

The Image of the Artist in Orhan Pamuk's *My Name is Red* and Irving Stone's *The Agony and Ecstasy*

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Abstract

This paper examines the influence of Renaissance themes and techniques in art on miniaturist painting in Istanbul and on shaping Michelangelo's attitude to sculptor and painting in Italy. The clash between Eastern and Western painting techniques is part of the conflict in Orhan Pamuk's *My Name is Red*. The novel is set in sixteenth-century Istanbul and the main characters are miniaturists who inherited the Persian style of painting. Istanbul people were very religious and the Muslim miniaturists felt unconfident and constantly tortured about their paintings. Artists were considered trying to imitate God and create their own perception of the world. The miniaturists of the novel are commissioned to adopt Venetian art with its emphasis on lifelike painting and individuality. Consequently they suffer of whether their creative work is considered blasphemous, or not. *My Name is Red* is juxtaposed to Irving Stone's biographical novel *The Agony and the Ecstasy*. The novel is set in approximately the same time that the events took place in *My Name is Red*. It concerns the life and work of the Renaissance Florentine painter and sculptor Michelangelo. The study examines the cultural atmosphere that determined Michelangelo's approach to art. It also addresses how religion has been the main source of inspiration for Michelangelo's themes, and consequently it was the medium through which he presented his own version of man. Both novels are examined according to the relation of Renaissance humanism to art and religion.

Keywords: miniaturist, painting, religion, Renaissance humanism, sculpture

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Introduction

The Renaissance was a period of unparalleled fulfillment in visual art. The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries marked the spread of bold and naturalistic themes in painting and sculpture that started in Italy and spread to Europe, and ultimately reached the Ottoman Empire. The Renaissance thinkers, referred to as humanists, mainly emphasized on human beings. Humanism's origin, in fourteenth century Italy, was initiated by some important scholars. The Italian poet Francesco Petrarch along with the Italian scholar Giovanni Pico della Mirandola resurrected manuscripts of the ancient civilizations. They revived the ideas of the Greeks and Romans in different aspects of life. Contrast to the totalitarianism of Medieval Catholicism, Renaissance Humanism affirmed human nobility, grace, and talent. Humanists encouraged artists to develop their skills and individuality, and to produce art that would be of good for the community. The classical conviction that was most significant to Renaissance philosophers and artists was the faith in the nobleness and capability of the individual. They believed that man's reason can lead him to truth; and that man should have an inquisitive mind and cultivate his intellectual capabilities and spirit.

The term "humanism" was not originated till 1808 by the German educator F. J. Niethammer as an interdisciplinary program that concerns language, literature, history, and moral philosophy, to distinguish this branch of knowledge from applied sciences. In the fifteenth century, however, "the term 'umanista,' or 'humanist,' was current, meaning a student of human affairs or human nature" (Babu, 2017, p. 108). Renaissance humanists were "teachers of literature and grammar" or "government bureaucrats" (p. 108). The humanists gave importance to art, sensations, morality, and beauty. They considered these elements as vital in the path to the Creator, rather than the biblical teachings of meekness, introspection, and humility that have predominated Europe in the former centuries. Humanists' teachings found a fertile ground in the artistic creation of Renaissance Italy.

Icon painting and Byzantium artistic style were dominant in Italy around the year 1300. The Virgin, Christ, and saints were presented in a symbolic, not a realistic manner according to the conventions of Byzantium painting. In the late thirteenth century, the Florentine painter Ciambue attempted to draw more naturalistic paintings. Yet Ciambue was surpassed by the fourteenth century Italian painter Giotto di Bondone. "Giotto's frescoes, in particular, displayed human emotions and attempted to place the human form within spaces that appeared three-dimensional" (Soergel, 2005, p. 361). By the fifteenth century new naturalistic styles in painting and sculpture continued to develop in Florence through the works of the sculptors Lorenzo Ghiberti and Donatello, and the painter Masaccio. The naturalistic style in art was influenced by the humanistic culture in Florence (Soergel, 2005).

Near the end of the fifteenth century, visual art in Italy reached its peak as the three great masters Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo Buonarroti, and Raphael Sanzio produced their masterpieces. "The works of these three masters helped to forge the conventions long associated with the art of the High Renaissance" (Soergel, 2005, p. 362). Leonardo da Vinci celebrated human figures and his art revealed man's individual personality and inner emotions. Michelangelo, and under the influence of the Medici circle and Neoplatonism, also strove to present a perfect human being through sculpture and painting. Contrary to Leonardo da Vinci's and Michelangelo's restless spirits, Raphael Sanzio's paintings were serene, balanced, and perfect.

The influence of Renaissance humanism on Ottoman painting has been addressed by Orhan Pamuk, a Turkish novelist. Pamuk grew up in a westernized district of Istanbul and this ultimately shaped his perception of the West and its influence on the East. "Pamuk is best to be portrayed as the Bosphorus straddling both European and Anatolian side" (Eriş, 2019, p. 138). He is the advocator of bringing together the perspectives of the East and the West and finding a midpoint. This is a major theme in Pamuk's *My Name is Red*, a novel about the essence and the creation of art and its development.

Analysis

My Name is Red is a historical novel celebrating Ottoman aesthetic tradition, influenced by Persian and Chinese arts. The novel also addresses the inevitable influence of Venetian art, and its ultimate clash with Islamic traditions. The latter stresses on small painting and repetitive patterns of the natural world and unrecognised human beings; and that the artist keeps his identity anonymous. Venetian art, however, depicts lifelike and three-dimensional representations of human figures and the natural world accompanied with the signature of the artist. The novel is set in late sixteenth-century Istanbul, and the main characters are miniaturists comprising of Olive, Stork, Butterfly, Elegant, their supervisor Enishte, and Master Osman. The miniaturists are commissioned to make the best illuminations in the workshop of Sultan Murat III. They draw scenes of the natural world and human beings in a very tiny scale, on the edges of pages and borders of books.

The beginning of Ottoman manuscript illustration is unknown. The traditions of Ottoman miniature art are available since the middle of the sixteenth-century, especially the books illustrated during the reign of Murad III. The Ottoman archives have no documents regarding the fifteenth-century schools of Bursa, Edirne, and Istanbul. Yet the oldest entry discloses the presence of a royal painting studio around 1525. "This document reveals an advanced organization, giving the names of masters and apprentices, their salaries and status within the hierarchy of the *nakkaşhane*, indicating that by this date the system was well established" (Atil, 1973, p. 103). The document suggests that the royal painting studio has been functioning for over

one generation as some of the miniaturists are listed as the sons of painters who had been employed in the studio. Consequently, the first painting studio has been established in Istanbul around the 1480s (Atil, 1973).

In *My Name is Red*, however, the miniaturists are secretly commissioned to follow the Venetian style of painting and draw a portrait for the Sultan “to celebrate Sultan’s Decree in the thousandth year of Islamic calendar” (Çetintaş, 2006, p. 53). Therefore, the miniaturists question the growing influence of Italian Renaissance painting on Persian and Islamic art and the traditions inherited from the great masters of the past, and whether western themes and techniques are against the teachings of Islam. This creates an ethical dilemma, especially if their secret project is discovered. Muslim society at the time of the novel believed that since Allah is the centre of the universe it is blasphemy to draw lifelike human figures at the centre of drawings, as if man were the centre of the universe. The miniature paintings, unlike Venetian paintings, “are not seen as things-in-themselves but they are treated as ‘footnotes’ even when the image seems to dominate the written word on the page. Image-making becomes an extension of the text, rather than an independent art” (Çiçekoglu, 2003, p. 1). This is contrary to Venetian art which inspires interpretation rather than a written text inspiring the painting (Sajjad, 2019).

This debate underlines Olive’s question to Enishte Effendi, “Might one be capable of making blasphemous art without being aware of it?” (Pamuk, 2002, p. 253). Olive further elaborates on this point, telling Enishte Effendi, “You know quite well why! Because they remembered Our Prophet’s warning that on Judgment Day, Allah will punish painters most severely” (p. 255). Enishte Effendi corrects him stating that not the painters are to be punished, but those who create idols. He further adds that this is mentioned in Bukhari, not in Qur’an. Yet Olive insists that painters are committing a great sin by presuming to be creators and thus competing with God:

Let it not be forgotten that in the Glorious Koran, ‘creator’ is one of the attributes of Allah. It is Allah who is creative, who brings that which is not into existence, who gives life to the lifeless. No one ought to compete with Him. The greatest of sins is committed by painters who presume to do what He does, who claim to be as creative as He. (p. 255)

Olive refers to Elegant Effendi, a miniaturist whom he killed and who thought that Enishte Effendi was tempted by Satan through adopting the Venetian science of perspective. According to Elegant Effendi, the science of perspective shifts the painting from the perspective of God to the perspective of human beings. Elegant Effendi noticed that Enishte Effendi had mixed the tradition of the great masters of the East with Venetian methods, depriving Persian and Islamic art of its specific character, and converting the miniaturists into imitators of western artists. Olive reminds Enishte Effendi of the Master of Isfahan, Sheikh Muhammad, who on a fit of troubled conscious searched through the libraries of sultans and kings, and tore out or spoiled every Manuscript he

had illuminated. Sheik Muhammad also burned down the library of Prince Ismail Mirza to destroy the books that he had illustrated. Enishte Effendi asks Olive if he thinks that they are committing blasphemy by imitating Venetian painting. Olive asserts that he is only addressing Elegant Effendi's point of view, and that that's not what he himself believes. Enishte mentions that the East and the West belong to God. He asserts that "nothing is pure" and that it gives him chills and brings tears of joy to his eyes that they have brought two styles together for the first time to create a masterpiece. Enishte Effendi completes Olive's story about the Sheik, telling him that Sheik Muhammad would later discover the futility of ruining his work as it was reproduced by two generations of young artists who imitated his illustrations of stories in books. Enishte concludes by giving an account of what it means to be a true artist: "A great painter does not content himself by affecting us with his masterpieces; ultimately, he succeeds in changing the landscape of our minds. Once a miniaturist's artistry enters our souls this way, it becomes the criterion for the beauty of our world" (Pamuk, 2002, pp. 257- 258).

Olive elaborates on the aspect of style and whether a distinguished miniaturist should have his own specific use of colours and individual voice. Olive refers to a masterpiece by Bihzad, the Persian master of miniaturist painting. Significantly, the illustration depicts a crime scene in the tragic romance of Husrev and Shirin by the Persian poet Nizami Ganjavi. The painting shows Husrev's son by a former wife stabbing his father in the chest. Husrev bleeds to death, while Shirin remains unaware and sleeping peacefully beside him. The meaning is that man is alone in death, and the world is indifferent to him. Olive concludes that Bihzad's style stands for his signature: "This is by Bihzad," the aging master said twenty years ago as we examined the book I held in my trembling hands. His face was illuminated not by the nearby candle, but by the pleasure of observation itself. 'This is so Bihzad that there's no need for a signature'" (Pamuk, 2002, p. 28). Yet Olive is simultaneously absorbed with the idea of painting associated with creation and blasphemy: "what was venerated as style was nothing more than an imperfection or flaw that revealed the guilty hand" (p. 28). He is unconfident and all the time tortured by recognizing that art is an act of creation to express an individual imagination and style. Therefore when Olive draws a horse, he becomes that horse: "The horse and I had seemingly become one and we were about to appear" (p. 439). This is because Olive's painting is about what his mind perceives, not what his eyes see. In this respect, the novel elaborates on the role of memory and the theme of blindness in creating genuine art. Olive mentions that "the miniaturist strives to depict the world 'Allah envisioned and desired,' and in the process goes blind to depict it from memory [...]. Hence the ultimate goal of the miniaturist is to paint from memory alone, from that which is known to the mind and not seen by the eye" (Kim, 2009, p. 62). Master Osman mentions that Olive's artistic genius is due to his complete lack of faith. He also describes Olive as a very proud artist who would sign his work, and have it plain and recognizable. This reveals that Olive's troubled conscious is basically related to the fear of public judgment rather than working on a blasphemous project. At the end of the novel, Olive shows the other miniaturists the secret portrait

that they were commissioned to paint parts of without seeing the final work. Enishte Effendi had chosen him to draw the lifelike image of the sultan. Yet Olive has drawn a portrait of himself at the centre of the painting instead of the sultan. He admits his desire to be at the centre of the universe and people bowing down to him as an artist, and consequently a creator deserved to be worshipped.

The importance of maintaining the techniques and traditions that have been inherited of the great masters of the past is what Stork thinks to be appropriate. He refers to the link between art and time in three stories that show both sultans and painters have gained immortality through miniature painting. He refers to Ibn Shakir, the most famous Arabic calligrapher, who witnessed the Mongol soldiers under Khan Hulagu ruining and throwing into the Tigris River all the manuscripts that he had transcribed and kept in the libraries of Baghdad. Ibn Shakir “ascended the minaret of the Caliph Mosque in the coolness of morning, and from the balcony where the muezzin called the faithful to prayer, witnessed all that would end a five-centuries-long tradition of scribal art” (Pamuk, 2002, p. 111). He determined never to write again, and yet he expressed his agony and the tragedy he had witnessed through painting what he had seen from the top of the minaret. Stork expresses his inclination towards preserving the miniaturists’ style of painting through this story. He further mentions that,

We owe the happy miracle of the three-hundred-year renaissance in Islamic illustration following the Mongol invasion to that element which distinguished it from the artistry of pagans and Christians; that is, to the truly agonizing depiction of the world from an elevated Godlike position attained by drawing none other than a horizon line. (p. 112)

Though books have been ruined and tossed into the river, the illustrations have already passed into other manuscripts to remain forever (Pamuk, 2002). Stork refers to the miniaturist Tall Mehmet, Muhammad Khorasani, who devoted his life to painting according to the traditions of the great masters. Ultimately he became a legend that surpassed time (Pamuk, 2002). However, Tall Mehmet, who had a very long life and never married, fell in love with a sixteen-year-old apprentice. The young apprentice, from Chinese and Croatian origins, had the same facial features that Tall Mehmet had depicted in his illustrations throughout his life: a round face, beautiful-slanted eyes, and a sharp chin. Tall Mehmet was obsessed with his love; he abandoned illustration and consequently died (Pamuk, 2002). The story reveals that Stork is against imitating the Venetian style in painting, believing that their peculiar style had immortalized them, abandoning it would ultimately end the legacy they have inherited from ancient Persian and Chinese art. Interestingly though, when Stork is asked to draw a horse, and believing it is a contest, Stork reflects that he would not win the prize if he draws the horse the way he personally wants to. Therefore he refers to a notebook, where he secretly made copies of masterpieces. Stork imitated the image of a magnificent horse which he could find in the notebook. Yet his notion about

painting is different from the public opinion: "My notebook is excellent, not for those who want to see the actual world in which they live through pictures and decoration, but for those who want to recall the fables of old" (Pamuk, 2002, p. 446). Stork further asserts that when he draws a horse, he doesn't become part of his painting (Pamuk, 2002). This probably shows that Stork is practical in his approach to life and art. Master Osman mentions that Stork is not concerned about having an individual style. He is not concerned either of signing his work or remaining anonymous. Master Osman also mentions that Stork gives attention to every detail in his paintings and accordingly his artistic approach bears resemblance to the Venetian masters, except that Stork is not concerned in depicting lifelike individual faces (Pamuk, 2002).

Butterfly scorns the "preoccupation with 'style' and 'signature'", assuring that it would lead to excess and crudity (Pamuk, 2002, p. 98). He asserts that the desire for style, signature, and individuality came to them by Chinese masters who were influenced by European pictures that Jesuit Priests brought with them from the West. According to Butterfly style implies imperfection and that a perfect painting does not require a signature. Butterfly reflects on what he considers to be good painting. He starts by mentioning that since he is the highest paid, he is the best miniaturist. His painting is about showing the bliss and rapture that pervades the world created by God. Butterfly considers painting as a means to please the public, 'festival', and full of 'ecstasy'. Master Osman expresses his wish that Butterfly would become the leader of the workshop after him: "Only Butterfly's sensitivity and faith in his own palette could resist the Venetian artistry that duped the viewer by trying to depict reality itself rather than its representation" (Pamuk, 2002, p. 417). When Butterfly is asked to paint a horse he thought to draw it in a manner that would please both the Sultan and Master Osman, and that it would be drawn according to the traditions of the great masters. Butterfly does not question tradition; he is satisfied by what he has already learned and mastered. He avoids troubles and is mainly concerned about being highly paid.

Master Osman shares Stork's opinion regarding painting from God's perspective, not man's perspective. He explains his point through recollecting the early memories of becoming a master miniaturist. He then met a handsome apprentice in the workshop. Through his feelings towards that young miniaturist, Master Osman realized the essence of art and Ottomans' style of painting: "I had the strong feeling that painting was not about melancholy and regret but about this desire I felt and that it was the talent of the master artist that first transformed this desire into a love of God and then into a love of the world as God saw it" (Pamuk, 2002, p. 508). Master Osman further refers to an illustration of the poet Abdullah Hatifi. He mentions that the face of the poet in the painting is similar to any other painted face, and that the real Abdullah Hatifi cannot be recognized from the painting. Yet "there's something in the manner of the composition, in Hatifi's pose, in the colors, the gilding and the stunning hand rendered by Master Bihzad that at once indicates the picture is of a poet" (Pamuk, 2002, p. 511). Master Osman further explains

that meaning comes before form in eastern painting style. At the end of the novel Master Osman blinds himself “after recognizing that his idealized style of portrayal ‘is coming to an end’ in the light of the new realistic style of painting” (Kim, 2009, p. 63). However, the influence of Renaissance artistic style which initiated in Italy and spread all over the European continent was inevitable.

Italy was the country that first embraced the artistic principles connected to the Renaissance. These principles incorporated “a new emphasis on naturalistic depiction, on human proportions and human scale in arts, and on the rational presentation of observed spaces” (Soergel, 2005, p. 363). Italy is the motherland of the Roman Empire, and hence Italy maintained the architecture and sculpture of ancient Rome. Italian fifteenth century artists carefully examined the works of Antiquity, and they consciously renewed their human-centered themes and balanced parts.

Michelangelo was one of the great masters of Renaissance Italy. He practised sculpture, painting, and architecture. He grew up in Florence where people were quarrying stones from mountains and shaping them to construct homes, churches, farms, government buildings, palaces, and forts. He felt that walking through the city was like walking through a gallery; where stone is the people's trade, subject of pride through craftsmanship, and source of living. According to Michelangelo “God was the first sculptor; He made the first figure: man. And when He wanted to give His laws, what material did He use? Stone. The Ten Commandments engraved on a stone tablet for Moses. What were the first tools that men carved for themselves? Stone” (Stone, 1961, *The Studio*, 8, para 4). Michelangelo refers to painters who use human perspective and try to convince the viewer that he is seeing the real world. Yet when the viewer moves around the painting he would discover that it is just an illusion, not a reality. Michelangelo claims that sculpture is superior to painting because “sculpture will come closer to true form, for when you work the marble the figure emerges on all four sides” (Stone, 1961, *The Studio*, 8, para 6). Michelangelo mentions that painting is short-lived in comparison to stone. Painting can be destroyed by fire, bad weather, and time. Stone, on the contrary, is eternal. Therefore, Greek and Roman sculpture has survived for thousands of years. According to him, the skill at which man can handle stones reflects the sophistication of his taste and cultural milieu.

Michelangelo entrance to Lorenzo de' Medici, the ruler of the Florentine Republic and the patron of the Renaissance in Italy, circle of family and friends refined his talents. Lorenzo was highly respected by artists and scholars “for his passion for knowledge; for the freedom of the mind, imprisoned more than a thousand years in dark dank dungeons, which Lorenzo de' Medici had pledged himself to liberate” (Stone, 1961, *The Sculpture Garden*, 2, para 28). Michelangelo was able to study the Medici's rich collection of ancient art work. He also joined the company of Florentine humanists and learned the principles of humanism.

Michelangelo's development as an artist took another turning point when he participated “in public dissections in his early teens, when he joined the court of Lorenzo de' Medici and was

exposed to its physician-philosopher members” (Eknayan, 2000, p. 119). By the age of 18; Michelangelo secretly began dissecting corpses at the hospital of Santo Spirito Monastery. In *Agony and Ecstasy*, He explains the importance of anatomy to his work as a sculptor: “How can I draw only from the outside? All we see is what pushes against the skin. If we could follow the inside of a body: the bone, muscle... To know a man we must know his *budelli e sangue*, guts and blood.” (Stone, 1961, *The Sculpture Garden*, 3, para 11). Michelangelo was always eager to create something new after being inspired by old works of art and stories from mythology and the Holy Bible. He tells Lorenzo de’ Medici that all art, and consequently new ideas presented through art, comes from inside the artist himself. “One thing he knew for certain: his first theme could not come from Athens or Cairo or Rome or even Florence. It had to come from him, something he knew and felt and understood. Otherwise he would be lost. A work of art was not like a work of scholarship; it was personal, subjective. It had to be born within” (Stone, 1961, *The Sculpture Garden*, 7, para 2). He regards that modelling his work to please those in power is “death to the sculptor” (Stone, 1961, *The Sculpture Garden*, 2, para 17).

Michelangelo’s sculpture is criticized by his brother Lionardo who is a monk at San Marco, a Medici monastery and church. Upon visiting his brother in the monastery, Michelangelo listens to Jerome Savonarola’s sermon. Savonarola is an Italian Dominican friar famous for destroying secular art. In his sermon he attacks the corruption of priests and rulers, and the exploitation of the poor. This is followed by other sermons attacking art. Lionardo tells Michelangelo that his sculpture is sacrilegious and he asks him to offer it to God by flinging it to the flames. He mentions that “all the obscene, godless art works within ... [Medici palace] will be destroyed” (Stone, 1961, *The Sculpture Garden*, 12, para 9). He asks Michelangelo to save his soul through abandoning his art. Michelangelo explains to his brother the significance of art to his soul: “If my soul is to be saved, it can only be through sculpture. That is my faith, and my discipline. You said that I live like an anchorite; it’s my work that keeps me that way. Then how can that work be bad? Wouldn’t God give me a choice, as long as we both serve Him equally?” (Stone, 1961, *The Sculpture Garden*, 12, para 9). Michelangelo argues that God created man in his own image; therefore man cannot be ‘vile’ as Savonarola describes him in his sermons. However, Michelangelo was a pious man and mainly inspired and troubled by a sense of man’s sinful nature. In *Agony and Ecstasy*, Michelangelo considers his efforts to recreate God’s world through stones as an act of love and worship.

This is contrary to Michelangelo’s experience with Father Nicola Bichiellini, Prior of the Order of Hermits of Santo Spirito. The Father led him to the rooms of the public library of the monastery. Michelangelo saw Florentines studying from large ancient books, monks copying from valuable manuscripts loaned to the monastery from other European countries, books of Greek and Roman philosophers, poets, dramatists, and historians. Father Bichiellini explained in a solemn manner his perspective of both the monastery and its library: “We are a school. We have

no censors here in Santo Spirito. There are no forbidden books. We insist that our students remain free to think, inquire, doubt. We do not fear that Catholicism will suffer from our liberality; our religion is strengthened as the minds of our students grow mature" (Stone, 1961, *The Flight*, 1, para 16). He further adds that they could only be respected if they were not afraid of learning. He emphasises that man's brain is God's splendid creation and that art is sacred, because it is the product of man's lofty dreams and desires. According to Father Bichiellini there is no sacrilegious art, only worthy and unworthy art. Fra Niccolo Bichiellini also allowed Michelangelo to access corpses awaiting burial in the church mortuary, where Michelangelo practiced dissection.

Significantly, most of fifteenth century artistic works were of religious themes. Therefore, artists were well acquainted with the Old and New Testaments and the stories of saints. In this regard, Michelangelo presented through his sculptures and paintings the holiest biblical figures and stories. He carved the statue of David between the years 1501 – 1504, and it turned out to be his masterpiece. David was carved out of one block of white marble and was "regarded as the pinnacle of sculptural prowess and an achievement of the highest technical virtuosity" (Kárpáti, 2019, p. 70). David had been a representation of the Republic of Florence in the light of the biblical account of the small David defeating Goliath, a philistine giant. "Florence, a small state, had flourished in an Italy dominated by Goliaths" (Soergel, 2005, p. 391). Michelangelo contemplates how to present David as he acknowledges that the Greeks had created perfect sculpture from white marble. Yet Michelangelo's art— "not satisfied with copying the nudes of antiquity—" (Eknoyan, 2000, p.1191) surpassed the classic masters through his study of anatomy. He further thought that David would not be "a sinful little creature living only for salvation in the next life" (Stone, 1961, *The Giant*, 7, para 10). He decided that David would be the embodiment of "Civic Identity" (Kamins, 2015, p. 15). His David would be the incarnation of all Lorenzo de' Medici had been aspiring for: a magnificent creation, manifesting grace, vigour, bravery, intelligence, and faith in humanity. The sculpture of David ultimately became the symbol of humanism.

Michelangelo's other essential work of art is his painting of the Sistine Chapel ceiling between the years 1508 – 1512. As he was thinking of a theme for the Sistine Ceiling, he realized that God is the greatest artist and nothing would suit the vault but God's creation of the universe and man. The story that the paintings "tell unfolds chronologically in the opposite order of their painting, from the altar end of the chapel toward its entrance, and falls into three groups of three panels each [...]. The first group presents the creation of the world, the second the story of Adam and Eve, and the third the legend of Noah" (Eknoyan, 2000, p. 1190). The most challenging task was how to draw God and Adam:

God as the most beautiful, powerful, intelligent and loving force in the universe. Since He had created man in His own image, He had the face and body of a man. The first human whom God created, Adam, has surely been fashioned in His likeness. By setting forth

Adam, the son, true creature of his Father: magnificent in body, noble in thought, tender in spirit, beautiful of face and limb, archetype of all that was the finest in heaven and on earth, there would be reflected God, the Father. (Stone, 1961, *The Pope*, 17, para 6)

Michelangelo's frescos presented the artist's notion of the idealised and heroic man. His sculpture and painting showed correct understanding of human form and this is due to his dissection of human corpses at the hospital of Santo Spirito Monastery. The frescos of the chapel have paintings of stories from the bible, and different kinds of people, prophets, and saints. However,

despite the profusion of the pictured characters, there is a curious aspect, which always occurs in an invariable manner: the palms. It doesn't really matter if the hand belongs to Adam, to the prophet Ezekiel, to Jesus Christ or to another personage, because each of them shows a palm that looks precisely like the hands of God. (Raudino, 2007, p. 5)

Raudino (2007) writes that Michelangelo was probably well acquainted with palmistry and he designed the palm lines of God, and consequently of all the human figures depicted in Sistine Chapel ceiling, similar to his own palm lines: the deep heart line indicates passion, the long head line and life line show intelligence and immortality respectively, and the large amount of Mercury means creativity (pp. 6-7). This shows that Michelangelo is identified with Olive; both perceive the artist as a Creator. It also coheres with Renaissance humanism which stresses on the dignity and value of man.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the period between the years 1300 and 1600 witnessed the emergence of new artistic concerns in both East and West, causing conflicts in artistic and cultural traditions. The main interest was celebrating human form, grace, and intelligence. This was sometimes subject to suspicion and resentment, especially in the East and to a lesser degree in the West, as honouring the human figure through art was considered blasphemous and idolatrous.

My Name is Red shows that good art is created through combing different and contrasting elements. The traditions of manuscript illustration during the Ottoman Empire were basically acquired from Persia, and became acceptable in the Ottoman society and culture. Yet the introduction of Venetian art created a conflict among Muslim miniaturists due to the nature of western art that celebrates lifelike paintings and the individuality of the artists. The miniaturists' fear of being blasphemous caused the death of Elegant Effendi. This also led Master Osman to reject and abhor Venetian style of painting. Yet according to Pamuk, Olive is the authentic artist among the miniaturists: He has a free spirit, tempted to explore the forbidden, and dares to defy traditions. He is the genuine artist, rendering intense and personal vision of the world.

Michelangelo also presented his personal vision of art, giving importance to human values and individuality. Michelangelo did not reject religion; he chose for his art religious themes to emphasise the merit and pride of man. He believed that since man is created in the image of God, his principles and worth are to be respected. Human figures in Michelangelo's work are expressions of divine grace and heavenly love. Also significant is that Michelangelo grew in an atmosphere of intellectual freedom, where science and art flourished rapidly, and he combined both in his creative work.

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