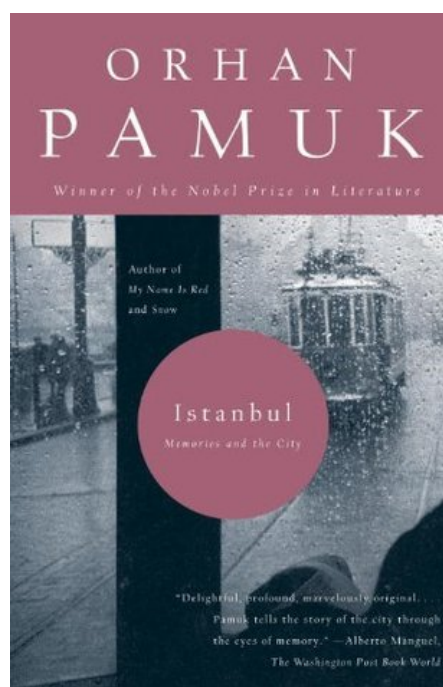




Istanbul: Memories and the City

Orhan Pamuk

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Istanbul: Memories and the City

Orhan Pamuk

Istanbul: Memories and the City Orhan Pamuk

A shimmering evocation, by turns intimate and panoramic, of one of the world's great cities, by its foremost writer. Orhan Pamuk was born in Istanbul and still lives in the family apartment building where his mother first held him in her arms. His portrait of his city is thus also a self-portrait, refracted by memory and the melancholy—or *hüzün*—that all *Istanbullus* share: the sadness that comes of living amid the ruins of a lost empire. With cinematic fluidity, Pamuk moves from his glamorous, unhappy parents to the gorgeous, decrepit mansions overlooking the Bosphorus; from the dawning of his self-consciousness to the writers and painters—both Turkish and foreign—who would shape his consciousness of his city. Like Joyce's Dublin and Borges' Buenos Aires, Pamuk's *Istanbul* is a triumphant encounter of place and sensibility, beautifully written and immensely moving.

Istanbul: Memories and the City Details

Date : Published July 11th 2006 by Vintage International (first published 2003)

ISBN : 9781400033881

Author : Orhan Pamuk

Format : Paperback 356 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Travel, Autobiography, Memoir, Biography, History

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Ulasan lebih panjang di blog

[illegible]

Jayson says

(B+) 79% | Good

Notes: An effective, inviting blend of history and memoir. Though the word “melancholy” is overused to the point of cliché.

Kelly says

It is just lucky that I happened to read Menocal's *Ornament of the World* just before this, as it perfectly prepared me for the psychological labyrinth that is this book. It introduced me to a beautiful, helpful image for Pamuk's creation- the "memory palaces" and "memory gardens". This is not an introduction to Istanbul, it is a memory palace worthy of the wildest child's fantasies that haunt this tapestry. Perhaps John Adams, the minimalist composer, put it best when discussing his piece *On the Transmigration of Souls*, which was dedicated to 9/11, as he said:

"I want to avoid words like 'requiem' or 'memorial' when describing this piece because they too easily suggest conventions that this piece doesn't share. If pressed, I'd probably call the piece a 'memory space.' It's a place where you can go and be alone with your thoughts and emotions. The link to a particular historical event - in this case to 9/11 - is there if you want to contemplate it. But I hope that the piece will summon human experience that goes beyond this particular event."

Similarly, Orhan Pamuk is not writing a Decline and Fall of Istanbul, in a strict economic and political reactionary sense. It's much more than that.

Pamuk chooses to depict the city in which he has lived all fifty years of his life through his own personal experience. This is an experience created out of the analysis and painting childhood memories, personal family tragedy and happiness, famous literary figures and creations, perspectives of newspapers, and reports of oddities. Added to this is descriptions of city-wide feelings, doings, and happenings, and most importantly, the concept of "huzun", a complicated, honorable, tenaciously held communal melancholy that Pamuk believes lies over the city, and of course- the endless big words East and West shoving their heads together in the midst of people just trying to live their lives.

Pamuk deals with big questions that fascinate me, such as- How do you go on when all that you know has died?, Do you have to burn the past in order to live in the present?, What does this word "West" mean, and whom does it mean this to?, How do you deal with multiple identities that tear you apart?, What is the psychological effect of the generations who repress themselves in order to get along with the new power nations on the block and survive?, How do you live when all the legends have done it better?, What /is/ this attachment we have for certain places?, Who is allowed to have a "valid" perspective on a place, or a culture, and why do perspectives from certain sources produce such anger?.. etc.

He also deals with questions on a smaller, more personal scale, which is why this is as much a personal psychological study as it is a national one- How do we become who we are?, Why must we be 'other', in order to see ourselves?, endless questions on personal identity and choice and conflicts with family, the past, the present, and the impossible future and trying to come up with choices that please or rebel against all.

Pamuk shows us an Istanbul drenched in longing- a longing that it appears nobody knows how to solve, caught between so many poles that people's heads spin. It is a place covered in huzun- the melancholy stressed above that somehow people just cannot get rid of, nearly a century after the Ottoman empire fell. He describes its honorable nature, its communal nature, the complicated opinions people have towards the past

and the Westernizing present and future. Anyone who has paid attention to Turkish politics should recognize the pull between East and West where what people think is "Western" is sometimes misunderstood, and what being "modern" really is. He shows us a tortured place where even beauty is full of pain. The Bosphorous is presented as an endless possibility, a soothing slice of heaven surrounding the city, a place to escape at the beginning of the book, and the author's complicated outlook morphs it into a source of threats and danger by the end. He shows us stark pictures of the poverty of the "wings" of Istanbul, and then writes tortured chapters arguing with 19th century western authors who praised the "picturesque" beauty of the broken down areas of the city. He shows us a place where people ape "Western" thought and ideas and dress, and look down on anyone who isn't European enough, and yet a place where the newspapers publish glowing accounts of the poor neighborhoods with romanticized accounts of people living "pure, Turkish, old fashioned" lives every year, and where the checkered Ottoman past is more openly celebrated each year. He writes a chapter on "Under Western Eyes," describing this conflict, and yet openly admits that it is Westerners who see the city the way that he does... and then he tortures himself about that too.

... Pamuk's city is, needless to say perhaps after all that, a place where nobody can be easy with themselves, where they are going, where they are, or where they came from.

And in that way, I think, Pamuk is able to make a microcosm of our ever more complicated, globalized world, where the 19th century savior of identity, nationalism, is breaking down, and what will rise to replace it is so far uncertain. Therefore, I really don't care if you ever want to go to Istanbul or not, this book helped Orhan Pamuk win the Nobel Prize for a reason. I think that we would all be a little more patient with the world if everyone listened to what Pamuk has to say.

PS: Whoever put this in the "Travel" section next to "Under the Tuscan Sun,"... EPIC FAIL.

Ena Hase?i? says

Pamuk u ovom autobiografskom romanu potpuno iskreno progovara o svom životu - porodici, obrazovanju, vjeri i naposljetku gradu u kojem je ro?en i u kojem je proveo najve?i dio svog života. Sve svoje uspomene on veže uz taj grad daju?i tako portret Istanbula od svog ro?enja pa sve do trenutka kada je odlu?io da ?e se baviti pisanjem. Iskreno progovara o svemu što ga je tištilo, o gradu koji ga je u mladosti gušio i o prodi?nim problemima, postepenom siromašenju uzrokovanim o?evim lošim snalaskom u porodi?nom poslu, zatim o slikarstvu, studiju arhitekture, prvoj ljubavi.

Srednji dio knjige zauzimaju podaci o piscima koje je autor smatrao vrijednim spomena. Rije? je o nekoliko poznatih turskih pisaca koji su u svojim djelima manje ili više pisali o Istanbulu. Pamuk tako pravi paralelu vremena opisanog u tim djelima i Istanbula u kojem je on proveo svoju život. Roman se proteže na 400 strana i svako poglavlje sadrži prigodne fotografije koje su za ?itatelje koji poput mene nikada nisu posjetili Istanbul veoma korisne. Na njima su istanbulske ulice kroz historiju, te privatne fotografije njegove porodice, majke, oca, brata i bake kojoj je i posvetio jedno poglavlje. Zanimljiva je i nagla promjena kojom je Istanbul bio pogo?en po?etkom XX stolje?a. Poznato je da veliko Carstvo tada polako nestaje, a stvara se Republika na ?elu sa Ataturkom. Te promjene su obilježile život mnogih stanovnika Istanbula - neki od njih su neprestano patili za starim vremenima, a neki su se svim silama pokušavali približiti Zapadu.

Koliko god ovaj roman bio autobiografski on je u isto vrijeme posveta jednom velikom gradu, gradu bogate i zanimljive historije.

"Pišem zato da bi cijeli svijet saznao kakav sam ja, kakvi su ostali - mi, svi mi što smo život živjeli i što živimo u Istanbulu, u Turskoj. Pišem zato što volim miris papira, olovke i tinte. Pišem zato što, više nego bilo ?emu drugom, vjerujem književnosti, umjetnosti romana. Pišem zato što je to navika i strast. Pišem zato

što se bojim biti zaboravljen."

Arakah Mushaweh says

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Eric says

Pamuk adds another layer to Istanbul's proverbial description as "the bridge between east and west" by showing how the major Istanbul modernists – poet Yahya Kemal and novelist A.H. Tanpınar, new names to me, I have to follow up – derived a poetics of post-imperial ennui and urban decay from the melancholic image of their city recorded or dreamed by travelling French writers in the nineteenth century. "[T]he roots of our *hüzün* [urban melancholy] are European: the concept was first explored, expressed and poeticized in French," he writes. And the nineteenth century French, the literary critics will tell you, were dealing with their own post-Napoleonic, post-imperial fatigue, and a *Mal du siècle* which made for what is called a "Late" Romanticism: dark, sexually anguished and routinely syphilitic ("The day the young writer corrects his first proofs he is as proud as the schoolboy who has just caught his first dose of the clap" - Baudelaire), as well as more perverse and pessimistic than the verdant and Liberty-extolling English variety (outcast, exiled, dark-locked Lord Byron being the founding hero, the revolting Satan for the French Romantics). I love that whole nervous crew; the Horror of Life Club, with their flamboyant despair and macabre brilliance (an 1874 entry of the Goncourt *Journal* begins, "Dinner at the Café Riche with Flaubert, Turgenev, Zola...We began a long discussion of the special aptitudes of writers suffering from constipation and diarrhea; and we went on to talk about the mechanics of the French language"). For such Istanbul visitors as Gautier, Nerval, and Flaubert melancholy was salutary and decadence authentic, the human norm. They relished the "Orient" for what they saw as its frank spectacles of violence and decay. Flaubert was especially taken with what he saw as the unworried kinship of pomp and squalor; writing a friend from Istanbul in November 1850, he marveled at the "splendid faces, iridescent existences that glisten and gleam, exceedingly various in their riches and robes, rich in filth, in their tatters and finery. And there beneath it all, the old immutable, perennial rascality." – antiquity and authenticity in contrast to the European bourgeoisie's fatuous conflation of moral and material progress, its aesthetics of engineering, its religion of convenience. When the Istanbul modernists, like all the other modernists, made their pilgrimages to the French wellsprings, they found their city already a literary image of melancholy – and just in time, what with Istanbul now the defunct capital of a fallen empire, poor, isolated, and afflicted by Westernizing republicans – a virulently progressive form of authoritarian bourgeois, in Pamuk's picture – eager to raze the old Ottoman mansions and pour concrete Corbusian apartment blocks in their place. I thought of Baudelaire on the demolitions of medieval Paris – "the form of a city changes more quickly, alas! than the human heart."

My favorite sections of the book were those devoted to Istanbul writers. Kemal and Tanpınar had two interesting associates, bachelor flâneurs like themselves: the Proust-like recluse Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar, and

the historian Reşat Ekrem Koçu, compiler of the lurid and idiosyncratic *Istanbul Encyclopedia* (its entries on Ottoman torture devices and techniques thrilled young Orhan) who lived alone amid ceiling-high piles of nineteenth century newspapers and archival scraps. I love the image of a coterie of urban dreamers engrossed by a city, people for whom the layered landscape of their 2,500 year old home is a complete cosmos, the inexhaustible ground for diverse passions – creative and curatorial, novelistic and antiquarian; sexual, architectural, philosophical. (I think of Joseph Cornell reading Mallarmé after a day rummaging in New York City’s junk shops.) Pamuk is, of course, one of these writers. I was deeply impressed to read that the composition of his latest novel, *The Museum of Innocence*, was preceded by two decades of collecting hundreds of objects that would “belong” to the characters and figure in the book. And then he opened a real museum to display the collection. Elif Batuman in the *London Review of Books*:

The inspiration for the Museum of Innocence came to Pamuk in 1982, while he was having dinner with the last prince of the Ottoman dynasty. Exiled after the formation of the Turkish republic, the prince ended up in Alexandria and worked for decades at the Antoniadis Palace museum, first as a ticket collector and then as director. Now, back in Istanbul after a fifty-year exile, he needed a job. The guests discussed the delicate subject of employment for the straitened septuagenarian prince of a defunct empire. Someone said the Ihlamur Palace museum might need a guide: who better than the prince, who had lived there as a child? Pamuk was immediately taken by the idea of a man who outlives his era and becomes the guide to his own house-museum. He imagined how the prince would greet visitors – ‘Ladies and gentlemen! Seventy years ago, in this room, I sat with my aide-de-camp and studied mathematics!’ – before crossing the velvet cordon to sit once more at his childhood desk, demonstrating how he had held the pencil and ruler.

Ten years later, Pamuk came up with an insane plan: to write a novel in the form of a museum catalogue, while simultaneously building the museum to which it referred. The plot of the novel would be fairly straightforward: over many years, an unhappy lover contrives to steal a large number of objects belonging to his unattainable beloved, after whose untimely death he proceeds to buy her family’s house and turn it into a museum. You might think that Pamuk’s first step, as a writer, would have been to start writing. In fact, his first step was to contact a real-estate agent. He needed to buy a house for his future heroine, Füsun. During the 1990s, Pamuk visited hundreds of properties, trying to imagine Füsun and her parents living in them. It was beyond his means to purchase a whole building in Nişantaşı, the posh neighbourhood inhabited by Kemal, the hero of the novel. He could afford a single floor in a stone building in the old Ottoman commercial centre of Galata, but then the remodelling would be difficult...

For the next ten years, writing and shopping proceeded in a dialectical relationship. Pamuk would buy objects that caught his eye, and wait for the novel to ‘swallow’ them, demanding, in the process, the purchase of further objects. Occasionally an object refused to be swallowed, as happened with some carriage lanterns and an old gas meter. Pamuk published *The Museum of Innocence* in 2008. It resembles less a museum catalogue than a 600-page audio guide. A ticket printed in the back of each copy grants one free entry to the museum. By that point he had already acquired nearly all of Füsun’s belongings, so the museum could, in theory, have opened the next day. But Pamuk was worried about the example of Edouard Dujardin, the French writer sometimes credited with pioneering, in a largely forgotten text called *Les Lauriers sont coupés*, the stream of consciousness. Pamuk didn’t want to be Dujardin. He wanted to be Joyce. It wasn’t enough just to build the world’s first synergetic novel-museum. The museum had to be a thing of beauty. He hired a team of artists and curators and worked full time in the museum for several months, taking naps on Kemal’s bed in the attic.

<http://www.lrb.co.uk/v34/n11/elif-bat...>

Salma says

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Irene says

This is a dual memoir, that of the author's first twenty years of life and that of Istanbul during the same period. Pamuk has a poet's voice. By that, I don't mean that he uses flowery or metaphoric language, but rather that he has the ability to conjure the abstract into palpable form: the atmosphere of a neighborhood, the bonds in a family, the mood of a people. I was surprised how much I enjoyed this book that lacked any plot or narrative tension. I must have been in just the right mood.

Chris says

This is the second book by Pamuk that I have read. I would like to point out that it seems that this book should be read either before or after *The Museum of Innocence* because I found myself making it notes of where the novel and this memoir collide.

I've never been to Istanbul, but now I want to go. What Pamuk does is not only describe his family but a city as a conflict between East and West. While it is not something that my own western city feels, it is somewhat akin to the feeling that Philadelphia has of being mashed between N.Y. and D.C. (Though in this day and age, it is a good thing that everyone forgets about us).

The book is part biography and part meditation on culture and its feeling of lost youth and innocence carries though to *The Museum of Innocence*. There are some places in the novel where you will laugh out aloud, for example where Pamuk apologizes to everyone he imagined killing or dying. There are also some extremely moving passages, not just in describing his family, or the feeling of Istanbul, but his only place in society.

I do wish, however, that more information about the pictures was given and I do wish that they had captions.

Lisa says

Pamuk was already one of my favourite authors when I read his memoir of his beloved city - Istanbul - in conjunction with a family vacation there. What an amazing reading experience that was!

Imagine that old, old city, full of stories after centuries of human interaction, of cultural clashes and exchanges, of architectural wonders and wars of destruction.

And then imagine one of its most talented writers, a storyteller with the power of 1001 nights, telling the story of the city from his personal angle, sharing his historical knowledge, his family history, and personal relationships, both fictional and real.

Imagine walking the streets and recognising each cobblestone Pamuk mentions.

Imagine going to the markets and taking in the colours and flavours of the spices that he describes, hearing the voices of the lively sellers and buyers, engaged in an everyday dialogue that you might not understand, but feel close to all of a sudden, as you have the voice of Pamuk in your head.

Imagine feeling connected to a completely foreign world through the literary masterpiece of an author who knows how to cross the bridge between Asia and Europe, both literally and figuratively speaking!

Imagine moving around that beautiful, powerful city with your own family while stepping into the living-room of Pamuk's childhood home, meeting his relatives from different generations.

Imagine feeling the *hüzün*, the melancholy of Istanbul, almost as if it was possible to touch it physically, guided by Pamuk's experience of spiritual loss as a chain that links together a city in an eternal identity crisis:

"For me it has always been a city of ruins and of end-of-empire melancholy. I've spent my life either battling with this melancholy or (like all *İstanbul*) making it my own."

Identity crisis as the defining element of identity itself - that is an idea only literature can explain and transmit, in conjunction with the black and white photographs of a fictional past glory and the experience of intense life carried out on the streets of modern Istanbul.

As readable as Dickens' London tales and Zola's accounts of Paris, Pamuk gives his home town the best tribute possible: he invites literary travellers to participate in the imagination of its torn soul.

Brilliant!

I couldn't help seeing the city partially with the Scandinavian painter's eyes as well, seeing Zorn's painting of the Bosphorus as a visual tribute to the melancholy beauty of local life that Pamuk celebrates.

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Usman Hickmath says

Major part of the book describes what some poets, journalists and painters have written or painted about Istanbul during 19th century.

But, when I picked this one up after reading My Name is Red, the expectation was to know how Pamuk describes Istanbul and his life in that city, not what some 19th century unknown travellers and century old journalists with difficult names to pronounce had to say.

There were some interesting chapters, but we do not buy a highly priced book, printed on quality paper, packaged with a lovely cover and praised by many internationally acclaimed news papers only to read few chapters.

If you have not read Pamuk's works yet - recommend to read his other works before Istanbul: Or you may overlook some great works of a master.

Travelin says

There's really no nice way to say this. One of the deservedly obscure authors he spends a chapter praising is described as being some kind of pedophile. This isn't a pretend metaphor in Lolita, this is Pamuk's loving description of a nobody. If that's not enough, his best description of Istanbul, one of the largest cities today, and, more importantly, in history, is moperly about his apartment and decaying wooden houses near it. To spend a day in the tiny English section of a large bookstore and see nothing but Pamuk writings everywhere put me in a decidedly bad mood.

Original review:

This book can feel so perfectly paced and intimate because he spends a lifetime sitting indoors bemoaning an Istanbul which, he says, doesn't exist anymore. How he can remain isolated in a busy city year after year says more about him, his non-Turkish background, wealthier heritage, self-centered habits, etc. than it probably does about Istanbul.

I stopped reading just after he described his encyclopedic, unread and unwept literary heros, but regret avoiding Istanbul based on his descriptions. Turks don't seem to like him because of his comments about Armenians. His politics may sometimes have validity but he's mostly a spoiled man pretending to moan over himself.

Have to say, finally: my edition was the second most beautifully designed and made paperback I've ever read, with paper, type faces and space of precisely the right weight

Alyazi says

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Mira says

It feels very odd to be writing this review now, sitting in a car on my way back home, feeling bored and tired for no particular reason. And out of nowhere this book- which I finished more than a month ago, and entirely gave up on ever being able to write a decent review about- comes to my mind unbidden, as though deeply connected with my present state of mind. This is going to be one of the most personal reviews I'll ever write, but that's merely because *Istanbul: Memories and the City* has affected me personally, more than any other book ever has. Therefore I'm not going to praise Pamuk's literary skills or the eloquence of the language. Nor am I going to comment on the exquisite picture of Istanbul which many westerners have described and which the author himself reflects upon many a time throughout the whole book. Those aspects enchanted me well enough, and they *do* give this book a great deal of its charm, but not as much as the relationship Pamuk shares with his city does. I have to say that I've also chosen a very odd timing to read this memoir. The few past months have been very busy and offered me very little time to read, and yet (stubbornly I guess, and to the amusement of many of my friends) I carried this book everywhere I went to make use of stolen free moments. It took me long to finish, naturally, but as John Green eloquently puts it: 'As I read, I fell in love the way you fall asleep: slowly, and then all at once.' The result was that I would read a few pages on the road, then find myself staring out of the window, watching many familiar objects as though for the first time. Has Jerusalem always been this beautiful? Has it always buzzed with noise and movement? I'd wonder sometimes. The magic in this book was that- while it offered nothing new except the details of Istanbul and its dark alleys which I've never been to- it reminded me to observe my own city with fresh eyes. As a painting, probably. Or a black and white sketch. Sometimes as a partner in an epic love story. Whatever it was, it helped me remember that familiarity does not necessarily guarantee perfect knowledge. That, in an earlier century, another person stood just like I did in a place he'd known since childhood, suddenly noticing something that has always been there but somehow at that particular moment felt new and unique. And why is that? Because he pretended to be a stranger, a "Westerner" in Pamuk's case:

'So whenever I sense the absence of Western eyes, I become my own Westerner.'
Ch.31

'I would begin to observe myself from the outside, as if in a dream.' Ch.34

At moments I felt that I've never related more to an author, or to his seeking the picturesque and the poetic. At others I felt pity. Pity that such a brilliant writer could be lost, much too taken with the European take on Istanbul in his youth. And so I found it only understandable for him to wonder by the end of the book: "Why should we expect a city to cure us of our spiritual pains?". Perhaps we shouldn't. The melancholy which invades the very soul of these memoirs stems from the city itself- its ruins and dilapidated palaces, from the attempt to modernize (along with westernize) Turkey, and bury the deeply rooted history. This specific sentence stopped me because it occurred to me upon reading it, that cities with ever changing and usually painful histories must have similar emotional atmospheres. This is probably why I loved Pamuk's walks to the poor neighborhoods and the ruins more than anything else; they represented the sort of poetic escapism which this book offered me on so many occasions. And it made me wonder more than ever whether Pamuk intended those memoirs to be a record of his own actions and decisions, or a tribute to the city he loved yet in which he was ever restless and wandering.

Reading this book, I was also reminded that stress teaches you to yearn for the unreachable, the unexpected. At least it taught me to. Reading under stress also gave this book a wholly different light from what I anticipated. Pamuk's memoirs came as a stimulator for many feelings and urges instead of a stereotyped brochure about Istanbul's charms. The more I read, the more I felt this irresistible urge to paint and write. I

The positive pointed out, I have to say that this book was far from perfect. I wasn't truly interested in Pamuk's physical fantasies or his religious upbringing- which he mentioned often and which I found irrelevant and distracting most of the time. The narration, though beautiful and imaginative, tended sometimes towards repetition. All in all, the few negative points aside, Pamuk's memoirs will always stay with me, and remind me of a specific period in my life when I decided to study architecture (the very branch of study the author chose then soon after decided to abandon for writing), and when I re-established my long-term passion for painting (also a hobby the author chose to quit long ago). *Istanbul: Memories and the City* will always be one of my treasured reads.

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Along with The World's Literature group, I have been reading a lot of books set in Turkey this year. Just check out what I've covered so far!

One of the best known Turkish authors has to be Orhan Pamuk. I've only managed to read one book of his so far, but there are many more on my to-read list to get to. I actually think reading this autobiography/memoir first will add some understanding to any of his books that I read in the future. It covers his childhood in Istanbul, up through his college years and the moment he decides to become a writer.

While this book came out in print in 2003, this audio edition was newly released by Random House in April. I had downloaded it but was listening to another book.

Then this happened:

I was already deeply interested in Turkey, even to the point of learning some of the language and the cuisine,

but following the protests and police action in Twitter made me more interested in Istanbul.

Of course, the Istanbul of this book is several decades ago, but you can see traces of a history that breeds an environment where clashes between groups are not exactly unexpected, where poverty and control have always been issues in the background. Pamuk suggests that the most beautiful view of the city is from afar. I'm not sure he really means it, because he continues to return to this concept of *hüzün*, or melancholy, that he claims is part of the daily lived aesthetic in the life of an Istanbulu. That those living in the city *want* to feel *hüzün*, and don't feel as alive without it.

I know Pamuk has been criticized both by the government for not being religious enough and by the public for not being critical of the government enough, but this book makes it clear that he isn't all that interested in making a statement with his writing; he wants to describe. It makes so much sense now, to see his journey from painter to writer, to understand how this plays out in his writing. His descriptions of the black and white landscape of winter is central to *Snow*, the one book I've read.

I've had dreams about the Bosphorus, a strait in Istanbul separating Asia from Europe. Even though I've never been there and don't have reason to dream of it, I can see why you would. His descriptions of living within view of the river, of the fires and the commerce, made me long for this place I've never experienced.

The reader for the audiobook is John Lee, whose voice is very familiar to me as the reader for *Ulysses*. He does a good job with the pronunciation of Turkish names, but I kept expecting him to jump into "Hoopsa, boyaboy, hoopsa!" You know you listen to a lot of audiobooks when....
