescence dazzled my intellect but also endowed it with brilliant lucidity.'* The book seems to be about him, so that *'my point of view was transformed by the book, and the book was transformed by my point of view.'*

Pamuk is a writer that helps me understand why I like reading; for the discovery of ideas, cultures, language, worlds, and most importantly, self. When reading his novels, the space and things around me just disappear. His plot lines are at times tenuous, something seen peripherally, weaving in and out of focus. I don't read Pamuk for the pleasure of a well-crafted story-line (though I do find the story-lines well-crafted). I read him for his style. He continually pulls me into his writing. I can't leave his books alone once started and when finished, cannot easily forget them.

*'A good book is something that reminds us of the whole world - Perhaps that's how every book is, or what each and every book ought to be.'*

In *The New Life*, Osman (maybe that's his name), reads a book (also called *The New Life*) that completely changes his life and propels him on a quest to find the meaning of the book, and life. Along the way he falls in love, aimlessly travels on buses, visits bus crashes to walk among the dead and dying, hunts down spies code-named after watch brands, and he speaks to the *Angel* for guidance and absolution.

*'Some went into solitude with the book, but at the threshold of a serious breakdown they were able to open up to the world and shake off their affliction. There were also those who had crises and tantrums upon reading the book, accusing their friends and lovers of being oblivious to the world in the book, of not knowing or desiring the book, and thereby criticising them mercilessly for not being anything like the persons in the book's universe.'*

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DAMN! I wrote the above with 50 pages left to go. Well, I just had lunch unknowingly eating a chicken pie as I pored through the final pages. When I closed the book I found myself fighting back tears, not tears for the characters in the book, tears for myself. It's more than puzzling to me. Magical words these were. And although I immersed myself in the first 250 pages enjoying every single word I was not fully aware what the story was about. I had a hint. I imagined. I guessed. And then the last 50 pages. And then the last 2 pages. Nothing is black and white. I still can't tell you the secret to the mystery of *The New Life*. I only know that this book hit a nerve with me and I can only now appreciate Osman's (if that's his name) opening line... '*I read a book one day and my whole life was changed*' and understand what it feels like to have '*my body sever itself and pull away from the chair where I sat reading the book that lay before me on the table*'. I'm still shaking...

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The book is a labyrinth. There are hidden traps. The words deceive. The words tease. Pamuk plays games with text from other books by Jules Verne, Dante, Rilke, Ib'n Arabi... Comparing Pamuk to Borges? I can understand. This is not a book that I think many would appreciate or enjoy. It is filled with thoughts on Westernization, Islamic fundamentalism, Turkish nationalism... Ultimately, '*what is important [of a book:] is your own perception, what you read into it...*'

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### **pegah says**

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**Azarin says**

After reading the opening sentence of the New Life, "I read a book one day and my whole life was changed," I wondered whether reading The New Life itself was going to change my life.

This is the story of Osman, an engineering student, who becomes obsessed with a book and falls in love with a girl, Janan, who shares the same obsession. This novel is mainly the story of their journey through Turkey, going aimlessly from city to city, searching for this new life promised by the book.

At some point, as a reader, we doubt about their sanity, and we wonder what the real meaning of this mystical journey is? Is Pamuk the modern literary version of a whirling dervish looking for God or the meaning of life or one's self like Sufis? Or does this new life is all about an identity crisis, like one of the favorite themes of Pamuk?

Could it be that Osman's wandering represents Turkey and its tormented historical journey to reach a point where the never ending conflict and contradiction between the East and the West would finally reach an end?

Again, like all his other novels, the new life is not an easy read, but it is full of poetic philosophy and ambiguous dilemmas, and this was what I liked the most. Because I was tempted to put the book down every few pages, and like tasting a good wine, I had to ponder about the underlayer meaning of what I had just read.

In my case, as much as Pamuk has changed my life with each of his novels, I have to confess that I have also transformed his words because of my own particular point of view. The beauty of Pamuk's work is that whatever conclusion any reader might reach, nothing in his work is ordinary. Each of us is going to read the book through our own eyes, and changing it because of who we are, as if each reader has to rewrite this whole journey ... and this is Orhan Pamuk's strength.

## Ahmad Sharabiani says

Yeni hayat = The new life?, Orhan Pamuk (1952)

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## **Mohit Parikh says**

I am done with 60% of the book and couldn't hold myself from writing something, anything, about the book, with my half-open sleepy eyes.

When I began this book, I wanted to love Pamuk. Through his interviews and talks, the reviews of his books, and my experience with Snow, I have made some strong opinions about him, which I wanted to change in the course of reading this novel. The opinions remain unscathed, so far, but I almost liked him.

Some observations so far:

1. Osman and Janan are too similar to Ka and Ipek: the male hero (overtly) sentimental, sensitive, vulnerable. The female hero mysterious and angelic.
2. Young people masturbate and watch Porno. Pamuk's insistence related to the religious/moral weather in Turkey?
3. His novel(s) is(/are) superbly planned, writing lacks precision.  
Too many words (bad), too many themes (good), too many layers (awesome).
4. Pamuk is IMPORTANT. Political reasons. He has contributed tremendously to the postmodern literature (been an avant-garde?) but his voice - where it comes from and what it says - is too crucial in our times.  
The New Life was a rage in Turkey. What does that mean? Some people picked up this book and their whole life was changed.
5. I am a bad reader. This book, that I will finish in about 3 weeks, will need at least three more weeks of re-reading (and brooding) to be able to even appreciate or denounce the work. All I am able to achieve in my first reading is reaching closer to the end.
6. I will never be able to love Pamuk the writer. Have immense respect, awe, for Pamuk the conjurer, the engineer of ideas, the political philosopher, the explorer of sub-cultures, the voice on the "West".

## James says

I am writing this short review in an airport, having just completed a three-week trip around Turkey, so bear with me as I get back into the routine of thinking about literature critically. Spookily, the parallels of *The New Life* and my trip remain powerfully disconcerting: the novel focuses on a mysterious book Osman reads one night and as a result, becomes obsessed with. The book is never described explicitly but its power to

change the lives of all the people who read it works as the catalyst for this philosophical road-trip which Osman undertakes. Dissatisfied with his family, and the humdrum existence of his studies Osman suddenly leaves and journeys to the nearest *otogar* [bus-station] to begin a journey that takes him from Istanbul all the way through to the wild Anatolian steppes of Eastern Turkey, as the novel evolves through a myriad of literary structures: part detective, part existential, part thriller. Perhaps I felt more keenly attuned to this book than the average reader would, since I was a student reading a book about a student reading a book; as a student who travelled around Turkey on its myriad of roads and bus-lanes, small-villages and expressways, dingy restaurant rest stops, and flashier, Westernised otogars. I have felt the sticky sweat in my hair cool as my head leant against the window like Osman does. I have found myself in the early hours of the night staring at the poplars which look like feathers in the dark ground. I understand the rootlessness that Osman must feel having had to change travel plans myself and spend the night sleeping on a metal bench in the sprawling Ankara otogar, flies spooling around the harshly lit air, questioning the validity of everything around me. Although it is perfectly possible to travel Turkey without relying at all on its buses, you realise - just as Pamuk exemplifies - that the bus service is holy, is a way of life. However, Pamuk's public transport network is much older than the very commercial, aggressive buses I travelled on recently: for Osman each bus-ride is not only a step away from his home towards a new life but a step into the unknown landscape, of towns not on maps, and to the dangerous precipices where traffic accidents - which still to this day reign supreme in Turkey - occur. Thus, the 'New Life' is not merely life but a search for death; Osman obsesses about the idea of traffic accidents as a means of bridging together life and death, as the perfect equal point of spiritual fulfilment, of hopefully being able to explain away life's difficulties. Thankfully, my journeys were never plagued with Osman's Russian-roulette style of journeying. At the heart of *The New Life* lies the themes of identity and philosophy, through Pamuk's constant meditation on the bridging of East and West, a cultural divide which defines Turkey even to this day; here we see the greater themes of metafiction, of the great power of literature and art to exact change, and an always keenly felt embrace of faith [whether institutional or intimately personal] which in *The New Life* becomes hyperbolised in the over-dramatic proclamations of Osman - he is, at the end of the day, just as angst-ridden as any other teenager. Although Pamuk's novel can be read as a satire, and indeed its overall grandiose narrative verges dangerously on the comical, at its heart is a novel of discovery and love, between finding oneself and finding oneself somewhere else. Pamuk captures exactly the metaphysics of travelling, of a disjointedness which takes place in everyone as they board that bus - or for anyone who has ever wished to run away - or travel through the darkness towards an unknown place as I have done in this trip. Even with the novel's struggling flaws which mark the novel as far too dramatic, *The New Life* is a strongly constructed picture of Turkey in the midst of enormous economical and cultural changes, drawing over its themes the changing landscape of a country's public-transport system as its bloodline, as the heart of the novel and country.

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## Mevsim Yenice says

?çinde "her ?eyi" bar?nd?ran bir Orhan Pamuk ?aheseri. Nedir bu "her ?ey" peki?

Bir yandan s?rf ba?l? ba??na "bir aray?? roman?" olmas?yla mükemmel?i yakalam??ken, öte yandan Türkiye'nin Bat?yla bütünl?meye çal??ma a?amas?n? muazzam ?ekilde yans?abilmi?tir. Hem de Pamuk bunu yaparken teknik bir?ey okuyorum hissini hiç vermeden, kusursuz bir kurguya oturtmu? hepsini. Okuyucunun, roman?n yazar?ndan ve kurgusundan bir nebze ?üpheye dü?ece?i yerleri de koklam??, oralarda bir yazar olarak okuruna "ben size falanca bölümde ?u ayr?nt?lar? verirken filanca bölümdeki ?uraya i?aret etti?imi anlamad??n?z için bir ?ey diyor muyum?" tavr?yla, çelmeyi kibarca takm??t?r tam anlam?yla kaba olmadan.

Tüm bunlar? yaparken de seçti?i dilin metine bu kadar uyum sa?lamas? i?in en ustal?k gerektiren yan? bence.

Ve bu kadar zor bir kurguya bizi inand?rmas?: Anlat?c?n?n bulmak u?runa bir otobüs yolculu?undan di?erine kendini att??? o "yeni hayat" a inand?m ben mesela. Ölmü? bedenler, üstüne gazete örtülü cesetler, uykunun ölüme benzeyen o uyu?uklu?u, mahmurlu?u, otobüs yolculu?unda izlenen televizyonun hypnotize etkisi... Hepsi çok gerçekleşti.

Y?llar sonra tekrar okumu? olman?n mutlulu?uya ve bundan y?llar sonra da tekrar bir ?eylerin aray???nda oldu?umda okuyaca??mdan emin olarak kapad?m kitab?n son sayfas?n?.

Tavsiye ederim.

10/10

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### **Ian "Marvin" Graye says**

#### **Blood on the Tracks**

Every one of us is a potential criminal, a potential killer, a potential murderer.

The question is: what circumstances would justify the crime, what situation would warrant us murdering someone?

If someone attacked one of our children, would we attack the assailant? If we went to war, would we kill for our country?

If the past was at war with the future, would we kill for the sake of the past, or would we kill for the sake of the future?

Well, the past is always at war with the future, so what are we going to do?

Will we kill, or will we sit back and wait for the war to end?

How can a war between the past and the future ever end?

How can we not kill?

Is Nature at war with Modernity? Is Realism at war with Modernism? Are Realism and Modernism at war with Post-Modernism?

Would you kill for Post-Modernism?

Regardless, come inside.

#### **Up Against the Wall**

I struggled with this novel for almost a half of its length. Perhaps a less patient or persistent reader would

have thrown the book against the wall.

However, if I had done so, I would have missed out on one of the greatest reading experiences I have ever had.

Everything I read about the novel in advance, not much apart from the blurb, suggested that it was a post-modernist work. However, this did not reconcile with the words in front of me.

Initially, it came across as a jumble of very realist descriptions and lists and highly abstract concepts, occasionally in alternating paragraphs.

The narrative seemed to hop up and down on one foot, before passing arbitrarily to the other, for a while, and then back again.

### **A Life of Crime**

I read on, puzzled, then finally I started to realise that I might now have all of the pieces, at which point a picture started to assemble in front of me.

I had done a lot of the work, but the author had placed the pieces there for me, like clues.

Turkish author Orhan Pamuk worked like a criminal, leaving enough clues for me to find, so that I could eventually identify the culprit myself.

"The New Life" might be metaphysical, it might be meta-fiction, but it also has many of the qualities of crime fiction.

Around chapter 13, it all came together, after which it was a roller-coaster ride. The last 100 pages just blew me away.

Skimming through my notes in order to compose this review, I realised just how subtle and widespread were the clues.

If you can be bothered to read the book once, I'm sure it will repay a second reading.

For a long time I questioned whether this was a minor work by a Nobel Prize Winner, alternatively did he really deserve the Prize?

Having finished, I feel this novel is a major achievement, regardless of where it stands in his ouvre.

### **"I Read a Book One Day"**

The first paragraph announces the novel's intentions:

*"I read a book one day and my whole life was changed...It was such a powerful influence that the light surging from the pages illumined my face; its incandescence dazzled my intellect but also endowed it with a brilliant lucidity.*

*"This was the kind of light within which I could recast myself; I could lose my way in this light; I already*

*sensed in the light the shadows of an existence I had yet to know and embrace...*

*"It was with dread that I became aware of the complete transformation of the world around me, and I was overtaken by a feeling of loneliness I had never before experienced – as if I had been stranded in a country where I knew neither the lay of the land nor the language and the customs."*

Within 24 hours, the narrator, a 22 year old engineering student (whom I won't name), has fallen in love and is seeking out the truth of the book, the "meaning of life" and therefore a "new life":

*"Love was every bit as devastating as the light that surged from the book into my face, proving to me how substantially my life had already gone off the track."*

### **Enlightened Guidance**

At first, I suspected that the book must have been a political tract like "The Communist Manifesto" or a religious Holy Book or a counter-cultural tome like those that proliferated in the 60's and occasionally more recently ("Eat, Pray, Rebel").

However, Pamuk doesn't reveal much about the contents of the book, even its name comes late in the novel, if it can be believed.

Instead, we learn about it by its effect on its readers. They become converts, though because of its nature, they are secretive. They disengage from mainstream life.

From the outside, they appear to be radicalized and subversive. Conservative political and religious groups feel threatened and start to attack back, one ultra-right group even killing a number of readers. They track down those who are "off track".

In just a few pages, we are plunged into a metaphysical battleground, although absent detail of the rival belief systems, it's hard to determine who is Good and who is Evil.

Perhaps this is the way it's meant to be. Perhaps this is the way it always is.

How are we to know who to side with? Perhaps we shouldn't side with any side? Perhaps both sides are equally culpable?

And so we read on...

### **On the Road, In a Bus**

The narrator and his friend, Janan (Arabic for "heart" or "soul" or "soul mate"), embark on a spiritual journey or odyssey through the Turkish countryside.

Their quest takes them on the road, off the beaten track, away from urbanized Istanbul.

They spend months travelling by public bus, trying to find the other realm hinted at in the book.

Roads join different people and parts of the country.

The bus is a symbol and vehicle of modernity and modernism that drives us toward our destination, our destiny, the future.

We start our journey from home, but as soon as we depart, our home is in the past. We are cut off from our former lives, we are cast loose. The bus cannot take us back home into the past, it can only take us inexorably toward a collision with the future. Just as we seek out spiritual integrity, things start to disintegrate. We fall apart.

### **Nature Versus Television**

So the quest makes us witness to the battle between conservative, unpretentious, rural Turkey's Islamic tradition and the apparent way of the future, the rapid and pervasive influence of Westernised commercial culture.

Rural Turkey is symbolized by Nature in the form of almond, chestnut, walnut and mulberry trees.

In contrast, the West pervades Turkey through television, radio, movies, advertising; even railway travel is viewed as an unwelcome, external, alien influence that detracts from tradition.

*"If today in this town... the virtue of living an ascetic life is considered shameful...it's because of the stuff brought in from America by that mailman, the buses, and the television sets in the coffeehouses."*

### **The Other Side**

The narrator meets Mehmet, a former lover of Janan, who has also read the book, but turned his back on its message about a brand new world:

*"World shworld...it doesn't exist. Think of it as tomfoolery perpetrated on children by an old sap. The old man thought he'd write a book to entertain adults the same way he did children..."*

*"...if you believe it, your life is lost..."*

*"Believe me, at the end there is nothing but death. They kill without mercy...There is nothing to pursue to the end...just a book. Someone sat down and wrote it. A dream. There is nothing else for you to do, aside from reading and rereading it."*

### **Illumination**

Can it be true that, in our search for enlightenment, we might only find darkness and despair? Isn't the path to wisdom and contentment illuminated?

Can we find our own way out of our predicament? If we get lost, how will we be found? Who will find us?

Does this dilemma only apply to adolescents and young adults? 22 year olds like the target audience of Japanese author, Haruki Murakami?

Perhaps not:

*"We are not here to represent youth...but to represent new life."*

Can an entire nation like Turkey find itself in this predicament?

Especially at a time in Turkey's history when it wishes to become a member of the European Union?

Ironically, while everyone is skeptical about advertising, posters proclaim:

*"Happiness is being a Turk."*

Who are we to believe?

### **A Labyrinth of Reflections**

By this point, the novel appears to have abandoned any pretense to unadulterated realism.

It has more in common with the Magic Realism of South America, not to mention the dream-like aspects of Franz Kafka's "The Castle" and Mikhael Bulgakov's "The Master and Margarita".

Bit by bit, we are forced to contemplate, suspect, negotiate and reconcile truth, reality, spirituality, imagination, coincidence, memory, beauty, love, happiness, death and terror.

Love provides some solace:

*"Love is the urgency to hold fast to another and to be together in the same place. It's the desire to keep the world out by embracing another. It is the yearning to find a safe harbour for the human soul."*

*"The only piece of heaven I was sure of was the bed where I was lying next to Janan."*

Still, as we reflect, we are surrounded and confused and trapped by a labyrinth of our own reflections.

We can't even safely look at our own image in a mirror. We are afraid of what we might see or learn there. We can't even trust love.

### **Check Mate**

The novel highlights the clash of cultures between Islam and Western-style Capitalism.

While Pamuk writes about it in a strident manner, he does so through the mouths of his characters.

It's hard to tell whether Pamuk personally is anti-West or at least regrets the impact the West has had on Turkey's heritage and culture.

*"The West has swallowed us up, trampled on us in passing. They have invaded us down to our soup, our candy, our underpants; they have finished us off..."*

*"We have no desire to live in Istanbul, nor in Paris or New York. Let them have their discos and dollars, their skyscrapers, and supersonic transports. Let them have their radio and their colour TV."*

Yet, Pamuk doesn't just defend, he counter-attacks.

He highlights how much impact Islamic culture has had on the West.

For example, Pamuk reminds us that the chess term "checkmate" comes from the Arabic "shah mat" ("the king died").

The word "caramel" (which relates to a subplot of the novel) also derives from the Arabic words "kara" or "cara", which means "dark".

### **Noblesse Oblige**

Should Western readers feel personally challenged or threatened by these claims and attacks?

I don't think so. We are subject to the same forces of Capitalism in the West.

In every neighbourhood in every city or rural area in the Western world, Consumer Capitalism ("the Dealers' Conspiracy") has bought up or destroyed local products and brands, all in the name of efficiency and global recognition, but at the expense of local character.

It's just that Capitalism treats the Third World worse than its own backyard.

Pamuk resonates, because he criticizes what many of us in the West have grown to accommodate.

He is brave, when we are complacent.

Perhaps this is why he was awarded the Nobel Prize?

### **Mehmet-a-Fiction**

I originally questioned how appropriate it was to describe "The New Life" as Post-Modern.

However, the further it progresses, the more it becomes self-referential.

The narrator addresses not just "the Angel", but the Reader, us.

He even calls into question whether the narrator might be an unreliable narrator (in a scene that reminded me of the Magic Theatre scene in Herman Hesse's "Steppenwolf"):

*"So, Reader, place your faith neither in a character like me, who is not all that sensitive, nor in my anguish and the violence of the story I have to tell; but believe that the world is a cruel place."*

Most importantly, Pamuk questions whether the novel is a tradition of the West that cannot be replicated in Turkey or what the West calls "the Middle East":

*"Besides, this newfangled plaything called the novel, which is the greatest invention of Western culture, is none of our culture's business..."*

*"I have still not quite figured out how to inhabit this foreign toy."*

### **By Machinist or By Hand?**

Pamuk uses the character Doctor Fine to question Literature:

*"Considering that the pawns and tools of the Great Conspiracy assail us, either knowingly or unknowingly, through books and literature...we ought to take precautions against printed matter...The culprit is not only that particular book, the book that snared my son, but all the books that have been printed by printing presses; they are all enemies of the annals of our time, our former existence.*

*"He was not against literature that was scripted by hand, which was an integral part of the hand holding the pen...the books Doctor Fine opposed were those that had lost their glow, clarity, and truth but pretended to be glowing, clear, and true. These were the books that promised us the serenity and enchantment of paradise within the limitations set by the world..."*

The irony is that, whatever the view of Literature, all of the views conveyed in Pamuk's novel itself operate within Western literary traditions, well at least, within the tradition of Post-Modernism.

Finally, within the framework of Post-Modernism, there is the dual interest in the fracture of life, perception and time:

*"Life is so fractured...TV abounded in gunshots, passionate lovemaking, shouts and screams, planes falling out of the sky, exploding gas tankers, all sending the message. No matter what, things must be smashed and broken."*

At the same time, the author and the reader are both concerned to reverse the fracture, by way of integration of the material in front of them:

*"I discerned encoded whisperings between texts from which I could detect their secrets; and putting these secrets in order, I constructed connections between them..."*

### **The Bus Timetable**

Any transport system must define three things: our destination, the intervening stops and the timetable.

Any journey or quest must comply with the same rules, even a spiritual one:

*"My restless soul which did not know respite was struggling to get somewhere or other, like some bus driver who had forgotten his destination."*

Without a destination, how else can we define our journey?

However, Pamuk also emphasises the difference in approach of West and Middle East:

*"Our timetables and timepieces are our vehicles to reach God, not the means of rushing to keep up with the world as they are in the West..."*

*"Timepieces are the only products of theirs that have been acceptable to our souls. That is why clocks are the only things other than guns that cannot be classified as foreign or domestic.*

*"For us there are two venues that lead to God. Armaments are the vehicles of Jihad; timepieces are the vehicles for prayer..."*

*"Everyone knows that the greatest enemy of the timetable for prayers is the timetable for trains."*

## **Speak, Memory**

There is much that I cannot discuss, because of a concern about spoilers, not so much factual spoilers, but thematic spoilers, given the manner in which Pamuk skillfully lays out his metaphysical tale.

However, like Proust (and Nabokov) before him, Pamuk is concerned with the concepts of time and memory:

*"I was about to discover the single element common to all existence, love, life, and time..."*

There is only one life, this one.

There is only one "new life", that is, any life that there might be after death.

There is only the present, the past does not exist, except in our memory.

There is no paradise on Earth other than what we create ourselves.

We must make do with this one life.

## **Transcendence**

Love and life are attempts to transcend time. They seek eternity, of love, of pleasure, of happiness, of fulfillment.

However, the paradox is that, when time stops, the journey ceases and the destination confronts us:

*"We had embarked on this journey to escape time.*

*"This was the reason we were in constant motion, looking for the moment when time stood still. Which was the unique moment of fulfillment. When we got close to it, we could sense the time of departure..."*

*"The beginning and the end of the journey was wherever we happened to be. He was right: the road and all the dark rooms were rife with killers carrying guns. Death seeped into life through the book, through books."*

## **Fractious Time**

Time is not infinite. It is finite. Or our share of it is finite. We are mortal and our life is finite. Life must end, either by design or by accident:

*"What is time? An accident! What is life? Time! What is accident? A life, a new life!"*

So, ultimately, accidents, fractures in time and intention, are fundamental to the narrative drive of "The New Life":

*"So that was life; there was accident, there was luck, there was love, there was loneliness; there was joy; there was sorrow; there was light, death, also happiness that was dimly there."*

Ultimately, Pamuk, through an Earth-bound Angel of Desire, urges patience, counsels that we take our time:

*"Your hour of happiness will also strike...Do not become impatient, do not be cross with your life, cease and desist envying others! If you learn to love your life, you will know the course of action you are to take for your happiness."*

### **Accidentalism**

Contrary to Western belief, life is not solely defined and governed by intention, deliberation and purposiveness, it must accommodate the accidental, both fate and fortune, both the unplanned and the unexpected.

In a way, Pamuk is reassuring the Middle East (as we call Turkey and its surrounds) that the best way to protect yourself against the Occidental is to embrace the Accidental.

### **Extremely Spoilerish Postscript**

It is continuing to frustrate me that I was unable to discuss some major themes of the novel, for fear of offending the Spoiler-Sensitive.

While they are fresh in my mind, I will write down some brief notes.

Please do not read these notes if you have not read the book.

It is important to me that any reader experience the metaphysical journey that the book takes a reader on.

(view spoiler)

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**Ivan says**

Ho letto con piacere il "Castello bianco", "Il mio nome è rosso", "La casa del silenzio" e mi sono innamorato di "Neve", ma "La nuova vita" è stato un tormento leggerlo, tanto che ho abbandonato la lettura poco dopo la metà, anche se generalmente leggo fino alla fine anche brutti libri. Il libro è noioso, scorre male, mi carica di sensazioni negative. Un vero tormento. Peccato però!

**merve says**

saf, sahîh edebiyat. yirmili ya?lar manifestosu. ya da bir nevi masal.

orhan pamuk'la tan??mama vesiledir yeni hayat. özellikle gençlik heyecan?n?n, ke?fetme arzusunun ve a?k?n anlat?ld??? ilk bölümlerdeki betimlemeler öyle güzel ve sahici ki arada kapat?p ?nciniz? çekmenizi, uzaklara dalman?z? ya da garipseyen bak??lar alt?nda gülümsemeyi sa?l?yor.

kitabının sonunda herkes hayatının sırrını ermek isterdi zannederim. ama hayat pek bir şey değil, bir zaman kazasından ibaret.

## Ben Loory says

i don't really know what to say about this one. i think i will be thinking about it for a while. i will say this: i found it both compulsively readable and boring as hell, both at the same time, all the time, beginning to end. despite all the great writers pamuk is compared to on the cover blurbs and inside (kafka, marquez, borges, proust, etc.), the writer he most reminds me of here is thomas pynchon. both come off as almost retardedly intelligent & way too clever, both are more interested in playing games and laying out a view of the world as a paranoid (in pamuk's case metaphysical) delusion/illusion than they are in writing about actual human beings and the things that happen to them, the things they feel and desire. they are also both very good writers of sentences. the thing is, i just keep thinking, what if i just ripped *this* page out? what if i just read every *other* sentence? what if *this chapter* was written in invisible ink? what if the book ended here? what if it never began? i think in general i found the book useless. i just didn't know what to make of it. emotionally. i can understand how some can get caught up in the voice, the style. it's just the feeling i don't care for, or the lack of it. it's just one note all the way through. people live, love, fight, learn, run, hide, die, laugh... all in the exact same register... all without MY feelings changing one bit. like watching a film in fast motion... only it takes a really long time... that being said, i know a guy in a foreign country who seems to have been absolutely overwhelmed by its power, so who knows... maybe the angel only comes to those who aren't expecting it...

**Ahmed says**

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**Özlem Güzelharcan says**

Milenyum öncesi o garip zamanda, 1999 y?l?nda t?pk? Orhan gibi otobüs yolculuklar? yaparken okudu?um, tad? dama??mda kalan, anadilimde okuma keyfini bana verdi?i için ?ükrettiren, kan?mca Orhan Pamuk'un yazd??? en iyi kitap. Ben kalp Yeni Hayat.

**Matt says**

I got really into this one.

It was one of those pick-it-up-in-the-bookstore kinda things and it's funny since that's more or less what happens to the narrator.

One day he picks up a book (contents not withholding to the reader, of course) and Kafka-like, he is never the same again.

Everything in the world around him is like a pale reflection or a crashing bore compared to what the book discloses for him. He is then, naturally, called upon to make sense of where he suddenly finds himself to

search for the lost damsel of the book- only others who have had this experience are there- and he goes through all manner of menacing and rather bleak set pieces until the final confrontation.

It's exhilarating to read something that takes you into its concept so quickly. Pamuk writes gorgeously, it's like surrealism but not vague and it's like magical realism but a bit grittier.

It was a huge hit in Turkey, the author's native land, going straight to the top of the charts. It was also, of course, banned by the culture.

What loses its star is that the plot got, at least for me who is not very good with plots, clotted and congested towards the late middle. Postmodern writing is like that, I fear. the multilayered narrative style is great and all, but I prefer more clear demarcations as to how exactly I am to orient myself as I participate in the story.

Otherwise, spellbinding and subversive. Poetic and adventuresome. Great stuff.

**Aliaa Mohamed says**

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**Bita says**

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## Irwan says

03/08/2008

Read slowly.. Let the tentacular, pellucid sentences take you to the world of mystical adventure, which is clumsy yet so entrancing. Reading the second time slowly made me realize all the symmetry, puns, even autobiographical bits and pieces of the the author himself. It evokes feelings you get when you are travelling by bus to distant places, excitement and toxic exhilaration of reading good books, and awe and scepticism of the mystery of life and love.

I would certainly read this book again.

P.S. I gave four stars before. What was I thinking?

06/07/2008 Notes on the second reading:

I am in the mood of reading a book that blows me away. Let's see what this book take me for the second time reading....

I haven't got such an intense feeling from my readings lately.

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"I read a book one day and my whole life was changed."

That sentence begins the novel. Sure enough it intrigued me to read on. The back cover said this is part road novel, part metaphysical thriller. "Osman, a young university student, becomes obsessed with a magical book that delves into the dangerous nature of love and self. He turns his back on home and family, abandons his studies and goes on a search for the meaning of the book's darker secrets."

I was a university student, young enough, turned my back on home to search for adventure. I remember one writer said that when we read we actually search of ourselves or its elements in it. You do the math!

It is quite difficult for me to say something about the story, I guess I have to read it again. I am not sure I got the "dark secret" of the book. Either I don't understand (remember) it completely or Pamuk didn't really say it. I just remembered how I enjoyed the flow of this difficult novel. Much different in mode when you are reading Da Vinci Code or something like that.

I watched an interview with Pamuk in Bokbadet in a Norwegian national TV. He is an interesting figure. Playful and rather "wickedly" suggestive. It was partly the reason I want to read him.

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## Bob says

I burned through this in two days, but partly, I have to admit because I feared if I got distracted, I'd never finish it - highly engaging at times, it didn't, for me, always sustain that level of "gotta get back to it" with

which Murakami's "Kafka On The Shore" is currently calling me away from this hurried review. Pamuk is very highly regarded, won a Nobel Prize etc, so he is certainly worth a bit of your time. "The New Life" is a story of a young man whose life is radically changed by a book whose title and content is not revealed until much later in the book (when, in one of several Borgesian tropes, it proves to be the story of his own life and be called The New Life). It starts with his quest with a young woman (who later disappears) by rattletrap buses around a Turkish landscape torn between traditional ways (more in the realm of material culture than religion) and Westernization, coming up against a mysteriously murderous father figure reminiscent of the one in Angela Carter's "Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman". As his "quest" becomes almost entirely internal and stretches into somewhat forlorn years, I was reminded of Dino Buzzati's "The Tartar Steppe" - then there is the secondary character whose reaction to the life-changing book is to rewrite it word for word, echoing "Pierre Menard", a few nods to Nabokov and so on. Perhaps the centrality of books of any sort in shaping people's lives, or the powerful fear of their potential makes the whole thing more of a metaphor for the complex relationship of Turkey to Islam than I understood - strange and fairly memorable either way.

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### **Heba says**

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