



THE CREATIVE PROCESSES IN THE CITIES: THE CASE OF TURKISH LITERATURE

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Abstract. Utilizing a four-stage model of the creative process, this article explores the creative process of experiencing and representing the city in a selection of modern Turkish literature and illuminates how the creative process aligns with and informs writings on the Turkish city. The analysis is focused on the inspiration, dreaming, reflecting, and imagining procedures of the creative process incumbent upon writing the Turkish city; concepts that condition stages of creativity. This paper's approach is in significant part a response to the theoretical problem of how the author situates the Turkish city, particularly regarding the capital Ankara, that is understood in the context of singularity and Istanbul, that is situated within a multiplicity of realities. This Ankara–Istanbul relationship is further referenced in the context of a discourse that is centered on the novel idea of an intersection of four tracts or a double chiasm. Several writers are referenced, especially the Turkish authors Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Elif Shafak, and Orhan Pamuk.

Keywords: Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, creative process, Elif Shafak, Orhan Pamuk, Turkish cities.

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1. Introduction

This paper analyses the creative process of representing the city in a selection of 20th and 21st century Turkish literature. Included in its repertoire, and as a primary purpose, is set the task of illuminating a specific and original perspective primarily on Turkish city identity and urban atmosphere, and an illustration of how the creative process can align with, and inform writings on the Turkish city to this end, and in terms of this paper's methodology, a four-stage model of the creative process utilized by Wallas (2014), and, for instance, by Kaufman and Gregoire (2015), is redeployed. That is, and more specifically, this article will focus on the second (incubation) and third (illumination) stages which concern inspiration, dreaming, imagining, and reflection and deep thought. Furthermore, the creative process of representing a city in literature tends to focus on the complex disposition that emerges from the interactions between characters and urban spaces. For some writers it can also involve communicating with what the Turkish author Hamdi Tanpınar (2018, p. 189) called an urban psychology. Furthermore, although urban and building development necessitates, among other things, knowledge of the practices and behaviors of human beings in urban settings, and although jobs, infrastructure and architecture are critically important, cities for Turkish writers are, as this article emphasizes, essentially a lived, emotional experience. Space identity

and place attachment, moreover, has profound emotional and physical impacts. On the one hand, the creative process of centering the city in Turkish literature however is not uniform and remains irregular rather than following a pattern because the ability to discriminate, categorize, and react to stimuli differs from author to author. On the other hand, and in spite of this, a crucial aspect of representations of the city in Turkish literature does have a regular uniformity, does have a pattern in that it is folded either into singularity, as in the case of Ankara, or it is de-centered into a multiplicity of realities as in Istanbul. Representations here means constituting, interpreting, or describing a reality; offering a meaning, as employed by Hall (2009) in the field of cultural studies, rather than mimesis, or imitation.

For the author engaged in the creative process, of thinking about and of being inspired by the “living” the city, each city space carries its own ambiance. Ankara, for instance, lacks the melancholia which some writers have attributed to Istanbul, or the “loneliness” of Bursa’s, Turkey, urban landscape (Hamdi Tanpınar, 2018, viii). A Turkish city’s ambiance is, in effect, a form of emotional residue. It is also a mechanism of emotional contagion between human beings; an emotional contagion that can influence the moods and behaviors of people. The creative “moods” of Turkish writers is an apt case in point.

Expected it may sometimes be, yet the representation of a city unbolts a problematic before the author such as when the perceptible history of a city in question is fading, for instance, in its traditional architecture and urban spaces that were once so historically animated. From a different angle, the author has come to relate the city’s thoughts to its people, to seek in its streets and architecture the character of its people, and to count it as a witness of their own undertakings. It is as if they hear a voice which, though comes charged with personal accents, seems to be “destined” to speak. From now on it is what the writer “feels”, an autonomous expression that is a reference exclusively unto itself, nestles within its own folds, and wherein the recollection of its origination disappears, an alignment with the creative activity of incubation, or a second stage in the creative process, no less. The writer and chronologer of the city in Turkey however have invested these cities with no specific powers; rather, they have simply taken up the task of privileging, or centering that which inspires them as significant. Hence, this is a case of the built environment conditioning the writer, and to write its urban fabric, to capture and communicate its dynamics, the city becomes an emotional experience both in the illuminating and incubating stages of the creative process.

2. Ankara, Turkey, and singularity

“Ankara, Ankara, beautiful Ankara!”, – from *March of Ankara* (orig. in Turkish: *Ankara Marşı*) by Mehmet Ali Ertekin (Aksu, 2003).

The architecture of modern Ankara, with its current population of around five and a half million began in the 1920s with a mixture of Ottoman and Western elements and was sometimes described as Ottoman revivalism or the first national architecture style (in Turkish: *ilk ulusal okulu*). The buildings in this style were the work of the first generation of modern Turkish architects that made use of Western engineering techniques. Ulus Square, the original commercial hub of new Ankara was also the headquarters of the Committee of Union and

Progress completed in 1923. Subsequent important buildings similar in style were largely the work of the Turkish architects Vedat Tek, Mimar Kemaleddin, and the Turkish Levantine architect Giulio Mongeri (Cross & Leiser, 2000, p. 147). The design of the city was laid down in the 1930's, making the main drag of Atatürk Boulevard, Ankara, the North–South axis of the city and extending it six kilometers to the Çankaya District, Ankara Province, Turkey. A second major axis, East–West, is the Talatpaşa Bulvarı, Ankara, intersected by Atatürk Boulevard South of Ulus Square and connected with the road to Istanbul (Cross & Leiser, 2000, p. 149). Since the 1960's the architecture has “truly become internationalist, keeping pace with engineering developments and designs in other large cities of the world [...] religious architecture has remained very conservative” (Cross & Leiser, 2000, p. 153). After natural gas replaced the old soft coal from Zonguldak, Turkey, as the major source of fuel, the wine-like air from the 1930's has yet all but to return. Only on some days can you experience this slightly tart air in Çankaya District. Rapid population growth in Ankara, furthermore, continues to put a huge strain on resources as it does so in Istanbul and İzmir, Turkey. Situated in Anatolia, Turkey, the pillow of the world, Ankara remains a potential prime mover in a “business, cultural and political Turkic world” (Handa, 1999). It is also the capital and the city of the revolution where the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye took place on 29 October, 1923. Ankara is a 20th century city with 21st century add-ons, from Gaziosmanpaşa, Istanbul, with its diplomatic buildings and residences and restaurants to lively Dördüncü Caddesi; to its downtown shopping malls and office blocks and on to Ulus Square and the ever-present sesame seed bread seller (orig. in Turkish: *simitci*).

In Italo Calvino's (1974) text *Invisible Cities* (orig. in Italian: *Le città invisibili*, first published in 1972) there is an ongoing dialogue between Emperor Kublai Khan and Marco Polo, the latter on his travels across Asia in the time of the Yuan dynasty (Mongol Empire). In parables and meditations, Marco Polo describes over fifty invented cities, all with female names (Calvino, 1974, p. 28). These are separated into themed groups, including one entitled “Cities and Memory” (Calvino, 1974, p. 28). It can be said that the Turkish writers, Hamdi Tanpınar, Pamuk, and Shafak add another theme: psychology and the city. However, Hamdi Tanpınar does not psychologically “unlock” Ankara, as Pamuk and Shafak do with Istanbul. He simply does not believe that such writing on Ankara is possible (Nur, 2016). Hamdi Tanpınar (2018, p. 1) senses Ankara first as an experience, an exposure of its fort as an *idée fixe* with “all the land forms about it”; second, and although Ankara's history is historically tagged with Hittites, Phrygians, Lydians, and on through to the Seljuk and Ottoman Turks, Ankara emerges singularly from the battles and endeavors for sovereignty “by setting fire to all its past” (Hamdi Tanpınar, 2018, p. 13). Indeed, in the first part of Kadri Karaosmanoğlu's (1996) novel *Ankara* (orig. in Turkish: *Ankara*), which was first published in 1934, the author too narrates singularly about Ankara in the years of Turkish War of Independence. Moreover, Ankara is crucial, according to Yalçın Çelik (2014), “in terms of fictionalizing both the turning points of the Republic of Turkey and the process of Ankara becoming the capital city”. It is also instrumental in the emergence of a national realism literature in Turkey in the early 1920s (Ayzenshteyn Avrumovna, 1968, p. 35). Moreover, Ankara's ancient past remains pertinent in legend. Ankara is the place where the fourth sultan of the Ottoman Empire Bayezid I, the conqueror of the Balkans, was defeated

by Timur in the Battle of Ankara in 1402. Yet this part of Ankara's history remains subdued by the city's contemporary singularity (see below).

With psychological elements missing in Hamdi Tanpınar's (2018, p. 12) writings on Ankara, dreaming of multiplicities of Ankara as part of the creative process, in addition, does not lend itself well to a re-imagining of this city simply because the "single event, a single era, a single man [...] governs the imagination". Former historical battles, moreover, such as the one noted above, give way in terms of ideological significance to the battles during the Turkish War of Independence, including Sakarya Province, Turkey, and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's victory in 1922 at Battle of Dumlupınar in Central Anatolia region, Turkey. In this sense, and despite Ankara's pre-revolutionary past, including a celebrated son, Haji Bayram Veli, the famous founder of a religious order, Ankara can still be reduced to a fundamental quality: the elder statesperson Atatürk and his thoughts (Hanioğlu, 2011, p. 17). This is the primary "reality of Ankara" (Hamdi Tanpınar, 2018, p. 4) and no more so than at his granite mausoleum, Anıtkabir, Ankara. Ankara is bound around a singularity then, a point of singularity up to, but not including the singularity itself. However, in terms of atmosphere there is diversity within such singularity. According to Kadri Karaosmanoğlu (1932), writing within the left-nationalist and left-Kemalist magazine *Kadro* published between the years 1932 and 1934, he says:

"I often reflect on our revolution atmosphere compared to that of Russia [...]. This study of atmosphere is difficult to conduct even in Ankara which is supposed to be the center of our revolution because the moral atmosphere in Ankara changes depending on districts and neighborhoods. There is a heavy medieval atmosphere in Tahtakale while Yeni Şehir progressively becomes more occidental. On the other hand, the atmosphere in the chambers of the assembly and government appears to be a frozen bureaucracy".

Diversity of atmospheres for inspiring the Turkish writer on Ankara occur in the day-to-day meanderings of life in downtown Ankara where snakes of yellow taxis in Kızılay, Ankara Province, push their horns, and where diplomats pass newspaper and tobacco kiosks, and where there are few buildings with "imposing doorways" as in Sivas, Turkey; Kayseri, Turkey; Niğde, Turkey; or Konya, Turkey (Hamdi Tanpınar, 2018, p. 8). Like Istanbul, Ankara does have its own urban idiosyncrasies. Its lack of flora for instance, compared to, say Adana's, Turkey, exotic palm trees, and its starless night sky compared to Antalya's, Turkey, mysterious night-fall. It also has its modern pace of life, noises, smells, and sights, its crowds, prosocial and antisocial behavior, primary and secondary relationships, happiness, and deviance. This list, a list of revealing urban phenomena which is gathered in the illuminating stage of the creative procedure, however, does not add a plurality of impacts. Unlike Istanbul, in Ankara the primary historical impact as the city of the revolution contains and subdues all else. For some commentators however, this single defining era of the city is overdetermined. According to Batuman (2011), Ankara can be conceived more widely "as the symbolic locus of Turkish modernization". Indeed, in Redfield's and Singer's (1954) schematic, Ankara's primary cultural role is "heterogenetic", in part functioning "to create and introduce new ideas, cosmologies, and social practices into the society".

3. Istanbul, Turkey, and multiplicity

"I am listening to Istanbul... // The Grand Bazaar's serene and cool, // An uproar at the hub of the market, // Mosque yards are full of pigeons, // While hammers bang and clang at the docks..." – Veli Kanık (2006, p. 62).

There are confirmations about Turkey's largest city, which is divided by the Bosphorus, and which part of the city is situated in Europe and the other, Eastern part is situated in Asia. Indeed, Istanbul as a sea city is flanked on three sides by sea – the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmara in the South of the city, and a strait called the Golden Horn which divides the European side. Istanbul is a huge city, one of the largest in Europe, with a population of around 16 million. The city has grown exponentially over the past few decades. Istanbul is the financial and commercial hub of Turkey.

Flocks of tourists gather in Taksim Square, Istanbul, with its adjacent myriad of tourist hotels. Through the "tourist gaze", Istanbul

"has become a tool to demonstrate to the European Union the economic, technological, and physical, as well as the conservative/Islamic power change in the social context of Istanbul; in other words, the making of a stage for the 'dialogue of civilizations' between the West and the Islamic countries" (Dogan, 2010).

This said, Istanbul, in Redfield and Singer's (1954) schematic, still retains its main "orthogenetic" cultural role as a "great tradition" of culture, elaborating and safeguarding "cultural tradition". In McAdams' (2007) schematic, furthermore Istanbul is not in the rank of international centres of culture, similar to Vienna, Austria, or Budapest, Hungary. Rather, it is "on the margins of being a transmitter of world culture" (McAdams, 2007). This is confirmed by some authors (Alvarez & Yarkan, 2010) who examines the process of the growth of cultural activities within a creative city narrative (Landry, 2008); a narrative in which Istanbul "is transforming into a world city" (Alvarez & Yarkan, 2010).

Looking up, Istanbul's skyline contains the Süleymaniye Mosque and Hagia Sophia, Beyazıt Square and Yavuz Selim Mosque and the other great mosques in the centre of the metropolis. Istanbul, with its seven hills, also has a majestic train terminus, Haydarpaşa station. Old Istanbul is the congested streets of the Grand Bazaar, elaborate and outlying small mosques, hammams (bathhouses), and the imposing stately homes of the Ottoman Empire, and head-scarved women walking the cobbled lanes with men smoking fruited tobacco from a narghile (water pipe). The muezzin's call to prayer is heard intermittently, in fact five times a day. Contrast this with modern Istanbul, with its fashionable boutiques vending clothes by internationally distinguished Turkish designers and the night clubs, bars, and restaurants in Cihangir, Istanbul Province, Turkey, that are equal to those in London, United Kingdom, and New York, United States. New Istanbul also displays modern high-rise global architecture and Turkey's contemporary art scene, including the recently revamped (in 2023) museum Istanbul Modern, designed by the Italian architect Renzo Piano. Such developments are not without criticism, however, in the sense that city cultural hubs geographically isolate and concentrate cultural resources around large arts and cultural institutions or commercial avenues (Rosenstein, 2009). This can be seen with the recent opening of two new libraries, in Moda, Kadıköy,

Istanbul, and Beykoz, Istanbul Province, in prime destinations and historical locations, that is, along the spectacular Bosphorus (Ergil, 2024)

Psychoanalytical critics who have found the “deep roots” of an “instinctive” city in Marco Polo’s evocations of Venice, Italy, his native city, understand this as a return to “the first archetypes of the memory” (Calvino, 1983, p. 41). For Marco Polo read the Noble Prize winner Pamuk, and for Venice read Istanbul. Calvino (1974, p. 7) writes that “the dreamed-of city contain[s] him [...]”. It is this containment of Istanbul that encompasses Pamuk in his writings set in this multi-layered urban space; a city with its internal structures of culture, time, and memory. Desires, the city and its signs, and a “hidden” Istanbul lend themselves to a multiplicity of meanings as they figure prominently in Pamuk’s incubating thoughts (Lekesizalin, 2009). In Pamuk’s dreamy, musty Istanbul furthermore, his city of memories where he grew up and still lives (in the apartment block which he bought and where he once lived as a child with his family), calculations of space and the incidents of a bygone times have a ghost-like quality. For instance, as a child he remembers engagements with the Westernized wealthy people of the last Ottoman generation, Ottoman families in their mansions or their Bosphorus *yalı* (waterside houses) in Emirgan, Istanbul Province, and Yeniköy, Sarıyer, Istanbul Province, or antique shops

“displaying the same furniture that had surrounded these people – lecterns, divans, tables inlaid with mother-of-pearl, oil paintings, framed calligraphy, old rifle, historic swords passed down from their grandfathers, tablets, huge clocks” (Pamuk, 2006, p. 80).

The architecture of Istanbul has an imaginative quality for Pamuk (Prosser, 2019). He also reminisces about old, cobbled streets, now covered with asphalt, sherbets (frozen desserts), paper halva, and the boza (fermented drink), street vendors. There are scratches, indentations, for instance, rows of houses abandoned by Greeks since 1964, and Armenians and Jews that do not tell the Istanbul’s bygone days, yet contain it “like the lines of a hand, written in the corners of the streets, the gratings of the windows, the banisters of the steps, the antennae of the lightning rods, the poles of the flags” (Calvino, 1974, p. 11). Pamuk’s re-imagined Istanbul is a representation of a multiplicity of desires in the forms of inspiration, dreaming, and imagining. This is what contains him, and wherein desires are already memories – the desired city. Pamuk can do nothing “but inhabit this desire and be content” (Calvino, 1974, p. 12). This can be compared to the protagonist Seniha in the novel *A Mansion for Sale* (orig. in Turkish: *Kiralık Konak*, first published in 1922) by Kadri Karaosmanoğlu (2013). For this author, Istanbul is undesired because it is, in a sense, “losing itself” as it and Turkey in general “was experiencing an intense emulation for the Western way of life” (Karaosmanoğlu, 2013, p. 72).

Pamuk’s Istanbul is, additionally, a city full of signs that point to the past, of the shipping on the seas, of pasha’s mansions and more generally of the Turkification of Constantinople. Pamuk’s old Istanbul can be viewed as when you least expect it, you see a crack open and a different city appear, as in the old wooden houses lining the Beykoz shore. Within Istanbul all these realities live together; a multi-layered city for Pamuk bouncing with vitality, inventiveness, and merchandising. And like the big cities in Turkey, Istanbul has its *gecekondu*, the unauthorized squatter settlements of the major cities of Turkey (Karpas, 1976), described as urban “satellite colonies” by Aksoy (2008). This is the major theme in Pamuk’s (2015) novel *A Strangeness in My Mind* (orig. in Turkish: *Kafamda Bir Tuhaflık*, first published in 2014).

Primarily for Pamuk, Istanbul is an overriding melancholy of co-existence of differing elements, a melancholy not too dissimilar to that of the Turkish writer, Yahya Kemal Beyatlı, living in the Westernized side of the city in Beyoğlu, Istanbul Province, but drawing on picturesque, melancholy scenes from the poor neighborhoods of Istanbul (Bilgehan Özpek, 2016). So too Hamdi Tanpınar (2018, p. 45), who in the Istanbul section of his *Five Cities* (orig. in Turkish: *Beş Şehir*, first published in 1946) sorrowfully notes: "One after the other, the masterpieces I see before my eyes melt as fast as watered rock salt until all that's left are piles of ash and earth" and the "grass, ivy and weeds and trees growing from the towers and walls of the castles of Rumelihisarı and Anadoluhisarı", along with the "beauty of a broken fountain". Indeed, such "sad, now vanished, ruins [...] gave Istanbul its soul" (Pamuk, 2006, p. 231). Interestingly, this melancholy is not how Freud (1917) describes melancholia; that is, as "a profoundly painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world". It is a quiet, measured, solemn melancholy, as found in the graveyards of Karacaahmet Cemetery, Istanbul, Edirnekapi, Istanbul, and Eyüpsultan, Istanbul Province, and in the coffee houses of Edirnekapi and Şehzadebaşı, Istanbul, for Hamdi Tanpınar (2014, pp. 3–5).

Shafak (2012) references the sounds and smells of Istanbul which remain integral to the creative process of representing the city in Turkey (Akbatır, 2011). In *Black Milk* (orig. in Turkish: *Siyah Süt*, first published in 2007) she writes:

"The first thing you feel when you walk out of Atatürk International Airport in Istanbul is the wave of noise, a loud jumble of cars honking, motorcycles rumbling, jackhammers drilling and people talking, yelling and whistling, all at the same time" (Shafak, 2012, p. 24).

A type of "heatwave, noise wave. Back and forth" (Shafak, 2012, p. 5). There are other sounds: "a gusty day, with Istanbul's infamous Northeast *poyras* wind pounding on the windpanes, penetrating the cracks in the doors" (Shafak, 2012, p. 23), and

"the cries of seagulls [...] the siren of ambulance, the quarrels of the couple living upstairs, the clamor of the children playing football across the street, the sounds of backgammon pieces coming from coffeehouses, the yelling of peddlers [...]" (Shafak, 2012, p. 25).

At night, "the sound of dogs fighting and howling in distant neighbourhoods" (Shafak, 2012, p. 9). Parts of Istanbul can be, however, peaceful, as Shafak (2012, p. 189) points out, for instance, in Kuzguncuk, Istanbul Province, in the Üsküdar, Istanbul Province, district on the Asian side of the Bosphorus – Istanbul's tranquil, old neighborhoods that "reverberates with the sounds of cows mooing, ducks quaking, owls hooting and French arias". Writing on Istanbul's odors: "the whiff of seaweed even [...] miles away from the shore" (Shafak, 2012, p. 190), and away from the polluted center, "the sundry smells of the sea, growing grass, and the yet-to-blossom almond flowers of Istanbul" (Shafak, 2012, pp. 355–356). And primarily for Shafak:

"Who would have ever guessed that Istanbul smells of coconuts! [...] The little white flakes that adorn the tops of bakery cakes, the heavy-scented candles decorating coffee shops and restaurants and the promotional cookies supermarkets give out to customers [...] Istanbul is one large coconut cut in half. The Asian side is one half, the European side the other" (2012, p. 190).

Compared to Pamuk, Shafak's (2005) Istanbul is less dreamy, less misty, and more angu-
lar, including in her work *The Flea Palace* (orig. in Turkish: *Bit Palas*, first published in 2002),
that offers a variegated, motley view of contemporary Istanbul through narrative structures
that relate the tales of residents living in a ramshackle, parasite-plagued apartment block.
Moreover, Shafak's (2016) reference to apartments, houses, and other urban shapes, whether
lived in, deserted, derelict, or in recollection, are central to her fictional narratives, including
diegesis, characters, and subject matters, as in her novel *The Architect's Apprentice* (orig. in
Turkish: *Ustam ve Ben*, first published in 2013). There are moreover the shadows in Istanbul:
"the indistinct shadows, and all the mysterious things around them" (Pamuk, 2015, p. 7) and
"shadows in a corner of the room" (Pamuk, 2015, p. 30), a reminder of "how rich the shadows
can be" for the Japanese writer Tanizaki (1977, p. 7). During Mevlut, the boza seller's walk in
A Strangeness in My Mind, he discovers that "the shadows of the trees in some neighborhoods
moved even when there was no breeze at all" (Pamuk, 2015, p. 42).

Within Pamuk's urban dreamscape an element of Freudian magnitude is at hand: a con-
stant connection between some part of every dream and of some wish, conscious or uncon-
scious (Tridon, 1921, iv–v). The wish-content in Pamuk's preoccupied and dreamy Istanbul
is for an authentic, historical Istanbul, just as the Mehmed Fuad Pasha wished to see Bursa
as an authentic historical city, or as he said, as the "prologue to Ottoman history" (Hamdi
Tanpınar, 2018, p. 87). Pamuk's symbols of architectural ruins, alleys, cobbled streets, stray
dogs, "minarets and plastic bags" (Stone, 2006), overgrown graveyards and so on remain
repeated references throughout his Istanbul texts. There is a clinging-on in Pamuk's creative
process. The dream as an encountered psychological motive, as an inspiration is present in
a selection of Hamdi Tanpınar's writings (Nigmatullina, 2015). However, when it comes to
representing, to situating the city, it is a perception of aesthetics (Akaltun, 2017) and history
that inspires Hamdi Tanpınar's imagination. The Turkish city of Bursa is a case in point:

"History has left its mark so deeply and powerfully on this city [Bursa]. It is present
everywhere with its own rhythm, its own particular delight [...]. Sometimes a tomb, a
mosque, a traveller's inn, a tombstone, here an ancient plane tree, here a fountain, with
a name or a view reminiscent of the past, and a light of past days shimmering above
them permeates all with yearning and catches you by the throat" (Hamdi Tanpınar,
2018, p. 88).

4. Ankara, Turkey, and Istanbul, Turkey

Urbanism, or the condition of living in a city (Wirth, 1940), has become the way of modern
life in Turkey. However, the Ankara–Istanbul urban relationship forms a unique intersection
of four tracts in the form of two letter X's. A double chiasm, no less. The first is one tract of
multiplicity crossing another of singularity, while the second sees one tract that is financial
and commercial (Istanbul) crossing the other tract which is political (Ankara). Ankara and
Istanbul cross each other as each city conveys significations in denotations, and figurative
meanings; a regulated significance. These cities signify an ingeminated guide, a persistent
mnemonic of their history as accessible and known about; urban environments that seem to
rest in themselves. Through imagination, dreaming, and inspiration they have been formed

in the heart of the visible, creating an attachment between them and the writer; an affinity as that betwixt the sea and the shoreline; a relationship as simple as that between seed and rain. For those living in the city, it is not possible that they can blend into these cities, nor that they pass easily into urban citizens. Within the creative process, cities are not homogeneous in relation to their delineated urban space. They do not present their urban spaces to the citizens. Indeed, the citizen of Turkey is not "empty" in the sense that they simply open themselves to them. Indeed, it is rather the citizen's pre-conditioned "gaze" that brands them, dresses them, just as Cross and Leiser (2000) "gaze" at, clothe, and "brand" Ankara in their text *A Brief History of Ankara*. Through their texts, these "creators" of Istanbul and Ankara follow a particular trajectory. As authors, as researchers, they endeavor to outline the reasons for approaching the city in a new light and why this new point of departure is needed; that is, why we can no longer understand the cities' "vital forces" within the substructure of prior representations. Such a process may include "writing out" those signifiers in the illumination stage of the creative process, signifiers such as images and sounds for instance, in which others have signified a particular city. A process which includes "filtering" a range of signifiers of urban spaces. Pamuk and Shafak moreover create the human condition within the city and transcribe this condition in the light of their own demands, that is, the demands incumbent in their incubated imaginings of Istanbul. This takes place in the second and third stages of the creative process; they themselves account for their own origin. Although signposts indicate representations of a city dependent on their experience, the structure of the discourse is trel-lised with an attentiveness, vigilance, discretion, and prudence which comes from the fourth stage of the creative process – verification. Continual hesitations, moreover, and insinuations of what will be related during the text, the conditional form forbids situating postulations in the present tense. At an appropriate juncture in the discourse, the writer will, to all intents and purposes, allude to a point of convergence within which the authenticity of the urban space will unfold itself; will divulge, unveil, and "confess" itself.

The above note is the case in point for the early pages of Shafak's (2008) novel *The Bastard of Istanbul* (first published in 2006) or for instance, in Hamdi Tanpınar's *Five Cities*; that is, that the "meaning" of the city will "reveal itself". Even more, at a crucial moment in narrating the city in Turkey, there is created a relationship between what has hitherto been pronounced and, what has not been pronounced that underpins every assertion and creates, beyond the sequence of suggestions, an attached substructure to each major urban space in the Republic of Türkiye. The intention of the writer on Istanbul or Ankara attempts to create a tangible nexus between the meanings underpinning portrayals of the city in Turkey and their corresponding inferences. The writer can assemble in the first version of the text many of the primary concerns they will repeatedly refer to and will whip up time after time in the continuation. It insists that meanings emerge from the creation of urban encounters and of the travails and complexity it cradles as soon as we want to imagine it in general, but also in terms of the categorizations of past renderings. It eschews, moreover, enunciating a proposition that would allow the assembling of an experience, but instead posits exploring it in all its orientations, questioning our relationship with urban space as we think we live it. Yet, for this creative project to take form the writer/researcher must already have weighed up the sets of circumstances in Turkey in the preliminary stages of the creative process; they

must then imagine urban living and its enigmatic ambiguities in which it is disclosed to them. A question can surface now: why it “transforms itself into an enigma”? (Cross & Leiser, 2000, xxvii). In one sense, an enigma surfaces as the writer discovers that their imaginings in the incubation stage of the creative process appear to sovereignly dispose of its object just as they construct its descriptions in conformity with its physical form in the next, illumination stage. Verification, or the fourth stage, in this creative process then becomes problematic. Another way of contextualizing this problematic is to view it as clash, or for Gregoire (2019) a “dance” between the inner and outer worlds of the creative process.

5. Conclusions

The process of recreating, or, giving a particular meaning to the Turkish city in Turkish literature requires a formula or it will simply slip out of hand without a formula. Pamuk has one. His writings are a transitory coming together of notion and object, a synthesis of imagined multiplicity, of multiple meanings, no less, where Ottoman blends into Republic of Türkiye; a synthesis of East and West (Bayrakceken & Randall, 2005); a synthesis of past and present, a collapse of time, just as Hamdi Tanpınar collapses time as Seljuk blends into the citadel of the Republic of Türkiye. Istanbul and Ankara, along with Kars – Turkey’s most Northerly and impoverished city, Erzurum, Turkey; Adana, Turkey; Edirne, Turkey; Trabzon, Turkey; İzmir; and Van, Turkey; all as city-objects fall therefore within a knowledge that is written, they are imagined, incubated, and illuminated reconstructions. Consequently, although the writer in this instance, according to Hegel (1998), does not require to bring standards of accuracy with themselves, lending Ankara a multiplicity of meanings beyond its particularity is feasible yet runs “against the grain” of singularity. On the other hand, an urban multiplicity in Istanbul can be understood as a melting pot of innumerable features, as a convergence of multiple historical elements, for example, in the synthesis of Islamic and the Ottoman state organizations in old Istanbul. A coalescence of large and small, local and foreign, modern and traditional. A simultaneous multiplicity rather than serial multiplicity, or from another angle a raft of lines in three-dimensional projective space. However, a reality of Ankara as an urban space sustaining its singularity, its existence in a singulative context wherein multiple historical elements is trampled upon by Ankara’s revolutionary status as a singular residue, as asynchronous, allochronic, and nonparallel, in this sense lends Ankara its historical, singular eccentricity. That is not to deny that Ankara presents itself as having multiple qualities in relationship with other things, for example, in relation to the process of hybridity in contemporary urban cultures in a period of globalization and migration (Miles, 2007). However, although Erzurum for instance, saw the origins of the Turkish War of Independence, it is the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye under Atatürk that subdues all other layers of meanings in this particular urban space; reduces Ankara to a single point. Political modernity in Turkey is built on Ankara. Moreover, understanding Ankara as a new space of “Turkish modernity can be best contextualized by identifying two intermingled processes, namely globalization and Europeanization”, according to Tok (2008). However, the function of an urban space “in generating this dynamism does not directly correspond to a ‘global-local’ dualism, but instead involves”, for Keyman and Koyuncu (2005), “multiplication and the dissemination of

economic actors, and the pluralization of economic organizations in Turkish society, operating at multiple scales". Such multiple scales are present in Ankara as well as Istanbul, but in the former they remain subdued within the overdetermined symbolism of the revolution and the establishment of modern Turkey in 1923. In this sense then, and in the novel way that this paper has demonstrated, the incubation and illumination stages of the creative process in writings on the Turkish city are conditioned and shaped by the overdetermined symbolism of, for instance, Ankara as the seat of the Turkish War of Independence, and as this article has further attested, by the overriding multiple scales of Istanbul.

The obscurity of an old Istanbul or an old Konya furthermore, the latter with its surrounding patchwork landscape, remains no less indispensable than the coruscating passages within which its purpose, its past existence-as-an-ambience appears unveiled by the author, and in Pamuk's (2006) case in his work *Istanbul: Memories of a City* (orig. in Turkish: *İstanbul: Hatıralar ve Şehir*, first published in 2003). This city ambience, in part arising from the non-modern features of Istanbul unfolds as a backdrop to the particularities of modern lived relationships, or in Shafak's case in primary and secondary relationships that deal with deviance and happiness. More generally, and in part, our Turkish author's writings attempt at scattering and then reassembling an idiosyncratic assemblage of signifiers that is intended to offer a different angle on a city identity. More specifically, what they bring forth and that which they make as absent, the content of their writing's postulations and their form, the candid manner they proceed to their goal, and its detours or its deviations, everything that entreats the need for awareness signifies a series of paths that meander within the creative process. However, the end point in this process is travel along a major pathway that leads to an urban atmosphere, as tradition and modernity line either side of this road: the yogurt seller's bell, arabesque (Turkish music), the bawl of the boza vendor, along with the smell of baking tsou-reki (sweet holiday bread); mosques and cobbled streets on the one hand, and on the other the representations of modernity – sport utility vehicles, modern apartment buildings, and global office architecture with its hundreds of windows, neon signs, and in Pamuk's (1997) *The New Life* ((orig. in Turkish: *Yeni Hayat*, first published in 1994) formica-topped tables. In this sense, this paper demonstrates that in applying aspects of a typical model of the creative process as a methodology, a particular process that infuses the incubation and illumination stages of the four-stage creative writing process is evidenced. That is, when situating the city in Turkey, a multiple layer of atmospheres jostle for position, while in Istanbul its multitude of binaries zigzag their way around the intersection between the inner illuminating stage and the final verification stage of the creative process, binaries including head-scarfed women/glossy billboards with scantily clad women, traditional Turkish red lentil soup (in Turkish: *kırmızı mercimek çorbası*)/McDonalds, wooden abacuses/computers, minarets/plastic bags, modern air conditioning units/traditional ceiling fans.

Although a further, novel demonstration of this paper's analysis is that the Turkish city in modern Turkish literature can be, given meaning either by situating it into a singularity, as in the case of Ankara, or decentered into a multiplicity of realities as in Istanbul, what remains fascinating finally, is how, when engaged in the imaginative writing process, the writer must not only experience or "live" the city in Turkey, but also negotiate urban emotionality and its resignification in fictional, presentable, verifiable forms; forms that is, which align with the verification or four-stage of the creative process.

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