

RESEARCH ARTICLE



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## Of Trauma: A Psychological Study of Orhan Pamuk's *The Museum of Innocence*

K. Nalini Selvi<sup>1</sup>, T. Jayakumar<sup>2</sup>, and N. Geethanjali<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Research Scholar (Part-Time), Thanthai Periyar Government Arts & Science College  
(Autonomous), Affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli – 620023

Email: [nalinigogo@gmail.com](mailto:nalinigogo@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> Principal, Government Arts & Science College, Kumulur, Affiliated to Bharathidasan  
University, Tiruchirappalli – 621712

Email: [jayakumar.kmr@gmail.com](mailto:jayakumar.kmr@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup> Associate Professor, PG & Research Department of English, Thanthai Periyar Government  
Arts & Science College (Autonomous), Affiliated to Bharathidasan University,

Tiruchirappalli – 620023

Email: [ngeethanjali66@yahoo.com](mailto:ngeethanjali66@yahoo.com)

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### Abstract

Orhan Pamuk is a well-known author and among the most significant of his generation. He has international recognition. Pamuk's novel *The Museum of Innocence* (TMI) portrays the love relationship of the protagonist which plays a significant role in human life and the novel also delineates the stress aroused out of unrequited love. Kemal, a rich man, has a crush on his middle-class cousin Fusun. He has a deep affection for Fusun. In her spare time, Fusun studies for her entrance examinations while working in a shop. She once competed in a beauty pageant but was not the winner. She also wants to work as an actress in movies. In order to help Fusun pass her admission tests, Kemal teaches her maths. Every day, Fusun meets Kemal at his Merhamet apartment. This flat is typically used by Kemal's family as a guest home and to store antique and antiquated items. Before they are married, Kemal and Fusun lose their virginity after falling in love. After that, Kemal becomes engaged to Sibel, a wealthy European girl who shares his social standing. Despite his love for Fusun, Kemal lacks the confidence to tell his family about it. The internal pain experienced by the protagonist lead to trauma. Trauma is an emotional responses to unexpected event happened in one's life. The present paper investigates certain psychological conditions and also the responses to certain traumatic experience encountered by the

protagonist. It an attempt to analyse the novel *The Museum of Innocence* from a psychological perspective.

**Keywords:** Trauma, Pleasure Principle, Hallucination, Depression, Memory distortion.

## Introduction

Melodramatic story lines make up the structure of the book *The Museum of Innocence*. The protagonist Kemal's battle to win Fusun's hand is depicted in the well-received novel. Kemal, a rich man, has a crush on his middle-class cousin Fusun. He has a deep affection for Fusun. In her spare time, Fusun studies for her entrance examinations while working in a shop. She once competed in a beauty pageant but was not the winner. She also wants to work as an actress in movies. In order to help Fusun pass her admission tests, Kemal teaches her maths. Every day, Fusun meets Kemal at his Merhamet apartment. This flat is typically used by Kemal's family as a guest home and to store antique and antiquated items.

Before they are married, Kemal and Fusun lose their virginity after falling in love. After that, Kemal becomes engaged to Sibel, a wealthy European girl who shares his social standing. Despite his love for Fusun, Kemal lacks the confidence to tell his family about it. He keeps his relationship a secret as he fears that his family will disapprove of Kemal's decision because his partner is not on the same social level as Kemal. Fusun waits for the engagement day in the hopes of marrying him. Kemal is unable to escape his engagement with Sibel. The main reason behind Kemal's distress is his marriage engagement with Sibel.

He finds himself torn between fate and passion. Fusun doesn't meet Kemal after the engagement. For several days, Kemal waits for Fusun, but she never shows up. Kemal is hurt. The main reasons for the pain are that Kemal keeps his relationship a secret from his family and never tries to end his engagement. It demonstrates that he lacks the courage to

confront his social issues. His actions demonstrate his incapacity to make decisions. He loses his lover as a result of this weakness. Kemal is unfaithful to his beloved, yet Fusun waits for his reaction. Fusun then departs without leaving a notice. Another factor contributing to Kemal's misery is his excessive fixation on Fusun, which prevented him from adjusting to the changes in his life.

## Multiple hallucination

Kemal is upset because he can't let go of his lovely memories of Fusun. Hours pass while he waits, frustrated. He still hopes that Fusun would return to him, so he waits every day. He lives in faith and, as a habit, he visits Merhamet's flat every day. His anguish intensifies with excitement as he watches the streets and hears footsteps as someone crosses. When the scheduled meeting time arrives, his thinking blossoms like a flower, and as time passes, he knows that he is deceiving himself by waiting needlessly. This can be captioned as multiple hallucination. Sensory experiences that take place without any outside stimuli are known as hallucinations. The sensation of experiencing many hallucinations at the same time is referred to as multiple hallucinations. This phenomenon can interfere with day-to-day life and cause distress.

Kemal waited impatiently for Fusun to arrive at Merhamet Apartments. He is able to avoid the pain of waiting because of his fantasy that she will arrive. He imagines she will undoubtedly arrive and imagining what he would do first when she arrives. However, the same fantasy, together with his cowardice in showing his love for Fusun to others, is what keeps him from visiting her at first. Later on, fantasies become a crucial component of his

mental processes, as seen by the clear way he finds solace in the memories and items connected to these. The complicated phenomena of many hallucinations can significantly affect day-to-day functioning. Psychiatrist believes that developing successful management and treatment plans requires an understanding of the types, causes, and repercussions of multiple hallucinations. Multiple hallucinations sufferers can acquire coping mechanisms and enhance their general quality of life with the right care and assistance.

### **Persevere with Pleasure Principle**

Kemal lives in his utopian world and is able to conceal his emotions. Since he meets Fusun, Kemal finds that the Merhamet Apartment is a whole new universe, and he feels content there. Kemal follows pleasure principle to get away from suffering. Freud speaks about pleasure principle theory which explains how a person with psychological stress control his mind and maintain mental equilibrium in order to be away with painful emotions. According to a psychological theory known as the Pleasure Principle, humans seek pleasure and shun suffering. People are motivated by the Pleasure Principle to engage in things that make them happy and content. On the other hand, people typically steer clear of situations that make them feel uncomfortable, distressed, or in pain. The Pleasure Principle frequently puts immediate delight ahead of long-term effects. The Reality Principle, which calls for postponing gratification and taking the effects of one's actions into account, may clash with the Pleasure Principle. According to Freud, human conduct is fundamentally shaped by the Pleasure Principle, which affects feelings, ideas, and behaviours. As in the case of Kemal, he disapproves of his tasteless life, he readily loses sight of reality, and the pleasure principle is the cause of this. When Kemal understands the truth of his life, he can no longer remain in the same state, even though he manages to keep his head free from strain for a while. He becomes delirious due to the pressure of pleasure. He

doesn't make the right choice. The protagonist's physical health is impacted by the mental condition. As the acid slowly rises and reaches his lungs, chest, and neck, he feels discomfort in his abdomen. He handles the agony as best he can.

### **Traumatic Guilt**

Kemal struggles to let go of Fusun and is unsure on how to overcome his love trauma. There is no way out of this suffering. Even though he is aware of his mental state, he is unable to control his desire for his beloved. He looks for novel ways to experience pleasure because he wants to manage his annoyance. Trauma traps Kemal as he is unable to live the life he wants. His trauma is impacted by his incapacity to find love. He suffers from psychological trauma. Kemal worries that he may lose his sweetheart forever. Such a mental state is referred to by Freud as psychological helplessness. Extreme guilt, humiliation, or regret after a traumatic experience is known as "traumatic guilt." It may be the result of perceived responsibility, self-blame, or survivor's guilt. If addressed, the symptoms—which include intrusive thoughts, emotional numbness, avoidance behaviours, and hypervigilance—can result in anxiety, despair, and PTSD. Kemal also feels embarrassed over not having the guts to tell his fiancée and family about his affair. He lives in traumatic guilt. He is unable to find comfort in nightclubs, parties, or booze, and his never-ending hunt for his beloved persists. He acknowledges that his life has completely changed as a result of the engagement party. He regrets misleading Fusun after realizing it. Kemal's mind begins to feel guilty.

### **Living in Delusion lead to Neurosis**

Kemal is in a dire predicament and is unsure of what to do or where to go. The doctor was unable to provide him with any answers, and he fears what lies ahead. The Merhamet Apartment and the items Fusun touches there are the sole treatments that provide him with an

immediate relief from his discomfort. He isolates himself from the outside world and lives in his imagination. His anguish is lessened by his covert trips to the flat, where he has delusions that reclining on the bed will make his pain go away. He gets a fleeting sense of relief from his suffering when he touches the object, but the trauma quickly re-emerges in his mind and spirit. He was unable to live a typical life. Kemal is not finding any comfort in this fantasy. He has trouble falling asleep and frequently wakes up in the middle of the night. He sometimes rolls dice a thousand times to indicate each time it is lost, or he consumes whiskey or raki when he can't sleep. He tries a lot to relieve his mental strain, but he knows that meeting Fusun and getting back together with her is the only way to heal his trauma. Kemal has a form of neurosis that causes him to distance himself from reality. He waits for Fusun every day since he cannot accept that she won't return to his flat. His views and thoughts are unreal, and he is prepared to live with the lovely memories he shared with Fusun.

#### **The unrequited love and its destination:**

The news that Fusun married art director Feriden shocks Kemal. But after a protracted quest, he is glad to have found his love. He hopes to gain Fusun's support. The romance between Fusun and Kemal ends as Fusun starts a new marriage. Unrequited love develops as Kemal finds it difficult to appease her. Although Fusun is already married to someone else, Kemal still wants to wed her. Since Kemal is a sincere lover, he wants Fusun to return the favour, but this does not occur. His unrequited love makes him a victim of himself. In no way can Kemal's misery be attributed to Fusun. Unrequited love Trauma is the term used to describe the emotional anguish and suffering that arises when someone's intense attachment and love are not returned. Severe feelings of shame, rejection, and low self-esteem may result from this trauma. Due to the intense emotional commitment and vulnerability involved, the trauma of rejected love can be especially

crippling. Anxiety, despair, and emotional numbness may result from this investment not being repaid. Time, introspection, and assistance are necessary for recovering from unrequited love trauma. It entails recognizing and managing one's feelings, re-establishing one's sense of value, and creating constructive coping strategies. It is possible to move forward and create a more pleasant and satisfying emotional life with time and assistance.

Kemal is saddened when his love is initially denied, and despite her love for Kemal, Fusun keeps her feelings to herself due to her familial circumstances. After eight years of unrelenting love, she gets a divorce from Feriden and agrees to marry Kemal. Kemal and Fusun are permanently separated by an accident before the story's climax. After the accident, Kemal lives. He succumbs to his destiny and returns to the agonizing world. Although he wins Fusun's heart, fate ultimately causes him to lose his sweetheart. He passes away following Fusun's passing. He never gets married in his life. He lives in his sorrows as a living dead person because of the loss, and her recollections are constantly unbearable to him.

#### **Depression and memory distortion**

Witnessing the death of a loved one intensifies the potentially devastating experience. Kemal's life companion, Fusun, passes away unexpectedly. When he relives the accident, the depression brought on by loss gets worse. It's normal to feel overtaken by sadness after losing a loved one, and the experience can be heart-breaking. Depression, a mental illness marked by enduring emotions of melancholy, hopelessness, and disinterest in activities, can be a manifestation of this grieving for certain people. Following the death of a loved one, depression can be severe and incapacitating. The sufferer may encounter long stretches of melancholy and tears, a decrease in appetite or enthusiasm for activities, insomnia or trouble sleeping, exhaustion and low energy, guilt, regret, or self-blame; and avoiding situations or

locations that bring back memories of the loved one. Recognizing that depression is a typical reaction to loss and that asking for assistance is a show of strength rather than weakness is crucial. Therapy and support groups are examples of treatment methods that can assist people in processing their feelings and creating coping mechanisms. It is possible to get through the mourning process and find a way to move on with time, patience, and support.

Kemal touches the vehicle where Fusun perishes and completely falls. Kemal wants to limit his life beneath the car and intensify his traumatic experience. He is not interested in trying a new life or forgetting his suffering. He prefers to live in agony. Because of the horrific experience, his memory is warped, and he is unable to interact with people normally. Because of memory distortion, he recalls the accident which intensifies trauma than they actually experienced. The term "memory distortion" describes how memories can be changed or manipulated to produce false or erroneous memories. This phenomenon happens when several variables affect the brain's memory processing system, causing memories to be altered, suppressed, or created. Memory distortion can appear in a variety of ways, such as: ignoring crucial information or complete occasions, inflating pre-existing memories with incorrect information, producing completely new, fictitious memories, modifying the context or meaning of memories. Decision-making, relationships, and personal identity can all be significantly impacted by memory distortion.

### Conclusion

Orhan Pamuk has made a very admirable and much appreciated contribution to the global community. After reading the novel *The Museum of Innocence*, the readers will be wary of trauma. They won't experience trauma or depression. Pamuk offers his readers suggestions on how to bounce back from adversity. He exposes the direct effects of

trauma. His works of fiction are essentially psychological investigations.

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