The Turkish writer, Orhan Pamuk, won the 2006 Nobel Prize in Literature for discovering “new symbols for the clash and interlacing of cultures” in his “quest for the melancholic soul of his native city,” Istanbul (Nobel Prize 2006). A vital part of the cultures that he represents in his novels and nonfiction are stray dogs. Strays not only represent and are part of the melancholic soul of Istanbul, they are often the companions of the characters who inhabit the city. Pamuk populates the pages of all eight of his novels with strays. They play important roles in his six contemporary novels—Silent House (2013), The Black Book (2006a), The New Life (1998b), Snow (2005), The Museum of Innocence (2009), and A Strangeness in My Mind: A Novel (2015)—whose time frames and location correspond with Pamuk’s own life (Pamuk was born in 1952, and has lived most of his life in Istanbul). Strays also appear in The White Castle (1998a) and especially in My Name Is Red (2001), Pamuk’s two Neo-Ottoman novels, or those he sets in sixteenth-century Ottoman Empire.\(^3\)
One of the 19 first-person narrators of *My Name Is Red* is a stray who speaks directly to the reader. What most particularly exercises this stray is the hostility he encounters from the “hajis [technically, a *haji* is someone who has made a *haji*, or religious pilgrimage, but this term also denotes a title], hojas [teachers], clerics, and preachers” who “persist in saying that dogs are impure” (Pamuk 2001, pp. 12 and 13). Pamuk’s dog is not ashamed of being “a four-legged beast” (Pamuk 2001, p. 13), and concludes by the end of his chapter that he and his fellow canines are not the enemy; rather, the “boneheaded” Islamic clerics who vilify dogs are themselves the “infidels” (Pamuk 2001, pp. 11 and 14). In a book that celebrates multiculturalism and hybridity, the dog becomes a spokesperson for a new and liberating way of looking at life, one that counters the narrow-minded fetishization of purity and singularity represented by the clerics—or orthodoxy in any form.

Like *The White Castle*, *My Name Is Red* is set in the late sixteenth century, when dogs were considered unclean, or *haram*. In present-day Turkey, stray dogs are still considered dirty and taboo—and a sign of backwardness (Fortuny 2014, p. 272). Hence, programs of westernization, begun in the nineteenth century, have entailed, among other things, the elimination of dogs from the streets of Istanbul. Pamuk addresses these efforts as well in nonfiction writing, his collection of essays *Other Colors* (2007) and his memoir *Istanbul* (2006b). In *Istanbul*, for example, he writes that: “the state and the school system have launched campaign after campaign to drive dogs from the streets, but still they roam free” (Pamuk 2006b, p. 44).

This essay connects the mongrelization of Pamuk’s writing, both fiction and nonfiction, and contemporary and Neo-Ottoman, to the presence of the dogs who roam free within its pages. Mongrelization is evident in the above examples from *My Name Is Red* and *Istanbul*; in the Neo-Ottoman novel it takes the form of resistance to the singular vision of the Ottoman clerics, and in the memoir it becomes a criticism of the uniform, republican ideals of Kemalism. But, in terms of the genre of the novel itself, mongrelization takes on an additional meaning. This essay will first go on to explore the mongrelization of fiction and identity within the context of Pamuk’s contemporary novels. The second part of this essay addresses the concept of the mongrel in Pamuk’s nonfiction writing. Pamuk ruminates on the real dogs who wander the streets of Istanbul as an outside observer, but he also wonders, in his essay “What I Know about Dogs” (2007, pp. 48–49) what it must be like to be a dog. This ontological quest
of experiencing another form of being is tied to an epistemological one: what do I know? As I show in the third part of this essay, Pamuk attempts to take on the dog’s point of view in the third chapter of *My Name Is Red*. The celebration of mongrelization becomes a form of politics. After I discuss this chapter, I conclude with the command that *Red’s* dog gives to the reader: we should learn to listen to those who speak.

**THE MONGRELIZATION OF FICTION AND IDENTITY**

Fiction is already a mongrel genre. One can haphazardly dip into any one of a number of texts from any era in history, any region in the world, to find evidence of mixing and matching, especially of cultures ranging from the elite to the popular. Mikhail Bakhtin famously characterizes the novel as heteroglossic; that is, it contains within it a diversity of speech types, languages, and voices (1981, pp. 262–263). As a genre, fiction is not pure or orthodox; by definition, it is not singular, nor does it always adhere to any one set of standards. To mongrelize technically means to crossbreed, “especially with one considered inferior,” leading to debasement or impurity (Mongrelize 2012). But in his oeuvre, Pamuk literalizes the word mongrelization by including mongrels as characters in all of his books. They are not just background. Though they are not named, they play a significant role: they become part of the network of relationships.

In his fiction, Pamuk deliberately includes a creature who, as James Serpell writes, has “never [been] properly assimilated or accepted” (Serpell 1995, p. 254)—much like the novel. The novel, as Bakhtin writes, has an “unofficial existence, outside ‘high’ literature … The novel gets on poorly with other genres” (1981, pp. 4–5). Both novels and strays are in a state of in-betweenness, instability, ever caught up in the “process of ‘becoming’” (Bakhtin 1981, p. 5). Along the canine scale, strays fall somewhere between the domestic and the wild. They are liminal, atavistic animals reminding us of their earliest roles as not-quite-domestically-incorporated creatures. They continue to exist on all continents—wherever there are people. In keeping with their outcast status, they are met with disgust nearly everywhere, especially in South America, Africa, and Asia (Budiansky 2002, pp. 24–25). Because, perhaps, they are less present in the Global North, they evoke less aversion. They are still, nonetheless, represented as fierce; movies like the Hungarian *White God* (Mundruczó 2014) make use of this stereotype. In the virtual world, they are associated with another source
of fear: disease. A cursory search for “stray dogs” on Google and in academic databases turns up tens of thousands of articles and reports on the way they function as vectors for disease in countries throughout the world. But Pamuk accepts and welcomes strays into his novelistic world; they are not extraneous, they are not diseased—they are a vital presence, as the following discussion will show.

In his second novel, *Silent House*, a family saga reminiscent of Faulkner’s oeuvre, dogs become a mirror of the young people who confront them. *Silent House* is set in a seaside village outside of Istanbul, just after the 1980 military coup in Turkey, and is narrated from the point of view of five characters, one of whom is a high school aged boy, Metin. In one key scene, while Metin is out on the water and cavorting with a group of friends, including Gulnur and Ceylan, his boat pulls up close to an island out of which springs a gray dog, and “then a black one and another gray one; they ran down to the shore and jumped on the rocks, barking right at us.” Gulnur shouts out, “‘The dogs are rabid!’” The emphasis here is on the dogs’ rabidness, though Pamuk makes it evident that the young people on the boat are provoking them: “Everybody in the boats was shouting, singing songs, to provoke the dogs, and the more they were provoked, the wilder they became, they yelped and howled and barked.” Pamuk suggests that the rabid behavior may originate from the youths themselves: “‘Crazy!’ said Ceylan, looking back at the dog that looked mesmerized as it flashed its sharp gleaming white teeth” (Pamuk 2013, pp. 90–91). Here, Pamuk resorts to a fearmongering representation of strays in Turkey as vicious and scary.

The second contemporary book under discussion here, *The Black Book*, falls into the genre of *cherchez la femme*. Set entirely in Istanbul, *The Black Book* features the lawyer, Galip, searching for his wife, Rüya, who has inexplicably disappeared. Along the way, Galip, in a plot typical of Pamuk’s novels, finds himself exchanging identities with a double, the newspaper columnist Celâl, who, like Rüya, has also gone missing. There are many references to barking or starving dogs, and several scenes of stray dogs, with one of the most important of these scenes functioning as a shimmering tableau and highlighting the motif of doubling. Galip is in the lobby of “Istanbul’s greatest ever den of iniquity” (2006a, p. 397). The owner of this den is holding a competition for paintings of city scenes. On one side of the lobby is a painting, and on the other, a mirror. In this scene, Galip describes the painting and its reflection in the mirror:
The gloomy, wretched stray dog in the painting looked just as gloomy in the reflection, but he also had an air of cunning; when you went back to the painting, you saw that this dog, too, had something cunning about him, and you could not help feeling a certain disquiet, for now the dog looked as if he were about to spring into action; crossing the room yet again to reexamine the dog’s reflection, you noticed other strange stirrings; by now your head would be spinning, but still you could hardly stop yourself from returning to the painting on the first wall. (Pamuk 2006a, pp. 398–399)

Rather than stressing ferocity, as he did in Silent House, Pamuk emphasizes wretchedness, cunning, doubling, and confusion—all of which are evident throughout the novel. Here the narrative moves from the third person to the second person, and so draws the reader, along with the protagonist Galip, into the dizzying hall of mirrors. Both in the painting and in the reflection “you”—that is, we readers—observe the “wretched stray dog”’s gloom and cunning. This act of shifting the perspective back and forth from the painting to the mirror seems to bring the dog to life: he looks “as if he were about to spring into action.” In turn, this canine vivification gives rise to “strange stirrings” within the human observer, suggestive of a cross-species mirroring that drives one into an obsessive quest for the source of the image: “you could hardly stop yourself from returning to the painting on the wall.” Strays perform many functions within the writing of Pamuk, including instilling in readers a search for origins—but a search that indicates that human and canine identities bounce back and forth so that both become mongrelized.

The Museum of Innocence is set in Istanbul, and it, too, features a representation of a dog—in this case, a porcelain figurine. The Museum of Innocence portrays a young, rich, successful businessman named Kemal who breaks off his engagement with one woman and becomes obsessed with another, Füsun, whom he meets in a women’s clothing shop. Over the passing of time in the novel, Kemal’s pursuit of Füsun parallels his collection of objects. (Hence the title of the novel; in fact, Pamuk has actually established a museum that he calls the Museum of Innocence.) As is true of Pamuk’s other novels, packs of dogs appear throughout The Museum of Innocence (for example, see pp. 210, 262, 357, and 380). These packs do not figure prominently; rather, the reader is presented with a series of china dogs that Kemal steals from Füsun’s family while he is visiting her and that he replaces with other dogs. Near the end of the novel, the two sets of dogs—the identical china dog replacements, and one stray
dog—merge together (Pamuk 2009, pp. 483–487; the following quotations from Museum fall on these pages). Like the ever-present china dogs, the stray who appears as Kemal and Füsun spend their last few minutes together is friendly and ordinary: “A dog with black ears approached us with care from the gas station, wagging its tail amicably. It was a dog of no distinction, an ordinary mutt. After sniffing me, and then Füsun, he rested his head on her lap.” This stray takes on the traditional position of a Shakespearean courtly lover; one is reminded, for example, of Hamlet, who, pretending to be mad, seeks to lay his head on Ophelia’s lap (“Lady, shall I lie . . . my head upon your lap? [Shakespeare 1974, p. 1163]). The stray is also unavoidable, and continues to hover close to Füsun, up to the tragic moment of the accident that kills her: “In the far distance, her friend the dog seemed to have recognized Füsun and was coming into the middle of the road to meet the car.” Both swerving, as if to avoid the dog, but also driving faster, as if to reach him, Füsun crashes the car into a plane tree. The accident is inextricably tied in with the dogs, both decorative and real, and with Kemal himself. The dogs and Kemal were both a companionable but also an inescapably oppressive part of her life. They were also, perhaps, a cause of her death, causing her, in her attempt to escape both, to drive faster, and to her demise.

**Mongrels in the Streets and in Memory**

For Pamuk, dogs do not just feature in his fiction; he represents them as an integral part of the life of Turkey itself. For example, in one of his notebooks about the writing of his novel Snow, later published in his collection of essays, Other Colors, Pamuk writes of his longing to “record the whole of Kars [a city in northeastern Turkey]—its mournful streets, its dogs, its teahouses, its barbershops” (Pamuk 2007, p. 278). The stray dogs are part of the whole of society. In his portrait of Istanbul, Pamuk includes, of course, the packs of dogs:

Then there are the packs of dogs, mentioned by every western traveler to pass through Istanbul during the nineteenth century, from Lamartine and Gérard de Nerval to Mark Twain; they continue to bring drama to the city’s streets. They all look alike, their coats all the same color for which one has a name—a color somewhere between gray and charcoal that is no color at all. They are the bane of the city council. When the army stages a coup, it is only a matter of time before a general mentions the dog menace; the state
and the school system have launched campaign after campaign to drive the dogs from the streets, but still they roam free. Fearsome as they are, united as they have been in their defiance of the state, I can’t help pitying these mad, lost creatures still clinging to their old turf. (Pamuk 2005, pp. 42–44)

Along with travelers before him, Pamuk does not consider his representation of Istanbul complete without the inclusion of other creatures besides the human, and like his fellow travelers, he takes pity on them (see Dubino 2014). At the same time, their very presence is a form of resistance to the state, which is unable to eliminate them. As of 2014, the dogs seem to have prevailed; it is estimated that there are 150,000 strays in Istanbul alone (Finnis 2014). To root them out is to tear out the heart of the city. Kim Fortuny notes that “Istanbul dogs, because they have maintained their historical place on the city streets, bear peculiar witness to such a notion of co-constitution” (2014, p. 287). Perhaps because of this history, the government of Turkey has, for its part, and for now, agreed to let the dogs—at least those who have been administered shots and whose ears have been tagged—stay.

But even more than addressing the symbol of strays as a symbol of defiance and their role in, indeed, mongrelizing the streets of Istanbul, Pamuk is especially interested in understanding what it must be like to be a dog as he writes in his essay, “What I Know about Dogs” (Pamuk 2007, pp. 48–49; all of the following quotations are from these pages). In this essay, the question of canine knowledge is connected to memory; in the course of trying to come to terms with what he knows about dogs, Pamuk, one might say, mongrelizes the process of remembering. At the beginning of the essay he moves from observing “a mud-colored dog, nothing out of the ordinary,” to “examin[ing] him carefully,” to then wondering, “What must it be like to be a dog?” He then goes on to list eight things he knows about dogs. What stands out here is his struggle to come up with anything at all, a struggle he embeds within his list, and a struggle that is tied in with what he knows, what he has learned, and what he remembers. He starts by describing a picture on a brochure of a “handsome, upright Kangal” who tells his viewer, in a caption, both ordinary facts—his size and color—and extraordinary feats, like his having followed a scent for 400 miles. As if prompted by this caption by a Kangal, a mastiff indigenous to Turkey, Pamuk shows himself to be immediately interested in the question of nationality and dog language: “Turkish dogs in comics … say hay! But dogs in foreign comic books say woof!” After this simple, if not simplistic, dead-end statement, he quickly admits defeat: “That was
as much as I could come up with about dogs. I tried, but I could think of nothing more.” He closes his eyes as if to try to come up with something else, and then, suddenly, he sets up a situation of himself in a car, possibly a taxi, along with his daughter, Rüya. When he opens his eyes, he sees a dog and asks the driver where he is from. The driver does not answer the question directly but instead replies, drawing from his own knowledge and memory, “In the winter they go hungry, they suffer, they tear one another apart.” The driver’s comment on the poor treatment of the dogs does not immediately provoke empathy on the part of Pamuk. Instead, he closes his eyes again and tries to remember what he knows about dogs. The memory of a dog he loved and who loved him—the dog “would so ecstatically wriggle on his back waiting for [him] to pet him that he’d wet himself”—comes to mind. But this happy memory is quickly followed by loss: Pamuk reports that an indeterminate “they” “poisoned him and he died.” We now see that Pamuk’s own memories of dogs—much like those of the taxi driver’s—continue to be inflected by melancholy, loss, injustice and discord. He then closes his eyes and notes a few more things he knows about dogs: it is easy to draw them, one of the dogs who lived in his friend’s neighborhood barked at the poor but let the rich pass by without making a sound, and the sound of a dog dragging a broken chain scares him. Following this list he opens his eyes, and concludes, “People actually remember very little”. He obliquely connects the failure of memory in general to his failure to generate any more information about dogs. The eighth and final point he makes on this list is a postscript of sorts, added to the re-publication of “What I Know about Dogs” in Other Colors: “Two years after I wrote this piece and published it in a magazine, I was attacked by a pack of dogs in Maçka Park. They bit me. I had to have five injections at the Rabies Hospital in Sultanahmet.” This final memory functions like a coda. Its placement at the end of his list is a hard fact that reminds us that dogs, especially strays, are not always the victims. Moreover, the presence of strays carries the risk of trans-species, zoonotic diseases like rabies. Living with free-ranging dogs is not without risks; the human–dog relationship is not necessarily a harmonious one.

**Politics, Religion, and Mongrelization**

 Fortunately, this attack did not put a stop to Pamuk, two years later, writing from the point of view of a dog, which he does most compellingly in My Name Is Red. This nameless canine character will emerge as one of the
most sardonic, in-your-face, and humorous of the nineteen voices in the novel. Some of the other narrators include a corpse, a murderer, a tree, a coin, the color red, but mostly a group of miniaturists working at the end of the sixteenth century who are caught up in court intrigue, rivalry, murder, and mystery.

At the beginning of his chapter, entitled “I Am a Dog” (Pamuk 2001, pp. 10–15), our canine storyteller addresses his readers as his “dear friends”; it seems as if his readers are already simpatico with him. Initially, Pamuk suggests, dogs expect that humans will listen sympathetically. But with the next part of this sentence, and in the paragraph to follow, Pamuk’s dog emphasizes his teeth, his canines—that which makes him a dog—and reminds us that humans and dogs are not preordained friends. The first human he refers to is a butcher who tells him he resembles a “wild boar.” Because the butcher does not recognize him as a dog, Pamuk’s dog sinks his teeth “right through his fatty flesh to the hardness of his thighbone”—thus leaving no doubt in the butcher’s—and the reader’s—mind that he is a dog indeed. In My Name Is Red, there is no mirroring here between dog and human; they are two separate beings. In the third paragraph, Pamuk’s dog explicitly separates himself from his human readers: “I’m a dog, and … you humans are less rational beasts than I.” He reverses the standard logic: it is humans who are less rational for their very practice of reading. They must suspend disbelief—enter into a state of irrationality—to enter the realm of fiction. In any event, if human readers can believe the previous two narrators of My Name Is Red, one of whom is a corpse, they should believe a dog. And so, Pamuk’s dog throws down the gauntlet: “Dogs do speak, but only to those who know how to listen” (see Landry in Cole et al. 2011, pp. 89–90).

What, then, does this dog have to say? He spends this chapter justifying his very existence—namely, his mongrelness. He reports on a typical sermon delivered by the Muslim cleric, Husret Hoja, from Erzurum. Husret Hoja represents a conservative Muslim attitude, one that originates from the founding days of Islam in the seventh century and continues to this day: dogs are taboo, haram. With his fatwa against keeping dogs (Dehghan 2015), issued in 2010, the Iranian Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi, a prominent hardline cleric, could be Husret Hoja’s present-day brother. According to Kim Fortuny, there may be social and historical factors that have led to Husret Hoja’s denunciations and the Ayatollah’s fatwa, including the struggle between the Muslim Arabs and the Zoroastrian Persians, who celebrated dogs (Fortuny, pp. 274–277).
The victory of the Arabs over the Persians led to colonization of the latter and possibly to the revilement of a creature who played an important role in their religion.

Pamuk’s dog is most critical of Husret Hoja for his fixation on purity. Indeed, Husret Hoja is “boneheaded” for being a single-minded fundamentalist and seeking to undo the diverse practices that have arisen in Islam since its founding days. Over the course of relaying and commenting on Husret Hoja’s venomous attacks, Pamuk’s dog envisions him becoming rabid, irrational, with “spittle flying from his mouth.” Husret Hoja is the one who, behaving rabidly, cannot contain his saliva. As the dog recounts Husret Hoja holding forth, he makes it clear what the imam’s true target is: the diverse and variegated realm that is celebrated through the course of the novel, or the coffeehouse, with its artists, writers, musicians, and thinkers. Husret Hoja calls the frequenters of coffeehouses the “true mongrels”—like the dog himself. Here, humans and dogs are counterparts of each other. Pamuk’s dog next defends himself in the logic of the Quran, referring to the eighteenth verse of the chapter, entitled “The Cave,” “which makes mention of a dog resting at the mouth of [a] cave where … seven youths have fallen asleep.” Dogs, too, have a place, in Islam.

The place of this dog, right now, is the coffeehouse. After fortifying himself on coffee, Pamuk’s dog, speaking in the language of the coffeehouse (using words like “fucked,” “shit”), offers a penultimate argument. He describes the Franks, or Europeans, as opposing the dogs who roam the streets of Istanbul, in contrast to their own cosseted, purebred pets, whom they keep on leashes. Thus, the boneheaded clerics who make enemies of strays are no different than their Frankish counterparts; that is, Husret Hoja and his ilk are also infidels. From this point, Pamuk’s dog moves on to remind us that humans and dogs inhabit a dog-eat-dog—or in this case, dog-eat-human—world. Infidels are executed; dogs are invited to take bites of those who are executed. Pamuk’s dog continues to remind readers of his dogginess; he is not just sinking his teeth into the flesh of another human, but rather eating him—namely, “that cleric from Erzurum,” though he is refined enough to prefer his meat cooked; he most decidedly does not like “raw meat.” In the end, the dog is a dog.
CONCLUSION

In conclusion, one can argue that Orhan Pamuk uses the dog as a mouthpiece to put forth his own argument on behalf of mongrelness. At the same time, Pamuk’s dog is one who also resists personification. Though he may speak, he speaks, as he tells us, through “long and pointed” canines, which will readily sink through the thighbone—like that of the butcher—of anyone who disagrees with him. His narrative provides other reminders of his dogginess—he may drink coffee, but in a bowl placed on the floor. His story, and the many appearances of dogs in My Name Is Red allude to the reality of the life of an Istanbul street dog. If there is a moment when Pamuk’s canine narrator romanticizes this life as one of freedom and community (in contrast to the purebreds “fettered [with chains around their necks] like the most miserable of slaves and dragged around in isolation”), he also refers to the hatred he encounters. That hatred is born of his very mongrelness.

In any event, it is this very mongrelness, especially embodied in the stray, that Pamuk upholds, celebrates, and hammers home throughout the course of My Name Is Red. Strays inhabit a domesticated world that is and is not quite domesticated; they defy categories. With all their in-betweenness, and with all their radical otherness, they deserve to be here; they are part of the universe of being. In Pamuk’s worlds, both fictional and otherwise, to listen to the dogs is to attend to them in all their animality—they bark, they bite, they roam. At the same time, in their proximity, they are our companions. Their very difference from humans reminds humans of difference, of beauty, of awe, even if our awareness is evanescent, as Pamuk writes in “What I Know about Dogs”: “I’d seen tens of thousands of dogs in this world, and when I’d seen them they’d struck me as beautiful. The world surprises us in the same way. It is here, there, right next to us. Then it fades away; everything turns to nothing” (2007, p. 49).

NOTES

1. The typical term for “stray dog” in Turkey is “street dog.” In this essay I will use “stray” to encompass both “street” and “free-ranging dogs.”
2. At least those translated into English. His first novel, Cevdet Bey and His Sons (1982), has yet to be translated into English.
3. The Ottoman Empire was founded in 1299 and lasted until 1923. With the end of Ottoman rule, Turkey abolished the religious caliphate form of gov-
ernment, in which the sultan was considered to be the leader of all Muslims. Though it became a secular republic, Turkey is 99.8 percent Muslim, mostly Sunni (Central Intelligence Agency 2015), though that number hides degrees of difference. According to the Pew Research Center (2012), 67 percent of Turkish Muslims say that religion is very important to them.

4. Efforts to modernize urban areas by “cleansing” the streets of stray dogs are not, of course, limited to Turkey. To cite two examples: in India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi wants to “modernize sanitation by 2019”; part of that modernization program involves “eliminat[ing]” street dogs and monkeys (Marcin 2015). In Romania, a controversial law was enacted to rid Bucharest of its stray dogs; “It seems the stray dogs of Bucharest have been holding back the Romanian capital’s attempts to reshape itself as a modern European metropolis” (O’Sullivan 2013; see also Zara 2013). Here one should keep in mind that rather than release unwanted dogs onto the streets, the United States euthanizes 1.2 million every year (Pet Statistics 2015).

5. Kemalism refers to the principles of westernization espoused and promulgated by the founder of the Turkish republic, Mustafa Kemal, known more widely as Kemal Atatürk (1881–1938).

6. At its most basic level, “heteroglossia” means different and multiple voices. Bakhtin writes, “Authorial speech, the speeches of narrators, inserted genres, the speech of characters are merely those fundamental compositional unities with whose help heteroglossia … can enter the novel; each of them permits a multiplicity of social voices and a wide variety of their links and interrelations” (1981, p. 263).

7. Currently there are at least 250 to 300 million stray dogs (Dell’Amore 2014).

8. White God critiques the stereotyping of dogs as murderous. It is noteworthy to compare the fear and hatred of stray dogs in the film to that of the mostly Muslim migrants who are currently passing through Hungary. Even as I am writing this essay, in September 2015, Hungary’s Prime Minister, Viktor Orban, wants to rid his country of migrants, who, he says, are “overrun[ning]” it. Orban wants to maintain the “Christian roots” of Hungary and all of Europe (Erlanger and Bilefsky 2015, p. A8).


10. The English translation in The Museum of Innocence is “china dog,” and I will refer to it as such from this point on. In American English, porcelain is commonly referred to as china.

11. See below, pp. 227–228.

12. The Quran itself is mostly silent on the subject of dogs; in the most prominent scene, located in Surah 18, verse 9–26 (Quran n.d.), they appear as
companions, as Pamuk’s dog emphasizes. Typically, however, religious conserva-
tives like Husret Hoja in *My Name Is Red* and Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi in con-
temporary-day Iran turn to the *Hadith*, a collection of sayings attributed to the Prophet Mohammed. These sayings are contradictory, but the primary basis for the association between dogs and impurity may lie in one of the hadiths related to physical contact, such as the following on saliva: “If a dog drinks from the vessel of one of you, let him wash it seven times” (Book of Purification 2010).

**References**


