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Chapter 2

The Soul of a City: *Hüzün, Keyif, Longing*

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This chapter engages Orhan Pamuk's claim that *hüzün* is the soul – if there is such a thing – of Istanbul. Assuming first that there is such a thing but becoming increasingly troubled with *hüzün*, the chapter introduces an alternative, if an opposite, soul, *keyif*, more precisely *şehrin keyfi*, as the soul of Istanbul. Yet, growing increasingly sceptical of itself, the chapter opens towards a discussion on why there should be such a thing as the soul of a city. Taking its cue from the phrase, 'reorienting Istanbul', it begins to argue that claims to know the soul of a city – whether *hüzün* or *keyif* – are discursive constructions that orient Istanbul in both senses: it reorientalizes Istanbul as an object of desire while it Europeanizes it by shaping its direction towards the Occident. The question then becomes how these discursive constructions emerge. Answering that question requires understanding how social groups that constitute contemporary Istanbul use such images as strategies of government. If *hüzün* and *keyif* are effects over which social groups struggle to govern the city according to their taste, habits and disposition, understanding how such effects are produced and are made objects of desire becomes essential to understanding literary products such as *İstanbul: Hatıralar ve Şehir* (2003) or *Istanbul: Memories and the City* (2005).

Istanbul's *Hüzün*

It was Orhan Pamuk who introduced his non-Turkish speaking readers to the Turkish word *hüzün*. In his book *Istanbul: Memories and the City* he suggested that *hüzün*, while having Arabic roots, has a distinctly Turkish meaning that is untranslatable to any other language. Since then he published two further articles abridged from the book (2008, 2007). *Hüzün* does not exactly correspond to the meaning of words such as melancholy, nostalgia, sombreness, sadness or even wistfulness, which comes closest to it (Henschen, 2008). While referring in part to all these words, *hüzün* still maintains a distinct sense by identifying a mood where one withdraws into oneself but without necessarily feeling down. For Pamuk this effect is a kind of longing but it is communal. Pamuk explains

the peculiarity of this word through its association with the city of Istanbul. It is *hüzün* as communal longing that becomes a central idea in *Istanbul*. Pamuk thinks that being the capital of a disappeared empire, if not culture, Istanbul is rife with symbols and images of longing. Istanbul, it appears, is a city of longing because of its disappearing past. *Hüzün* is longing for the city.

While I found this idea originally compelling when I read *Istanbul* in Turkish, I was much less convinced of the weight Pamuk placed on it when I read *Istanbul* in English. It is this idea – the city of Istanbul as a city of longing and *hüzün* as longing for the city – that I shall call into question. *Pamuk wants to reorient Istanbul away from an outsider gaze and towards an indigenous or authentic essence – an insider’s gaze. Yet, in so doing it creates a reverse image of the city with an outsider’s gaze firmly cast upon it.* There is another mood that defines Istanbul’s soul to which *Istanbul: Memories and the City* is a stranger. That mood is *keyif*, or more precisely, *şehrin keyfi*.

When *Istanbul: Hatıralar ve Şehir* (2003) was first published, I was living in the city. After being away for twenty years (since 1983 I was only briefly in Istanbul in 1999), I was doing archival research on Ottoman munificence and patronage. When I read the book with much anticipation – since I had read Pamuk earlier – I thought it perfectly captured not only memories of my youth and my relationship to the city but also that very moment when I was back after such a long absence. I thought it captured that combination of loss and longing twice: that of my youth when I both longed for the city and yet thought it was lost forever and that of my years away from it when I both longed for and lost it. For those months I was in Istanbul, *İstanbul: Hatıralar ve Şehir* became a kind of companion that Pamuk speaks about in terms of his relationship to other writers: a fierce and continuous dialogue. *Hüzün*, I thought, was the mood that determined my relationship to the city. I left the city with that acceptable longing that was *hüzün*.

When I was back in the city in 2005 to complete my archival research, the English translation *Istanbul: Memories and the City* had been published. When I read it in English I was startled by how its effect on me was so different. Rather than agreeing that *hüzün* was the mood through which I experienced the city, I reacted to the idea negatively, finding *hüzün* rather too inward looking, brooding and lethargic to describe the soul of the city and my relation to it. Moreover, the English translation made me realize that this was more than a memoir: it made several and rather large claims about the city and its history. Why did *Istanbul: Memories and the City* have this effect that *İstanbul: Hatıralar ve Şehir* did not? This has been said so many times, and most compellingly, by Eva Hoffman (1989): translation is interpretation and creates new worlds. What *Istanbul: Memories and the City* made me aware of to an extent that *İstanbul: Hatıralar ve Şehir* did not was that the former was about reorienting Istanbul for outsiders. *Istanbul: Memories and the City* addressed a non-Turkish speaking audience and summoned an outsider’s gaze upon Istanbul again. While Reşat Ekrem Koçu, Hamdi Tanpınar, Yahya Kemal, and Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar were Pamuk’s manifest protagonists in

İstanbul: Hatıralar ve Şehir, its latent protagonists were Gérard de Nerval, Théophile Gautier, Charles Baudelaire, Michel de Montaigne and Claude Lévi-Strauss. Reading *Istanbul* in English made me realize how much Pamuk was caught ‘under western eyes’ worrying about what ‘foreigners and strangers’ think about Istanbul. I realized that the value of *Istanbul* may be that it reveals this problem: ‘My interest in how my city looks to Western eyes is – as for most *Istanbullus* – very troubled; like all other Istanbul writers with one eye always on the West, I sometimes suffer in confusion’ (Pamuk, 2005, p. 211). As Ayşe Öncü (1999) has illustrated, however, the notion of authentic *Istanbullu* is itself a cultural and social artefact rather than a stable identity as Orhan Pamuk seems to think.

When I left the city in 2005 I was intrigued by this confession of a confusion and wondered whether Pamuk’s explanation was adequate. I was back in Istanbul in 2008 – again to complete the archival research on Ottoman munificence and patronage. But I had another aim too: to engage in a ten-day intense street photography workshop and studio. After several daunting and challenging encounters with the city, its people, its sites, and scenes, it was the hundreds of photographs which I took that revealed to me what was troubling with *hüzün*. I will return to that later. For now I will engage with *hüzün* that *Istanbul: Memories and the City* presents.

Pamuk starts with his childhood to come to grips with *hüzün*. Tracing the origins of the word to its Arabic roots in the Koran, he argues that ‘the word is meant to convey a feeling of deep spiritual loss’ (*Ibid.*, p. 81). But over time the word comes to denote, as Pamuk sees it, two different meanings, each evoking a different tradition. The first *hüzün* arises when ‘we have invested too much in worldly pleasures and material gain’ (*Ibid.*). He thinks this is distinctly Islamic.

The second *hüzün* specifically arises from Sufi mysticism and ‘offers a more positive and compassionate understanding of the word and the place of loss and grief in life’ (*Ibid.*). A Sufi suffers *hüzün* because he can never be good enough for God. It is this lack that defines Sufi *hüzün*. (Pamuk does not mention that the specific Sufi tradition which he draws upon is urban Sufism.) He argues that while both senses of *hüzün* have dominated Ottoman and Turkish poetry and music for centuries, it is not enough to describe the *hüzün* he feels and its ‘enduring power’ as it is inextricably implicated in the city in which he is embedded (*Ibid.*, p. 82).

Pamuk then advances the central idea of the book: ‘The *hüzün* of Istanbul is not just the mood evoked by its music and poetry, it is a way of looking at life that implicates us all, not only a spiritual state, but a state of mind that is ultimately as life affirming as it is negating’ (*Ibid.*). He now thinks that distinct from melancholy *hüzün* is communal and that is why it is appropriate to apply it to the soul of a city. But he goes even further than that and suggests that the feeling is unique to Istanbul and it binds its people together (*Ibid.*, p. 83). What does Pamuk mean by *hüzün* being communal? ‘To feel this *hüzün* is to see the scenes, evoke the memories, in which the city itself becomes the very illustration, the

very essence of *hüzün*' (*Ibid.*, p. 84). It is communal not because it is expressed in public but it evokes collective memories. Pamuk then goes on to provide a long list of scenes that are presumably the essence of *hüzün* but are not much more than everyday occurrences in any city anywhere: sunset on the Bosphorus, fathers returning home with shopping bags, barbers waiting for customers, children playing football on cobblestone streets, crowds rushing to the ferries, men fishing on Galata Bridge and so on. This is when the idea begins to blur before it even gathers some sense of coherence. Is it just that these scenes make Pamuk feel *hüzün* or does he think that people he observes in these scenes must also be feeling it? If the latter, it is rather far-fetched to attribute an affect on such various scenes. It is then not clear why everyone should feel the same as Pamuk.

Perhaps anticipating this kind of reaction Pamuk immediately suggests that the difference between other cities and Istanbul 'lies in the fact in Istanbul the remains of a glorious past and civilisation are everywhere visible'. Again, one would think that Athens, Rome or Beijing would have more claim to *hüzün* than Istanbul. But Pamuk says 'These are nothing like the remains of great empires to be seen in Western cities, preserved like museums of history and proudly displayed. The people of Istanbul simply carry on with their lives amongst the ruins' (*Ibid.*, p. 91). So the distinct sense of *hüzün* is that in Istanbul people carry on with their everyday lives amongst ruins of the past while elsewhere that past is glorified and monumentalized.

So for Pamuk *hüzün* is unlike a solitary melancholy or Montaigne's *tristesse*: 'Montaigne's own sorrow was as solitary as mourning, eating away at the mind of a man who lives alone with his books. But the *hüzün* of Istanbul is something the entire city feels together and affirms as one' (*Ibid.*, p. 95). Rather, *hüzün* is more



Figure 1. From Eminönü to Pera and Galata (2003). (*Photo*: Engin F. Işın)

like Lévi-Strauss's *tristesse* in that it 'describes what a Westerner might feel as he surveys those vast, poverty-stricken cities of the tropics ... [b]ut he does not see the city through their eyes' (*Ibid.*, p. 92). By contrast, Pamuk claims that *hüzün* 'is not a feeling that belongs to the outside observer' (*Ibid.*, p. 93). This is where I feel that the idea is about reorienting Istanbul. Pamuk denies the outsider the right or capacity to feel *hüzün* since it is, he seems to imply, an indigenous mood. The gaze of outsiders does not have access to *hüzün* and when they encounter it they express confusion and bewilderment. This is because '*hüzün* does not just paralyse the inhabitants of Istanbul; it also gives them poetic licence to be paralysed' (*Ibid.*). It is this poetic licence that is indigenous if not the authentic mood of the city. Istanbul bears its *hüzün* with honour. Pamuk relays this with his experience of channel hopping on TV when he sees the hero of a typical black-and-white movie made in the 1950s or 1960s. The hero is always implicated in a sad story but Pamuk argues that something strange happens in the reaction of heroes to their own situations. He feels 'it is almost as if the *hüzün* which infuses the city's sights and streets and famous views has seeped into the hero's heart to break his will' (*Ibid.*, p. 95). This idea of the hero with a poetic licence to *hüzün*, it turns out, is quite significant as it symbolizes the authentic actor of the city as the hero.

Pamuk identifies Reşat Ekrem Koçu (one of the four protagonists of Istanbul along with Hamdi Tanpınar, Yahya Kemal, and Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar) as that hero whose *hüzün* drives him to an impossible project: *İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* (*Istanbul Encyclopaedia*). The product of a labour of love, *İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* begins its life as a collection of strange facts by Koçu in 1944 and by serialized publications, and contributions by various other hero Istanbul-lovers, its first volume sees publication in 1958, reaches letter G and eleventh volume in 1973, and ends in the twelfth volume. Pamuk sees this heroic act of recording the history of the city in a systematic and yet utterly idiosyncratic way as driven by *hüzün*. He says 'Koçu was one of those *hüzün*-drenched souls who helped create an image of a twentieth-century Istanbul as a half-finished city afflicted with melancholy. *Hüzün* is what defines his life, gives his work its hidden logic, and sets him on the lonely course that can only be his final defeat, but – as with other writers working in a similar vein – he did not see it as central and certainly did not give it much thought' (*Ibid.*, p. 141). As Koçu grew older he came to realise with sadness that he would be unable to limit his Encyclopaedia to fifteen planned volumes let alone finish it (*Ibid.*, p. 145). Pamuk says that Koçu 'failed in part because Istanbul is so unmanageably varied, so anarchic, so very much stranger than Western cities: its disorder resists classification' (*Ibid.*, p. 153). 'Without falling into the strange habit of praising Istanbul's strangeness, we acknowledge that we love Koçu because he "failed"' (*Ibid.*). Here then we see the essence of *hüzün*: the hero with a poetic licence to conquer the city is bound to fail but that licence allows him to feel *hüzün* not as defeatism, not as failure but as a kind of poetic conquest.



Figure 2. Dusk in Beşiktaş (2005). (Photo: Engin F. Işın)

But then again just when the idea is gathering some stability and coherence, Pamuk becomes uncertain. He says ‘in the last one hundred and fifty years (1850–2000) I have no doubt that not only has *hüzün* ruled over Istanbul, but it has spread to its surrounding areas’ (*Ibid.*, p. 210). How to judge such a claim? Clearly, not by its truth value but for its truth effect: if Pamuk does not doubt that *hüzün* ‘rules over’ Istanbul over such a long period time then we are invited to accept affectively that it has also ‘spread to its surrounding areas’. That’s fine but then he shocks at least this reader: ‘What I have been trying to explain is that the roots of our *hüzün* are European: the concept was first explored, expressed, and poeticised in French (by Gautier, under the influence of his friend Nerval)’ (*Ibid.*). That which seems to be indigenous to the city turns out to be European. It was Europeans who longed for the past of the city and wanted to see it memorialized and monumentalized. It was the European gaze that instilled the mood of longing in the city for the city that was lost. It is because ‘Western observers [always] love to identify the things that make Istanbul exotic, non-Western, whereas the Westernizers amongst us register all the same things as obstacles to be erased from the face of the city as fast as possible’ (*Ibid.*, p. 218). It turns out then that the paradox of *hüzün* is that it is the Orientalist gaze turned into the soul of a city. For Pamuk *hüzün* is the Orientalist will to govern over the city.

It is not clear if Pamuk draws this conclusion from his narrative: he leaves

out this specific discussion of the European origins of *hüzün* from the two subsequent extracts he published as articles (Pamuk, 2008). But *hüzün* is now beset by irresolvable dilemmas that also inhabit Pamuk's paradoxical approach to the word, if not Istanbul. While insisting that it has Sufi and Islamic origins we are then presented with European, if not Orientalist, interpretations of it. Pamuk embodies these paradoxes himself by, on the one hand, being drawn to European melancholic literature and, on the other, desperately trying to discover an authentic or indigenous mood of the city. That is why I think *Istanbul: Memories and the City* is more than a memoir. It gives an image of the city that withdraws into itself longing for its future to come through longing for its past that is gone. To put it differently, while Pamuk's longing appears as though it is for the past, it is in fact animated (and made legitimate) by imagining a European city to come. Consequently, Istanbul and *hüzün* are perhaps closely associated and it is this association that orients the city in both senses of the term: it reorientalizes Istanbul as an object of desire while it Europeanizes it by shaping its direction toward the Occident. To put it differently, if bluntly, Pamuk's *hüzün*, while appearing anti-Orientalist, produces Orientalist effects. Is it possible to produce a counter-effect? Can we imagine another mood to which perhaps Pamuk, or self-described *Istanbullus* are a stranger? This city is so vibrant, creative and energetic that arguably *hüzün* is only one mood amongst others that defines its soul.

Istanbul's Keyif

Now let us return to the photographs. It was those photographs that revealed to me what was troubling with *hüzün*. After shooting hundreds of photographs I was left with the daunting challenge of making sense of them or at least presenting them in a way that made some sense. Originally, I started with the idea that I would shoot 'working streets'. The term has a double meaning. First, it refers to the countless men, women and children of Istanbul who work on the streets for their livelihood. These range from transvestites to peddlers. The following incomplete list is itself a testimony to the characters of the working streets: *tulumacı, simitçi, macuncu, turşucu, salepci, tahinci, şerbetçi, kunduracı, sebzeçi, saka, hamal, mestçi, leğenci, çakmakçı, hallaç, zerzevatçı, çömlekçi, değirmenci, kağıtçılar, muslukçu, bileyci, kopyacı, çöpçü, dilenci, sihirbazı and hiyleci*. There is an enormous variety of characters working the streets and one or another can always be found there. Second, Istanbul's streets work. That is not in the sense that they function well (some do and some do not) but in the sense that they are at work almost all the time. Streets change their character along with the characters that inhabit them. There is a bewildering ebb and flow to these streets with a different cast of characters in each.

Yet, Istanbul has recently 'decided' that to be European (and 'global') its streets must be cleansed (Potuoğlu-Cook, 2006). Working streets are becoming increasingly sterile thoroughfares where street life and its characters are pushed

inside the fast-growing shopping malls. Istanbul's street characters are feeling the pressure and are being displaced to look elsewhere to make their living (Candan and Kolluoğlu, 2008). I wanted to shoot and record the remaining vestiges of these characters before they entirely disappear and before photographing becomes an illegal activity as it practically is in these shopping malls.

That was the idea. What happened was somewhat different. Looking at the photographs I shot over ten days did not reveal many of the characters I expected to portray. Looking at these photographs again and again revealed, I do not know how, another idea: *şehrin keyfi* (enjoyment of the city). Time and again my gaze was fixed not on Pamuk's heroic (and tragic), but the everyday and yet resilient *acts* of Istanbul's people (especially those belonging to the social groups that are most deprived and marginalized) seeking to enjoy the city against a background of oppression or sufferings (Secor, 2003). These people are the outsiders and strangers to the city, coming to the city for centuries but especially during the twentieth century (Ayata, 2008). Like many large and historic cities, Istanbul is a city of outsiders and strangers who constitute its essence while at the same time being regarded as 'other' by those who claim 'nativity'. While Pamuk laments the disappearance of a specific Ottoman diversity in the city, he fails to observe, let alone rejoice, in the appearance of another, creative and energetic diversity created by its outsiders and strangers. It is not then only the scenes of pleasure – people having their tea, grilling fresh-caught fish from the sea, simply strolling, playing cards, taking a coffee break, or catching a glimpse of many views of the Bosphorus – but the acts of enjoyment by its strangers taking various risks that define *şehrin keyfi* (Bryant, 2005; Henkel, 2007). Amongst the most impressive



Figure 3. *Şehrin Keyfi* in Sarayburnu (2008). (Photo: Engin F. Işın)

of these characters of the city are kids. They seem to enjoy the city most with their inventiveness, mischievousness and defiance. Istanbul's children, at least in neighbourhoods where TV has not yet become the dominant pacifier, have not yet been pushed inside as in New York or London – a point made by a great street photographer Helen Levitt (Loke, 2009). In Istanbul the 'other' children still *enjoy* street life mostly on their own terms.

The *keyif* of the city is of a specific kind: it is not communal, as Pamuk thinks about *hüzün*, but public. Its publicness is not one of ostentatious announcement (the further up you go in the class scale the more prominent that becomes), but enjoyment in the presence of others and against all odds. Strolling in the streets with my camera I am often invited to join in the enjoyment rather than stay outside. I have been offered grilled fish, drinks, cake, tea, coffee and even *çığ köfte* and *rakı* in such occasions. With children it also means either playing with them or even joining in resolving disputes under the watchful eyes of the street elders. I wondered if *keyif* was the mood that defined the city's soul rather than *hüzün*.

As I mentioned earlier, *hüzün* is caught up with the Orientalist gaze. If Pamuk is intent on rescuing *hüzün* from this gaze it is neither successful nor apparent. But is *keyif* without the Orientalist gaze? Edward Said praises Richard Burton remarking that:

In no writer on the Orient so much as in Burton do we feel that generalizations about the Oriental – for example, the pages on the notion of *Kayf* for the Arab ... – are the result of knowledge acquired about the Orient by living there, actually seeing it firsthand, truly trying to see Oriental life from the viewpoint of a person immersed in it. Yet what is never far from the surface of Burton's prose is another sense it radiates, a sense of assertion and domination over all the complexities of Oriental life. (Said, 1978, p. 196)

In his *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah & Meccah* (1893) Burton writes:

And this is the Arab's *Kayf*. The savouring of animal existence; the passive enjoyment of mere sense; the pleasant languor, the dreamy tranquillity, the airy castle-building, which in Asia stand in lieu of the vigorous, intensive, passionate life of Europe. It is the result of a lively, impressible, excitable nature, and exquisite sensibility of nerve; it argues a facility for voluptuousness unknown to northern regions, where happiness is placed in the exertion of mental and physical powers; where *Ernst ist das Leben*; where niggard earth commands ceaseless sweat of face, and damp chill air demands perpetual excitement, exercise, or change, or adventure, or dissipation, for want of something better. In the East, man wants but rest and shade: upon the banks of a bubbling stream, or under the cool shelter of a perfumed tree, he is perfectly happy, smoking a pipe, or sipping a cup of coffee, or drinking a glass of sherbet, but above all things deranging body and mind as little as possible; the trouble of conversations, the displeasures of memory, and the vanity of thought being the most unpleasant interruptions to his *Kayf*. No wonder that '*Kayf*' is a word untranslatable in our mother-tongue!

This exotic, visceral and sexual sense of *keyif* is intoxicating. One of its meanings is being ‘high’. As Burton (1893) says ‘In a coarser sense “kayf” is applied to all manner of intoxication. Sonnini is not wrong when he says, “the Arabs give the name of *Kayf* to the voluptuous relaxation, the delicious stupor, produced by the smoking of hemp”’. The French word *jouissance* (enjoyment) especially known for its usage by Jacques Lacan also expresses *keyif* (Evans, 1998). But Lacan associated *jouissance* with sexuality while *keyif* exceeds it. (Lacan might say that nothing exceeds sexuality but we will leave that Ottoman-French disagreement aside for now.) *Keyif* is sensual but not necessarily sexual. What *keyif* shares with *jouissance* is that emotional state or mood as a suspension in the present without the past and future or even despite them or perhaps even against them. Said (1978, p. 103) notes that in fact this is called ‘bizarre *jouissance*’ by the *Description de l’Egypte* through which ‘the Orient becomes a living tableau of queerness’.

So there is as much evidence for *hüzün* as *keyif* for originating in the Orientalist gaze. Perhaps just as Pamuk, I was caught in the Orientalist gaze – he as insider, I as outsider-insider. Yet, I do think, and hope, that there is more to *keyif* than its Orientalist interpretation as intoxication and delirium, a bizarre *jouissance*.

I would like to think that *keyif*, or more accurately, *şehrin keyfi*, rather than being a bizarre *jouissance* is a mood of defiance. Unlike *hüzün*, which reaches to the past or future or both, *keyif* is about the present. It is about the present and its affirmation. What it defies is the conditions that are supposed to determine one’s fate. With *keyif* one plays with fate. *Şehrin keyfi* is such that the city enables this mood of defiance, makes it acceptable and accepted. In *şehrin keyfi* there are always risks taken, some high, some low. But there is no *keyif* without some risk. It is understood that to abandon time and space, past and future, and to affirm oneself in the present (and in the presence of others) has its costs. It is these costs that Istanbul’s people bear and not the honour of the poetic licence to failure. *Şehrin keyfi* is the enjoyment of the right to the city or, for short, civic enjoyment.

Much more than *hüzün*, I think *keyif* is associated with Istanbul. The city, this city, is a city of spaces of *keyif*. These spaces put its people in the mood of *keyif*. Or at least they seduce you to dare to *keyif*. The city, this city, is an injunction to civic enjoyment. But now that I disassociated *keyif* from bizarre *jouissance*, the spaces of *keyif* I have in mind are those spaces of the city that invite its inhabitants to affirm themselves in the present if only for a moment. In a city of intense vitality and energy, this not only means seeking relief from that intensity but also managing it by enjoying it.

There are many spaces of *keyif* but I think one of their shared orientations is either catching a view of the Bosphorus or being on it. It seems for centuries mosques, churches, synagogues, fountains, parks, cafes, and many other public spaces have had this orientation. It seems every architect and builder in the city has been in competition to catch a view of the Bosphorus (though often with disastrous consequences in recent decades). Shirine Hamadeh’s *The*

City's Pleasures: Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century (2008) captures this quite well. Throughout the eighteenth century, she argues, the Bosphorus in particular was opened up to enjoyment of all classes through the munificence of almost all classes. Hamadeh argues that the explosion of new buildings in the eighteenth century compares to post-conquest rebuilding in intensity and scale. Yet, she argues the eighteenth century was marked by an opening of the city to broader classes and social groups. The main source of making this argument is poetry especially *tevarih-i manzume* which literally meant histories in verse. They were composed specifically in celebration of buildings and gardens. Each of these poems included a separate section titled 'monuments of benefactors' dedicated to gardens, palaces, houses, fountains, mosques, madrasas, schools, baths, and bridges (Hamadeh, 2008, p. 15). Hamadeh says 'they constitute the richest form of architectural discourse in the eighteenth century and form the bulk of the poems used in [her] study' (*Ibid.*). It is clear that there is another tradition to draw from than the Divan poetry that Pamuk draws from. We can say that it is this built-enjoyment-poetry that Istanbul inherits and builds upon. Every building, it seems, tries so hard to orient itself to the Bosphorus in order to catch a glimpse of its glorious glisten and glitter. Again, it is not scenes such as sipping coffee or tea with a delicious dessert and catching the view that define *şehrin keyfi* but its defiant characters. It is almost as if it is more important to catch that view just at that moment that spares you the hustle and bustle of the city. It is at that moment that you are of the city but not in it.

To have *keyif* means to lose oneself not only in time but space and to attempt an escape only to discover that we are all thrown together in this universe called the city and then say 'I might as well enjoy it'. *Keyif* is neither nostalgic nor hedonistic. It is affirmative. *Keyif* is that defiant mood of the city not because it is indigenous or authentic but because it is at once universal and particular. It is universal because it belongs to the city. Anyone can experience that mood when one affirms with no past or future but only the present. It is particular because in Istanbul particular elements (sites, scenes, and characters) come together to assemble it. It is this assemblage that makes *keyif* possible not because it is indigenous or inaccessible but because it is for anyone who dares, or rather, must dare. Civic enjoyment is an open act.

Is *keyif* another side of *hüzün* rather than being its opposite? What is the relationship between the poetic licence to communal defeatism that makes itself felt as longing to long and defiance of the moment that makes itself felt as suspension in time and space? Is *hüzün* the acceptance of the impossibility of *keyif*? Is *keyif* the acknowledgment of the inevitability of return to *hüzün*? However we may answer these questions it is impossible to imagine Istanbul without its characters drawn from outside (and beyond) who obey (and create) the injunction to enjoy the city and make it bend to their will regardless of how much the city tries to break it. This was exemplified when a newspaper journalist Mine Kırıkkanat (2005) complained about poor people taking over the

city's beaches and parks with their grills, underwear and head scarves. A bitterly dividing debate followed this complaint. The issue was, in my words, whether the poor was claiming its right to the city by practicing civic enjoyment or the poor was displaying its vulgar taste. The city government eventually caved in and tried to regulate civic enjoyment by imposing middle-class, 'European' standards upon them though without much success.

The secret of the creative energies of the city lies not only in its European *outsiders* whom Pamuk engages but also in its *strangers*. There is an astonishingly telling moment in *Istanbul* when Pamuk actually identifies *keyif* as an 'Eastern fantasy' though without naming it. This is when he argues that *hüzün* is inaccessible to outsiders and that 'Westerners coming to the city often fail to notice it' (Pamuk, 2005, p. 93). To illustrate the point he mentions that Gérard de Nerval 'spoke of being greatly refreshed by the city's colours, its street life, its violence and its rituals; he even reported hearing women laughing in its cemeteries' (*Ibid.*). Being surprised, if not perturbed, at the sight of *keyif*, Pamuk surmises 'Perhaps it is because he visited Istanbul before the city went into mourning, when the Ottoman Empire was still in its glory, or perhaps it was his need to escape his own melancholy that inspired him to decorate the many pages of *Voyage en orient* with bright fantasies' (*Ibid.*). Is Pamuk's longing for the city expressed in *hüzün* not about Ottoman Istanbul but the contemporary Istanbul that his social group – self-defined *Istanbullus* – mourns?

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