



DOLAYLI BİR ÇEVİRİ OLARAK “THE SIEGE” İSMAİL KADARE’NİN İNGİLİZCESİ

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ENGLISHING OF ISMAIL KADARE’S “THE SIEGE” AS AN INDIRECT TRANSLATION

ÖZ Dolaylı çeviri, çeviri konusunda eski bir gelenektir ve günümüzde hala devam etmektedir. Arnavutluk’ta, Arnavutça’dan İngilizceye çeviri konusunda, Kadare’nin eserlerinin çoğunda dolaylı çeviri olgusuyla karşı karşıyayız, çünkü tercüme edildiler ve Fransızca’dan Arnavutça’dan ilk çevirileriyle İngilizceye çevrildiler.

Belge, “dolaylı çeviri” kavramını, bu tür çevirilerin arkasındaki sebep ve dezavantajları açıklamayı taahhüt eder ve çeviri tarihi boyunca mevcut olduğunu ve çevirilerin şu anki durumunda hala belirgin olduğunu gösterir. Dahası, Kadare’nin eserlerini İngilizceye çevirme olgusuna odaklanır ve dolaylı çevirinin açık bir örneği olarak “Kuşatma” eserinin çevirisinden örnekler verir ve gelecekte bu fenomene meydan okumak için bazı fikirler sunar.

Her ne kadar bu tür bir çeviri en iyi ve ideal seçenek olarak kabul edilmese de, çeviride yabancı edebiyatla ilgilidir ve yakından ilgilidir. Bununla birlikte, başarılı ve saygın dolaylı çevirilerin tarihi boyunca, daha az iyi hatırlanma eğiliminde olmalarına rağmen, başarısız ve yetersiz doğrudan çevirilerin tarihi boyunca geniş kanıtlar vardır.

Bu yazıda ima edilen genel fikir, Kadare’nin çalışmalarının doğrudan ya da dolaylı çeviriler olarak yapılmasına rağmen, halklar ve kültürleri arasındaki iletişimi kolaylaştırmasına rağmen, çeviri kaybını ikiye katlamaları, ancak bu gerçeğe rağmen alternatif seçenekler olarak kabul edilmeleri gerektiği, mükemmel seçenekler olarak kabul edilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dolaylı Çeviri (ITr), Çeviri Kaybı, İngilizce, Hedef Dil (TL), Kaynak Dil (SL), Arabulucu Dil (ML).

ABSTRACT Indirect translation is an old tradition in translation and still occurs nowadays. In Albania, as regards translation from Albanian into English, we are facing indirect translation phenomenon for most of Kadare’s works, since they have been translated and are being translated into English through their first translation from Albanian in French.

The paper undertakes to explain the notion of “indirect translation”, reasons and disadvantages behind this sort of translation and shows that it has been present throughout the history of translation and is still evident in the current situation of translations. Moreover it focuses on the phenomenon of Kadare’s translated works into English, providing examples from the translation of the work “The Siege”, as a clear example of indirect translation and provides some ideas to challenge this phenomenon in the future.

Although this sort of translation is not considered as the best and ideal option, it is present and is closely related with foreign literature in translation. There is, however, ample evidence throughout history of successful and highly esteemed indirect translations, as well as of failed and inadequate direct translations, even though they tend to be less well remembered.

The overall idea implied in this paper is that although translations of Kadare’s work either as direct or indirect translations facilitate communication between peoples and their cultures, they double the translation loss, but despite this fact they should be accepted as alternative options, but they should not be considered as perfect options.

Keywords: indirect translation (ITr), translation loss, englishing, target language TL, source language SL, mediating language ML.

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DEFINITION AND ALTERNATIVE TERMS

There are many alternative terms used for indirect or intermediate translation.

Indirect translation refers to translation into Language C based on a translation into Language B of a source text in Language A.¹ Simply put it is a type of translation that follows this route: A-B-C meaning translating a work first from language A into language B, and only then into language C (instead of directly from A to C). There are many alternative terms that are used to explain this kind of translation: relay translation (Dollerup, 2000) second hand translation (Toury, 1995), indirect, double translation (Edström 1991), secondary translation (Lindqvist, 2002), multiple translation (Gambier 1994), twice-removed, retranslation (Koskin & Paloposki, 2010). The translated texts are referred to as mediating texts or twice translated texts. As regards the term in Albanian, among other terms, the term coined by the well known Albanian writer and translator Mitrush Kuteli, deserves attention about its originality: “përkthim pas përkthimi. (translation following translation)”

REASONS BEHIND INDIRECT TRANSLATIONS OF KADARE’S WORKS

Hypothetically speaking, indirect translation might be expected to correlate considerable distant linguistic systems between the source and target cultures.

So if ITr is viewed in the light of language/translation hierarchies it can be assumed that the SL and the TL are small/dominated languages, whereas the ML is a dominant language. As we see this has been a common phenomenon associated for a very long time with the status of lingua franca at a certain period. For a long time the Latin language has enjoyed this fate and for a time the translation of Albanian literary works was made via Latin mediating language. This explains why the first translated work from Albanian into English has been based on the Latin version. In (western) Europe the lingua franca / mediating language de préférence was for a long time French, which has since increasingly been replaced by English during the twentieth century. There are sub-hierarchies as well; German, e.g., has played an important mediating role to and from the languages of eastern and northern Europe.

Furthermore, ITr may be used as a means to control the contents of the TT, e.g. for political or religious reasons. This aspect is likely to have played a role in the frequent use of Russian as a ML in the former Soviet Union (Eastern bloc), as Gambier points out (in connection with translation into Estonian in Soviet times): “Russian being thus, effectively, a relay language and the language of censorship.”²

The most obvious reason, however, is sheer lack of knowledge of the SL. This lack can be absolute when no translator knows the SL, or relative, when no available translator knows the SL. Nowadays English is the world's only lingua franca. It is the language spoken by the majority of the population either as mother-tongue or non mother tongue and poses better opportunities to find and train qualified translators to translate directly from Albanian into English. There are many Albanians that are English speakers but in order to be a literary translator you of course need other skills rather than linguistic skills.

¹ Landers E. Clifford, *Literary Translation: A Practical Guide*, 2001

² Gambier, Yves, “Working with Relay: An old story and a new challenge, L.P Gonzalez, *Speaking in Tongues, Language across Contexts and Users*, Unibersity of Valencia Press, pp 47-66



The fact that ITr prevails today in Kadare's translations from Albanian into English is due to the lack of qualified translators who could render a text from language A to C. Thus to engage an experienced translator from the dominating ML is more convenient and less risky than to try a less experienced translator from the SL.

Kadare has long been translated into German directly from Albanian, but for that there is a good reason: a German scholar virtually invented the discipline of Albanology, and there has long been a tradition of teaching Albanian in German universities. In Holland, too, Kadare is translated directly -- but then, Dutch authorities paid two experienced translators a good salary for two years simply to go and learn Albanian in order to do the job. Britain and America have neither those traditions, nor such support for translation. That is why Kadare is mostly translated indirectly in English.³

One of the translators that talks about the lack of competent literary translators who can translate from Albanian to English was Robert Elsie, who has translated a number of literary works from Albanian into English. He expressed that Albanian literature remains in a way blocked due to the lack of people who can translate literary texts directly from Albanian to English. Regarding Kadare's works, he thinks that Kadare has so many books that deserve to be translated, so it is needed a devoted professional translator working full time, as it appears to happen with the translators of French, German, Spanish and Dutch languages.⁴

As a poet and in particular as a prose writer, Kadare is the most published Albanian author. Of all the translations of Kadare only five of them, which means less than one-third, are directly translated from Albanian. Most of them have been translated into English by David Bellos-i, who used the French versions of Jusuf Vrioni as mediating texts. Bellos, the official translator of Kadare's works in English, was initially reluctant to translate "The Siege", because a double transmission of it can cause a lot of losses to the original novel, however he expresses that:

"...as I began to read more of Kadare in French I also realized that what was being put on my plate was a writer of the first importance, with an œuvre that was wide-ranging, coherent, intricately connected... and certainly worth bringing into English as well as could be done."

Kadare is one of the most appreciated authors in Albania, and so are his works. Thus the translation of his works, either direct or indirect, has had a great influence worldwide. The real need is that one day there will be more translators to translate his works directly to English.

Bellos, his English-language translator expresses:

"What I try to do in my twice-removed translations of Kadare from French is to respect the simplicity of the language, and at the same time to decorate it with those classical and Shakespearean associations that seem to me to hover over nearly all he writes. For Kadare is not, in any ordinary sense, a contemporary writer, that's to say a writer engaged with contemporary trends and fashions. He's a story-teller – a bard – a rhapsode, indeed, spinning yarns that are always slightly strange yet hauntingly familiar. One day, I hope, a literary translator with fluent Albanian will devote a lifetime to translating the entire œuvre over again. In the meantime, I am honored to be able to do my little bit to make this remarkable writer accessible to English speakers the world over."

³ Bellos David, The Englishing of Ismail Kadare, Notes of a retranslator

⁴ Elsie Robert, Bota Sot, Pristina, November, 3, 2009.

Ideally, indirect translations are not the best options since there are many disadvantages implied, but as the famous saying goes: “There are no perfect translations” and this sort of translation is not excluded. Although it is not a perfect type of translation, it can be justified only under certain circumstances and reasons. First, it helps remove the isolation barriers of different cultures especially minor-language cultures or peripheral cultures. Secondly in the circumstances of no qualified translators who could render a text from language A into language B and very often it’s pretty difficult to find qualified translators of rare languages.

Nowadays, English enjoys the privilege of being lingua franca of our era and as such it very frequently serves as an intermediate language. This explains why Murakami is translated first into English and then into other European languages. In Albanian, Murakami’s novel “Norwegian Wood” is translated by Etta Klosi in 2011, via English, which serves as the intermediate language in this case and then into Albanian. So the route is: Japanese-English-Albanian. The reason behind is that you can hardly find translators of Japanese into Albanian.

DISADVANTAGES AND PREJUDICE AGAINST INDIRECT TRANSLATIONS

Translation is a process that unwillingly causes different losses of a given source text. Not any type of text is easily rendered from one language to another, this is because at one step, no matter how good the quality of translation is, something can be changed or lost. However this is communication and people want to reach it at any cost. Without ignoring the fact of the great advantage of translation as a bridge of communications between cultures, it is widely accepted that translation causes losses to a text; it changes a text although it is also a necessity. In the case of indirect translations this loss rate is higher and they can double change the text, making it so different from the original text. Sometimes it is the cultural element that suffers the highest loss, since in these sorts of translations, the cultural element is not distinct and is either vague or lost. It is due to this loss that it is not considered a good choice by the readers.

This phenomenon is not only for Albania, but is prevalent in many Eastern European countries. In a study about indirect translations it is mentioned that: "All the examples of texts translated indirectly, come from literature in Eastern European languages: Albanian, Hungarian, Polish and Russian."⁵

The widespread negative attitude towards ITr is reflected e.g. in the following UNESCO recommendation:

[...] as a general rule, a translation should be made from the original work, recourse being had to retranslation [i.e. ITr] only where absolutely necessary⁶

Indirect translation leads to inferior results in comparison with direct translation. Negative prejudices towards ITr abound, also in the writing of (translation) scholars. Qvale, e.g., calls ITr as such “en meget uheldig prosedyre” [‘a very unfortunate procedure’]⁷ There is, however, ample evidence throughout history of successful and highly esteemed indirect translations, as well as of failed and inadequate direct translations, even though they tend to be less well remembered.

⁵ Complete Review, Volume IV, Issue 4 - November, 2003, The Baffling Phenomenon of the Translated and then Re-Translated Text An Eastern European problem?

⁶ “Recommendation on the Legal Protection of Translators and Translations and the Practical Means to improve the Status of Translators”

⁷ Ovale Qvale, Per, Frau Hieronymus til hypertext. Oversettelse i teori og praksis, Oslo:Ascheoug, (1998: 81),



Despite the disadvantages, it is worth mentioning that this sort of translation was a present phenomenon and is still a frequently occurring phenomenon. As a phenomenon, it has not been studied in-depth in the field of translation studies. This is not to say that the phenomenon in question has been completely ignored by academics. The situation is quite the reverse, and scholarly publications abound with passing references to indirect translation, as “it is almost impossible to examine literary exchange, especially historically, without coming across this phenomenon”.⁸ However, until very recently in-depth comprehensive studies with a specific focus on this issue have been sparse and it is only in recent years that indirect translation has received more attention and there have been many papers and monographs focussing on indirect literary transfer have been published may well serve as an indication of increased scholarly interest in this phenomenon.

We can mention a few examples: during the communist period many foreign non-Russian authors were translated via Russian into Albanian and this was linked to the ideological affinity we had with this country of the communist bloc. Nowadays Japanese, Chinese, Afghan authors are translated via English into Albanian.

Indirect translations of Kadare’s works into English, Most of the translation of Kadare’s works into English are rendered via French translations. There are many reasons behind and let’s try to explain this phenomenon.

Nowadays, it is a great honour for an author to be published in English-speaking countries since this allows for great recognition of the author and the author’s native culture. This is true especially if we consider that kind of scepticism that exists towards translated literature on the part of UK and USA. The figures provided by PEN International Organization in 2008 tell us a bitter truth about this: In UK the figure for foreign literature publication is 6% and literary translation 2% whereas in Germany 17 % of the published books were translations, in France 20% and Slovenia 40%. The reason behind these figures is that the reader is not interested in the translated literature because English is the dominating language. According to the publisher’s claim there are low selling rates for the literature translated into English, most of the translations are considered as bad translations; the marketing is really bad and they have limited critical interest.

Considering this “gloomy” atmosphere in publications of literary translations, we can say that the translated works of Kadare in English give an optimistic view of the acceptance of an author from Eastern Europe. The figure for the publication of translated fiction published in the USA, 2000-2006 from Albanian is 3% (0.5% yearly), from Croatian 6% (0.1% yearly), French 52%(8.7% yearly), German 36% (6% yearly)(Germany/Austria/Switzerland), Greek 8% (1.3% yearly), Italian 39 % (6.5% yearly).⁹ Considering the figures and also the size of the population and the spread of the respective languages, this figure is considerably high for the Albanian literature in translation.

The translations of Kadare into English are closely related to indirect translations because 1/3 of Kadare’s translated works in English are indirect translations. These indirect translations come via the French of Vroni and Tedi Papavrami. Many other English-language translators have translated a considerable number of Kadare’s novels, from French (Derek Coltman, Barbara Bray, Jon Rothschild, Emile Capouya, David Bellos)

⁸ Ringmar Martin 2007: ‘Roundabout Routes’ Some Remarks on Indirect Translations”

⁹ Source: Center for Book Culture, http://www.centerforbookculture.org/context/no19/translations_5.html

and there are a few direct translations from Albanian (Peter Constantine, John Hodgson). There is a limited number of translations made by Albanian translators (The General of the Dead Army, The Castle (translated by Pavli Qesku), A Chronicle in Stone (Arshi Pipa Albanian-American translator), An Autobiography of the People in Verse) and although they were considered as a huge contribution for the time they were offered, their quality is not well appreciated by the English-speaking publishers. According to one of the translators of Kadare, David Bellos,

“They are dreadful - accurate, no doubt, but in a language now completely out of date, and in a style so wooden it would float.”¹⁰

From the numerous number of the translators of Kadare’s works in English, we can see that the trend is different from the trend that Kadare’s translations have pursued in other languages because in French there are two translators: (Vrioni and now Papavrami), in Spanish (Ramón Sánchez Lizarralde), German (Joachim Röhm) and in Dutch (Roel Schuyt).

The fact that Kadare’s translation in English are mostly indirect translations and that he does not have a clear profile of translators, is related to the limited number of qualified translators that can render direct translations.

Indirect translation of the “Siege”, not the Indirect translations cannot be the best option ever, but since they are an alternative in those cases no other alternative exists, should be accepted and as one of his translators, David Bellos who has translated Kadare via the French of Vrioni puts it: “...translation is, on occasions, like politics, the art of the possible.”¹¹

There are cases of translation loss in the “Siege”; the translator didn’t provide any englishing for the Albanian passages in many cases. There seems to be no obvious reason for that, one reason being the neologisms coined by Kadare that do not exist in the Albanian dictionary: **shkretani** (a desolate place) and **breshkore** (turtle-like form) that might have posed a problem for the direct and indirect translators.

...askush nuk e dinte të vërtetën përse u ngrit ky gardh dhe çdo të ndodhte në *shkretaninë* midis tij..... (pg 186)

Disa herë i thurin në formën e shpinës së breshkës, prandaj dhe quhen *breshkore*. (pg 23)

The most difficult component to be translated is the style, the particular discourse of the writer. Can readers detect the Kadarean style in the indirect translation of Bellos?

Kadare’s literary works are easily distinguished and readers of any of his writings can take notice of them, even in the absence of the name of the author. The first indicators are his vocabulary and his style. In his works his favouritelinguistic and stylistic devices are easily distinguished due to the extent and the manner they are used.

Kadare uses a lot of resources, which in most cases are original. These unique ways of expression are often achieved by avoiding semantically overused lexical units and using units created by the author himself like **zgavrina** that has been rendered into English in different ways as shaft, passage, tunnel. These lexical units that are not part of the Albanian language dictionary, when translated in English do not create to the foreign readers the same effect as the Albanian versions do to Albanian readers. Such an example is the name:

¹⁰ Bellos, David, The Englishing of Kadare, Notes of a Retranslator, the Complete Review, Volume VI, issue 2 may 2005

¹¹ Bellos David, (2005), The Englishing of Ismail Kadare, Notes of a Retranslator, The Complete Review, Volume VI, issue 2 may 2005

zgavrin/ë-a, derived from the name “*zgavër*”, adding to it the diminutive suffix *-inë*; the same are the names *shkallinë*, *kishëz*, *furçëz*, *shkretaninë*, *flamurth*, etc. This diminutive element is lost completely in translation.

ST- Kështjella - The Siege by Kadare	TT- Indirect translation - David Bellos
Astrologu kaloi nëpër vendin ku zgavrina mernte një pjerrësi të papritur. (p. 142)	He came to the place where <i>the passage</i> dipped down steeply. (p. 160)
Nga degëzimi tjetër i zgavrinës , dikush po vite me vrap. (p. 145)	A sapper came running from the other branch of the tunnel . (p. 164)
Ai shpjegonte se në ç`thellësi duhet të kishte zgavrina në fillim të saj.....(p. 97)	He showed the depth to which <i>the shaft</i> had to be dug at the start.....(p. 108)

There are cases when the adverbs of manner that do not appear in dictionary as adverbs, but are formed with conversion from their respective adjectives. E.g.: **shkretueshëm** is derived from the adjective “*ishkretuar*”, and has the meaning “*në mënyrë të shkretë-in a lonely manner*”. The equivalence in translation “*lonely- affected with, characterized by, or causing a depressing feeling of being alone; lonesome, destitute of sympathetic or friendly companionship*” shows that here exist morphological differences between two equivalent elements, the Albania version being an adverb and the English version an adjective. The meaning of lonely doesn't cover all the shades of *shkretueshëm*.

ST- Kështjella - The Siege by Kadare	TT- Indirect translation - David Bellos
.....zhurma e thundrave të kalit dëgjohej gjithmonë e më shkretueshëm . (p. 190)the clip-clop of the horse`s hooves made a <i>lonely sound</i> . (p. 215)

Kadare is famous for the innovative use of the language and his newly-coined words in the form of compounds are commonly encountered in his work. It is difficult for the translator to find only one-word equivalent so usually different words typical of Kadare`s style are translated by paraphrasing them. E.g.: the word “*rrokarmë as a noun and `rrokarmës` as an adjective*” is a compound word not found in Albanian dictionary, but it is coined by Kadare. In English it is translated as “*the call to arms*”, “*sound of the alert*” or by using the Turkish borrowing *Silah-Bashna*. If we focus in some other typical formations of the author`s discourse, which have an innovative effect in Albanian language and are part of the unique style of Kadare, we notice that they are quite insignificant in English.

ST- Kështjella,- The Siege by Kadare	TT- Indirect translation - David Bellos
Vërtet dauille rrokarmëse , - tha Saruxhai. (p. 201)	“Yes”, Saruxha agreed. “That is the call to arms ”. (p. 227)
Lodra e rrokarmës binte pa pushim. (p. 202)	The great drum carried on the <i>sounding of the call to arms</i> without a pause. (p. 228)
Kështu që, me të dëgjuar rrokarmën , dola me vrap nga tenda. (p. 209)	So at the first <i>sound of the alert</i> I ran out of my tent. (p. 236)
Britmat “Hazëroll!”, “ Rrok-armë! ” dëgjoheshin nga të gjitha anët. (p. 205)	Cries of “Hazeroll!” and “ Silah-bashna! ” rang out all around. (p. 232)

Kadare has merits in the revival of dialectic words like the words: **zgafella**, **trandje** etc. that have been rendered respectively as **dungeons**, **uncertain sensation** which are quite vague compared with the effect they create in translation.

ST- Kështjella - The Siege by Kadare	TT- Indirect translation - David Bellos
Pa humbur kohë, ne zbritëm në zgafellat dhe burgjet e kështjellës.....(pp.117-118)	We lost no time and went down to check our dungeons and cellars(p. 131)
Ishte një trandje pa shkak të dukshëm....(p. 13)	There was no obvious cause for that uncertain sensation(p.14)

U Use of onomatopoeic words which is quite characteristic of the unique style of Kadare have lost the flavour of onomatopoeia by rendering the exact meaning without reproducing phonetically the sound that they imitate. Instead of giving the sound of **“ah” e “uh”**, it provides a version of **uttering loud screams** or loosing the lamenting sounds **“oi, oi”** completely.

ST Kështjella - The Siege by Kadare	TT - Indirect translation - David Bellos
- Fiu , - ia bëri kryeveqilharxhi, duke mos e fshehur habinë e tij. (p. 29)	The Quartmaster General gave a whistle of astonishment. (p 33)
Valltarët uleshin e ngriheshin mbi gjunjë, duke bërë “ah” e “uh” . (p. 55)	They would squat on their heels, then rise up with a fast-paced, obsessive swaying movement, uttering loud screams that made your blood run cold . (p 55)
Disa e shoqëronin të qarët me fjalë: orëzëzë ne, oi, oi . (p. 151)	Some added their own dirge: “Unhappy that we are!” (p. 171)

The setting of the siege in Kadare’s work is characterized by the use of the Turkish loan words that have been rendered into English either as pure borrowings or by expansion and giving explanatory notes as in the example of *gjylistan* which is translated as *a lower-garden- a gulistan*, and in some other cases they are translated in English. E.g. *U dëgjuan mijëra thirrje “Jyrysh!”*, “Jyrysh!”..... (pg 64) is translated in English *The cry “Charge! Charge!” rose up from a thousand throats*..... (pg 74). This provides the right semantic equivalent but fails to give the Turkish setting of the novel.

ST - Kështjella - The Siege by Kadare	TT – Indirect translation - David Bellos
Kronistit nuk i kujtohej që ndonjë paraardhës i tij ta kishte quajtur ndonjë ushtri “gjylistan” (p. 27)	The chronicle remembered that none of his colleagues had ever described an army as a flower garden- a gulistan(p. 30)

CONCLUSIONS

- There is ample evidence throughout history of successful and highly esteemed indirect translations, as well as of failed and inadequate direct translations, even though they tend to be less well remembered;
- For the time being indirect translations of Albanian authors into English contribute to communication, making Albanian literature well known and appreciated worldwide;



- Albanian readers can enjoy reading the authors from minor language areas or peripheral areas thanks to indirect translations;
- In indirect translations the loss rate is higher and they can double change the text, making it so different from the original text;
- The cultural element suffers the highest loss, since in these sorts of translations, the cultural element is not distinct and is either vague or lost. It is due to this loss that it is not considered a good choice by the readers;
- Indirect translations are a potential reality, although not an ideal reality. Nowadays in the era of globalization, when Albania is not isolated anymore and part of the population lives abroad in many countries, there will be more opportunities for reducing the number of indirect translations.

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