

Snow orhan pamuk essay

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



How does the snowflake in Chapter 29 explain the spiritual course that Ka's life takes?

In Chapter 41 Orhan explains to the reader that Ka decided that “ snowflakes have much more in common with people” (371) and that “ individual existences might look identical from afar, but to understand one's own eternally mysterious uniqueness one had only to plot the mysteries of one's own snowflake.” (378) Ka has only begun to do this in order to re-create his lost fortieth poem – believing that if he plots all the other poems from his new collection on the snowflake of his life, he will be reminded the final, missing snowflake, in a way this action reflects what Orhan is doing in the present of Chapters 29 and 41 – trying to find the poem by recreating Ka's last few hours and then his last few weeks of life, in order to discover the missing poem. However, snowflakes melt quickly too and his search in Chapter 41 is futile, and only traces remain of Ka the man and poet.

On the memory axis of the snowflake Ka might place his series of unsatisfactory love affairs and his sense of ostracism from the childhood Turkey he grew up in, which he escapes by moving to Germany. On the logic/Reason axis he might also put his political and anti-clerical beliefs – which are at odds with both the fundamentalism of Kars and the authoritarian nature of the national regime. For a poet the imagination axis is probably the most important and this is where the final missing poem, the one that will complete the snowflake, fits in. Is it also where his imagined love affair with Ipeck should be placed?

I feel that the imagery of the snowflake has a wider relevance than merely to Ka's life. On the one hand, it is a powerful symbol for humanity – our

individual uniqueness and our fleeting time on this earth – we melt quickly. In addition, in relation to this particular novel, the opposite ends of each axis represent the stark dichotomies which are present everywhere in the novel – Islam vs secularism, repression against the freedom of speech in Germany, west vs east, truth vs lies. This is a novel in which the population distrust the government so much that they no longer believe even the weather reports: such chilling polarities are also encompassed by the opposite ends of Ka's snowflake.

Work Cited

Amok, Orhan, Snow. London: Faber and Faber. Print.