

Translator's preface and notes in the Turkish version of *Pale Fire*: Para-textual interventions of the translator justified?

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APA: Özbir, U. (2020). Translator's preface and notes in the Turkish version of *Pale Fire*: Para-textual interventions of the translator justified? *RumeliDE Dil ve Edebiyat Arařtırmaları Dergisi*, (18), 627-638. DOI: 10.29000/rumelide.706428

Abstract

Along with the emergence of the widely accepted approaches in Translation Studies that perceive the act of translating as a complex socio-cultural phenomenon rather than a mere text-level linguistic activity, the circumstances that surround the source as well as the target texts has become more visible and are therefore increasingly scrutinized in academic circles. As a result, any translation-oriented text analysis that does not take in to consideration such relevant circumstances that bring about the source text or its translation (such as commercial and ideological realities, purposes for or functions of both the original and the target texts, intended readerships, the backgrounds of both the author and the translator etc.), run the risk of failure. The role of the translator as the reader, interpreter of the source text and *writer* of the target text has a decisive importance. The translator, particularly while fulfilling his role as writer either remains relatively hidden or can become quite visible through the published text. As this issue with visibility may have a great influence on the perception of the readership on the translation, it has become of ever-increasing interest for academic researchers. The ways in which a translator becomes visible are various and particularly in literary translations, para-textual elements that *accompany* the main body of the text come to the forefront. This paper examines the Turkish translation of Vladimir Nabokov's famous novel *Pale Fire* via certain para-textual elements, namely translator's foreword and footnotes, in order to portrait the image of its translator and the possible impact of this crystallizing picture on the readers.

Keywords: Pale Fire, translator's visibility, para-textual elements, rewriting, translation criticism.

***Pale Fire* romanının Türkçe çevirisindeki çevirmen ön sözü ve notları: Çevirmenin yan-metinsel müdahaleleri ne ölçüde yerinde?**

Öz

Çeviriyi toplumsal ve kültürel bir olgu olarak kabul eden yaklaşımların ortaya çıkması ve benimsenmesiyle birlikte, gerek çevirinin çıkış noktası olan kaynak metni gerekse erek kültür için üretilen çeviri metnini kuşatan unsurlar görünür ve incelenir hale gelmiştir. Çeviriyi incelemeye yönelik yapılacak bir metin çözümlemesinde artık hem kaynak hem de erek metni ortaya çıkaran ortam, metnin kullanım amacı, hedef kitlesi, metin yazarının arka planı gibi etkenler göz önüne alınmaktadır. Bu noktada, kaynak metnin okuru, yorumlayıcısı ve erek metnin yazarı olarak çevirmenin rolü ve görünürlüğü de inceleme konuları arasında yerini almıştır. Yazın çevirisi eserlerinde çevirmenin görünürlüğünün özellikle metnin alınılmasında etkili olan yan metinsel öğeler ile gün yüzüne çıktığı söylenebilir. Bu bağlamda bu çalışmanın bütüncesini Vladimir

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Nabokov'un *Pale Fire* adlı eserinin çevirisinde yer alan yan metinsel öğeler oluşturmaktadır. Çalışmanın amacı, ana metni kuşatan yan metinsel unsurlar üzerinde çevirmenin varlığını irdelemek ve somutlaştırmaktır. Bu doğrultuda, ilk olarak kaynak metin, kaynak metin yazarı, çevirmen ve erek metin araştırma kapsamını oluşturan yan metinsel unsurlar ve çevirmen görünürlüğü çerçevesinde incelenmiştir. Ardından, çeviri ediminde yan metinsel öğelerin işlevi ele alınarak, çevirmenin varlığı ve bulunuşu, erek metinde yer alan çevirmen önsözü ve notları özelinde ve ilgili kuramsal yaklaşımlar çerçevesinde tartışılmıştır. Bu incelemenin, erek okurun çeviriyi algılamasında yönlendirici rol oynayan ve bu anlamda çeviri incelemesinde göz önünde bulundurulması gereken yan metinsel öğelere dikkat çekeceği, söz konusu öğeler aracılığıyla erek metinden süzülen çevirmen portresi ve bunun okur üzerinde yaratabileceği muhtemel etkileri ortaya koyabileceği düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Pale Fire, çevirmenin görünürlüğü, yan-metinsel öğeler, yeniden yazma, çeviri eleştirisi.

Introduction

Translator's visibility has been one of the popular topics of the current discussions in Translation Studies. It has been investigated from a wide range of angles by some prominent academics in the field and brought about refreshing ideas as to the dynamics of translational activities (Venuti: 1995, Lefevere: 1992, Hermans: 1996, Genette: 1997). Translators become always detectable in the texts they translated; in subtle as well as conspicuous ways. This is more observable particularly in the field of literary translation, where the translator needs to meet many complex linguistic and cross-cultural challenges, in the process of creating artistically-higher-level textual solutions. Intellectual debates revolving around translator's visibility (or indeed *invisibility*) open up opportunities also for literary translation criticism.

The theme of this article is to discuss the translator's visibility in the context of *Pale Fire*'s² Turkish translation. As a piece translation criticism, its focal point will be certain para-textual elements that appear in the translated version.

Vladimir Nabokov's monumental work *Pale Fire* is regarded as one of the great literary creations of the modern world literature. The deep-layered, multifaceted structure of the novel, which is widely regarded as one of the most challenging to decipher, seems to have forced also its Turkish translator to intervene in intriguing ways in order to mediate between the original text and its readers. While doing so, he becomes intensively manifest in certain para-textual elements, that is, his preface and extensive translator's notes.

The aim of this article is to examine these particular para-textual elements in the context of translator's visibility. To do so, firstly I will concentrate on the significant characteristics of the writer, his novel in question, its translator and the Turkish translation of *Pale Fire*. In this part, I will try to cover a terrain of information to the extent that would be relevant, thus limited to the main objective of the paper.

Thereupon my focus will shift onto the concept of para-text as well as functions of para-textual elements in translational operations, by paying closer attention on translator's prefaces and notes. I will then dwell on certain theoretical approaches in the field in order to interpret para-textual elements within the context of translator's visibility. Subsequently, I will analyse the corpus composed from the

² All *italics* are mine.

translation in the suggested theoretical framework. I will conclude the article by an evaluation based on the findings of the study.

Vladimir Nabokov and *Pale Fire*

The author of *Pale Fire*, Vladimir Nabokov, was born in St. Petersburg, Russia in 1899. He was raised in a wealthy, aristocratic family surrounded by prominent characters from political and artistic circles of the period. Due to this privileged environment and thanks to his extraordinary characteristic traits, from earlier ages on, he was able to learn various foreign languages; among others English, French and German. His Family had to flee from the country during the Bolshevik Revolution. He lived in Germany for some years with his family, then moved to England and studied French and Russian literatures at Trinity College in England. He also lived in Berlin and Paris. In 1940 Nabokov moved to USA, where he pursued a distinguished career as a novelist, poet, literary critic and literary translator. He also taught literature at famous American universities such as Cornell and Harvard. In 1961 he migrated to Switzerland, where he died in 1977. He wrote his literary work in both Russian and English.

Pale Fire, is one of his most widely acclaimed novels. The originally-in-English-written novel has brought about a considerable enthusiasm in literary circles, generated a great deal of interpretations and become a rich source of investigation for literary critics and academics since its publication in 1962. Although another novel, *Lolita* (published in 1955), brought him the worldwide literary fame, the majority of Nabokov's critics regard *Pale Fire* as his highest artistic achievement (2001: 3).

Pale Fire opens with a *Foreword*, followed by a 999-line poem called *Pale Fire – A Poem in Four Cantos*, then continuous with a lengthy *Commentary* on the poem, and comes to the end by an *Index*. Apart from the Poem, which is written (the reader is told) by the fictional writer and academic *John Shade*, we are also informed that, all other parts had been composed by the central character, Shade's self-appointed editor, namely *Charles Kinbote*.

Although teemed with ambiguities, the plot of *Pale Fire* could be summarized as follows: The poet Francis Shade is murdered, just after finishing his latest work, a poem called *Pale Fire*. His neighbour and (self-appointed) friend Charles Kinbote put his mind to publish the poem and convinces his widow to give him permission to do so. He then publishes the poem with his lengthy commentary. The *end product* (i.e. Nabokov's novel), also called *Pale Fire*, along with the poem, contains a foreword, commentary and an index.

Pale Fire presents an unusual structure in terms of diverse literary characteristics of its main parts. Although these components (i.e. the foreword, poem, commentary and index) all together constitute the wholeness of the novel, on a separate level, they also belong to distinct genres themselves and show certain features of the category to which they belong. This becomes outstandingly obvious for the 999-line poem, also titled *Pale Fire*: As also the Turkish translator Yavuz indicates, this particular piece of literature is often regarded as a great poem in its own right (2015: 12).

The novel, although somewhat controversial, is considered one of the precedents to Postmodernism (2001: 4); mainly due to its remarkable narrative formation. In parallel with common postmodernist traits, in *Pale Fire* as well, instabilities nurtured by the text force the reader to interrogate truth versus fabrication and blur borders that conventionally divide fiction from non-fiction. Due to this intriguing

characteristic, that obscures the lines between fiction and reality, the text has also strong meta-fictitious qualities (2001: 235)

Needless to say, the sophisticated main structure put together by prime fictional specimens from distinct genres and linked through some hard-to-penetrate connections, presents arduous enough challenges to any translator, who have eye on the prestigious novel. But the hardships that *Pale Fire* pose to a translator seem to go beyond that: The fact that the novel is full of open, hidden as well as ambiguous references, has the potential to make any translator think twice before getting down to the job. This highlights a key aspect of the novel, particularly for the translator: *Pale Fire's* *intertextual* quality.

***Pale Fire* in Turkish**

Pale Fire was translated into Turkish twice. The translator of the second version, titled *Solgun Ateş*, which is the focus of this study, is Yiğit Yavuz. He was born in 1970 in Ankara, has a BA in business administration and a master degree in radio, television and Cinema. While studying, he started working at the Turkish Radio and Television (TRT) as a video editor, and then took a position at the Prime Minister's Press Office. Yavuz currently works as a producer at TRT.³

Yiğit Yavuz's career as a translator started in 2003. Since then, along with working as a producer, he has translated mainly literary work as well as books relating to media & communication and history for various reputable publisher; among others, İletişim, İmge and İş Bankası publishing houses. He is a self-taught translator with no formal training in the field. He translated four books by Vladimir Nabokov, certain works of Jack London, Svetlana Boym, James L. Halley and Mary Shelly. His translation of *Pale Fire* was published by *İletişim Yayınları* (a reputable Turkish publisher) in 2013, in a series called *His Complete Works* (of Vladimir Nabokov).

As mentioned previously, Yuvuz's translation has not been the first one in Turkish language: In 1988, another well-known translator Fatih Güven and a poet Lale Müldür jointly translated a small part of the novel, called *Canto One*, which was published in an acclaimed Turkish literary translation journal, *Metis Çeviri*. Finally, Yaşar Günenç's full translation of the novel was published in 1994 (with the same title - *Solgun Ateş*- of Yavuz's translation), which became the first complete Turkish translation.

Yavuz's translation reflects the outline of the original text with two apparent differences: He added an introductory translator's preface (titled *On Pale Fire and This Translation*) in the beginning and a good number of translator's notes that appear at the bottom of the relevant pages throughout the book.

Theoretical framework

It seems useful to examine certain notions and theoretical aspects that surround the subject of this study before carrying out the proposed analysis. In the scope of the present study this involves particularly the concept of the translator's (in)visibility and rewriting.

A literary translation critic who is aware of the current academic discussions and progresses in the field, not only looks into text-level aspects of a given work, s/he also takes into consideration certain diverse elements that surround the source as well as the her/his translation. After the groundbreaking

³ <http://www.yigityavuz.com/index.php?link=23>. Accessed on 10.10.2018

transformation in the seventies called *Paradigm Shift*⁴, along with linguistic aspects of a text, also socio-cultural, economic and communicational dimensions of translational activity and the translated version gained great importance. In this context, the put-on role of the translators, as a mere copier, become debatable. The nature and extent of their involvement in translational activities were investigated in the light of these fresh ideas, and accordingly their image evolved from ordinary transcribers of original texts, into creative *rewriters*, who can have considerable influences within the target language and culture. That is also, where the Turkish translation of *Pale Fire* becomes a subject of investigation.

The term *rewriting*, in this context, was used for the first time by the pioneer academic Andre Lefevere; he was one of the masterminds of *Paradigm Shift* in Translation Studies. Lefevere, in his famous work *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*, suggests that there are concrete factors that systematically manage the reception, acceptance or rejection of literary texts (1992: 9). Lefevere puts the translators in his category of “Professionals within the literary system”, in which other power-exercising people, such as critics, reviewers etc. are present as well. Accordingly, also translators, as *rewriters*, can influence the ideology and poetics of the translated text. They always reorganize certain characteristics of the original text, thus have manipulative effects on the reader’s perception, and the footprints they left, make them visible. These marks of the translator are always present in the translation. They are often subtly hidden beneath the textual surface, at times though; they manifestly surface as in the para-textual operations of the translator.

These considerations regarding translational involvements of the translator also remind us of the need for investigating the translator’s visibility in the target text. When the term “visibility” is uttered, one name comes up almost instantly: L. Venuti. In his noted book “The Translator’s Invisibility”, he examines the prominent characteristics of English translations, which are offered for mainly British and US readers. Venuti suggests that “a translated text, whether prose or poetry, fiction or nonfiction, is judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers, and readers when it reads fluently...”, that is, as if “the translation is not in fact a translation, but the ‘original.’” (1995: 1) The translator, who under the constraints of the publishing industries (like Lefevere’s *rewriter*), is, so to say, forced to create this misconception of the original, that is *the illusion of transparency*, so that the translated text can come across as “natural”, i.e. “not translated” in the eye of its readers. As he highlights, “A fluent translation is immediately recognizable and intelligible... (supposedly) capable of giving the reader unobstructed ‘access to great thoughts,’ to what is present ‘in the original.’” (1995: 5)

Another prominent thinker, T. Hermans, draws attention to the translator’s visibility from different angle. According to him, regardless of the degree of her/his perceptibility, the translator is always existent in the translation, because his voice, as an intermediary from another cultural atmosphere, thus being the bearer of a foreign discourse, necessarily goes into a cross-cultural reaction with discourses of the source text; thus, in one way or another, this distinct voice is invariably present as a major component in the translation. The facades of this important constituent materialize sometimes merged with that of the original, at times though it can appear in isolation. In his noted article *The Translator’s Voice in Translated Narrative*, Hermans emphasizes the distinctness of the discourses: In a translation two divergent discourse come together; that of the author’s and the translators. These two voices do not necessarily overlap with each other at all times: The translated narrative always bears the traces of another colour which is the translator’s voice (Hermans, 1996: 27). According to Hermans, this is why

⁴ Many scholars point out the significance of *Paradigm Shift* and its enormous effects on translation research. See, among others, Holmes (1972) Holz-Mänttari (1984), Lefevere(1992) Vermeer (1996), Nord (1997), Reiss (2002), Toury (1995), Broeck (1985).

it is pointless to try to establish a one-to-one equivalence between the source and the target text. The discourse of the translator remains latent within the texture of the narrative, yet other times it emerges in more tangible and clear ways as is the case for para-textual employments of her/his prefaces and notes.

Translator's prefaces and notes as paratextual devices

Para-texts are significant components that also accompany translated texts. They can have considerable influences in the reader's perception, thus should not be overlooked when evaluating (or indeed criticizing) a translation.

G. Genette, a literary theorist, who also coined the very term "paratext" defines it as those features in a published work that accompany the text. These are prefaces, introductions, illustrations, dedications, opening information, forewords, and footnotes; also book covers, font types, formatting, typography and many other materials that are not created by the author. According to their location Genette categorizes paratextual elements into two main categories: "Peritexts" and "Epitexts" (1997: 5). Peritexts incorporate aspects inside of a publication, including cover pages for example (as mentioned above) introductions, footnotes, translators' prefaces etc. Epitext, on the other hand, stand for external elements such as diaries, interviews, reviews, correspondences and the like.

According to his categorization, prefaces and notes, due to their relative proximity to the actual text, are considered as peritextual elements. Regardless of the category they are in, para-textual tools modify the readers understanding of the work and ensures the consumption in the target publishing world. In translated texts especially translator's prefaces and notes contribute a great deal to echoing the voice of the translator. They so to say complete the wholeness of the translation in the target atmosphere. These elements, through which the competing voice of the translator becomes most audible, emerge also as invaluable sources where the readers as well as the critics could gain an insight as to how the facilitators of cross-cultural transfer approach their work.

Analysis of the translator's preface and notes

In order to analyse the preface and notes of the Turkish version of *Pale Fire*, it is important to understand the intertextual character of the original text. Because, Yavuz's translational strategy to use these para-textual features seems to base on the need to illuminate intertextual references in the first place.

Intertextual character of *Pale Fire*

The term *intertextuality*, coined by the famous academic and literary critic Julia Kristeva, broadly refers to the employment of a text or indeed certain elements of it within the body of another work. Writers often make use of it to transmit an additional layer of meaning by referring to a known character, place or concept from another work. Readers are influenced not only by the work they are currently reading but also by the works they have read previously. Characters, concepts, titles, phrases, even just a single word can evoke strata of meaning from the reader's previous literary experiences.

The most common use of intertextuality is found within literary fiction. In this context, it refers to situations in which a writer uses a direct reference to another written work by mentioning a literary element, such as title, scene, character, setting or plot. Another way of using it is to include a well-known story or aspect of it, for example a historical event, myth or legend.

Intertextual qualities can have various effects on the reader's mind. It can influence the reader's interpretation by enhancing or altering his/her perception of literary elements. It can also alter the reader's perception of the text by introducing new ideas and creating other viewpoints. Intertextuality can also drive the reader to reinterpret both the text s/he is reading and the subject of the reference, in the light of new insights brought about by the comparison and this process might lead to unexpected ideas.⁵ *Pale Fire*'s intricate superstructure (i.e. its main parts) along with its intense intertextual mechanisms surely made the novel a challenge also for its Turkish translator. Even only recreating various genres incorporated in the text must be a great obstacle to overcome for any translator. To make matters worse, they also have to wrestle with a textual net that is laden with countless overt and covert references to almost every direction of human knowledge (literature, philosophy, and art to name a few).

This enormous undertaking seems to have triggered the Turkish translator's strategy to use para-textual aids, predominantly translator's notes and preface, in order to make the *tough texture* more digestible by his target readership. On the other hand, though, these para-textual tools not only make the translator incredibly visible, they also bring about certain effects on the translated text that seem to influence the reader's perception. Whether the effects in question are beneficial for the outcome of the translator's effort is what I am going to investigate by analysing the devices in the Turkish version.

Translator's preface

The preface is divided into three parts. In the first section, Yavuz briefly touches upon the importance and the reception of *Pale Fire* among the critics and academics since its publication in 1962 and how initially negative perceptions have changed eventually. He then concentrates on the research he made regarding the ideas surrounding the novel before and in the process of translating it.

As a translator, he tries to elucidate the cultural and historical background as well as the rich intertextual elements and connections of the novel. He does so by consulting certain works of prominent Nabokov critics (such as Brian Boyd and Priscilla Meyer); he goes through also some reputable online forums⁶ whose main subject appears to solve enigmatic points of *Pale Fire*. He then informs the reader about the conclusion he reached by his research: That *Pale Fire* is regarded as the most complicated novel of Nabokov; thus, it cannot be read superficially. Quite on the contrary, its densely woven net of riddles hides mysterious pieces of a puzzle, which only welcome those, who are willing to make a laborious effort to construct them properly. Although this is the case, he continuous, even most *active readers* should bear in mind that "the riddles in question haven't been and probably will never be solved entirely ... (Because) like the universe itself, also *Pale Fire* is inexhaustible" (2015: 9, 10). Here Yavuz seems to share Nabokov's notion of reality: "You can get nearer and nearer ... to reality; but you can never get near enough because reality is an infinite succession of steps ... hence unattainable" (2001: 5). This is an intriguing point, as the shared idea (as will be looked into subsequently) seems to form Yavuz's attitude in terms of his understanding of translation in general.

⁵ Ungvarsky, Janine. *Intertextuality*. (Jan. 2016). In *Salem Press Encyclopædia online*. Retrieved from <http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?sid=2183531e-7292-434b-9950-9d133d98c279%40sessionmgr103&vid=1&hid=114&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmU%3d#db=ers&AN=109057053>. Accessed on 10.10.2018.

⁶ For instance <https://listserv.ucsb.edu/lsv/cgi-bin/wa?Ao=NABOKV-L> Accessed on 03.12.2019.

In the second half of the preface, Yavuz concentrates on the distinctive features of four central parts of the novel and explains their interconnectedness. His focus is mainly on the *poem* and *commentary* as these parts are closely connected to each other.

He explains the literary form (i.e. *heroic couplet*) in which the poem is written, the challenges this structure presents, the choices he had to make while translating the poem. He also refers to intertextual characteristic of the novel; wide range of references he had to follow and decipher. He then dwells on the much-discussed topic of authorship in the context of the main characters (i.e. *Shade* and *Kinbote*). According to Yavuz, as all academic hypotheses regarding the authorial discussions have their solid bases on the complex structure of the novel and are of convincing nature (2015: 11-12).

Yavuz, in the last part, indicates that he was able to translate *Pale Fire*, thanks to the intellectual and academic discussions that have been carried out since the first publication of the novel, for more than half a century now. "This also explains," he continues, "why the novel could not be translated properly into Turkish; (because) it is impossible to translate the book without deciphering the references and codes of the text" (2015: 12-13). Needless to say, these comments also suggest that the translator regards his version *as it should be*, as he fulfils the requirements, he himself stipulates for a translation duly done.

Yavuz's preface is a revealing statement of a translator who tries to go about his task in a conscious manner. He believes in the importance of making research regarding the writer, source text, its cultural context, literary criticism on the work. Such investigations would contribute to the comprehension of the text, thus producing a more rewarding translational product. He is, to a certain extent, aware of the recent developments in Translation Studies and knows that an able translator cannot rely on a translational approach that focuses on merely linguistic level features of the source text. This reminds us also of his criticism on the previous translational attempts (2015: 13) of *Pale Fire* in Turkish, which, he implies, failed, because of their disregard for the facts that surround the creation of the original and regards his version as appropriate as he did the necessary research into the circumstances in question.

On the other hand, though, he insinuates a nowadays-dated presumption that the translation is doomed to remain a *copy of the original*, regardless of the competence and knowledge of its translator. According to this (academically almost out-dated) approach, the author of the original text has a nearly sacred position, s/he is the creator of meaning, over which s/he has an absolute control. This belief (and reasoning that is based on it) entitles the author to become the sole owner of the original, who enjoys all sorts of privileges of her/his presumed possession. The translator, on the other hand, is reduced to a minor *copier*, whose labour is limited to *discovering* a literary piece of fixed meaning, which the author is assumed to have established, and then *import* it so to say, into another literary planet. As a translator, also Yavuz falls into this trap and undermines his own translation by certain remarks he makes in the preface. For example, when explaining the particular literary form of the original poem ("heroic couplet"), in which the poem is written, he informs the reader, that "it was impossible to *preserve* the form as it is in Turkish. "Even though this was the case," he maintains, he had decided to keep a certain rhyme-structure, "so that, while *conserving the meaning*, I hope, at least, I was able to *reflect the shade of the (original) form*" (2015: 11).

In this point, it could prove useful to go back to Venuti again. Even though what Venuti scrutinizes is exclusively English translations in Anglo-American culture, some of his conclusions seem to be applicable to the literary translational practices of different languages and cultures too. This also applies

to Yavuz's Turkish translation. In *Pale Fire's* Turkish version, despite the challenges brought about by complex stylistic and semantic features by the novel, the translator attempts to create a fluent, readable text as well. Yet, at the same time, he firmly believes that "it is impossible to translate the original as is" and any translator who dares do so would inevitably end up producing "just a pale reflection" (2015: 13). Therefore, Yavuz tries to produce his version of the "pale reflection", as close as it could get, to its source text. This becomes particularly complicated in two points. Although he would wishes to do so, stylistically he cannot reproduce the poetic structure of the original poem; and on the semantic level, he is not able to render the intertextual references in their entirety, in the body of the main translation. To overcome the first difficulty (as he indicates in the preface), he considerably reduces the stylistic features of the poem to a much simpler rhyme scheme, in order to give at least a taste of the original and *preserve* the semantic content. His underlying belief in the superiority of the original though, inevitably reduces the translated version to an *inferior replica*, thus affects the reader's perception in terms of the value of the translation. In this respect, the way he ends his preface is an excellent example that does not seem to need any further elaboration: "On the other hand" agrees Yavuz, quoting from a critic, "*Pale Fire* is just a metaphor whose originality could only be reflected on a translation in a pale fashion" (2015: 13).

While some of Yavuz's statements in the preface function as useful aids to shed light on certain aspects of the novel and give insight into his translational decisions, it is quite evident that the ways in which the Turkish translator becomes visible here has an adverse effect on the credibility of his work. That means the preface glorifies the original text at the expense of its translation. The reader is conditioned to see the translation just as an inferior copy, not a freestanding piece of literary creation.

The translator's notes

As indicated previously, one of the conspicuous aspects of Yavuz's translation is its para-textual use of the translator's notes. The book has 190 translator's notes of various length. One could categorize these notes into a couple of pigeonholes. Some of the notes, for instance, seem to have a clear purpose to define particular terms and give simple translations of foreign words and phrases (originally used French or Russian, for example), all of which the translator obviously regards as unfamiliar for the Turkish reader. The first and 56th notes⁷ of the *Commentary* are good examples of that usage. In the first note, Yavuz gives a brief definition of the term *Eschatology*, and then, in the other, he provides the Turkish Translation of a French adjective clause. This group of notes emerge all over the book, and due to their lucid content, could be regarded as means that are in line with the translator's strategy to clarify possibly obscure points for the reader.

On the other hand, there are other groups of notes, which do not seem to ensure the presumed benefits of such a para-textual employment. In fact, it could even be argued that the notes in question function against the very notion of their existence; because while attempting to clarify misty points of the source text, they seem to make them even more unintelligible and/or confusing for the reader. One of the subgroup of this category consist of the notes that contain untranslated English quotes or phrases. Note 17⁸ is one of them. Here the translator identifies a reference to the English translation of a poem written by Goethe and quotes directly in English the relevant two lines of the poem. Another suitable example is the note 106, where there is also a direct English quote from the original text of *Pale Fire*. The translator to refer a certain rhyme scheme uses this quote. Yavuz here⁹ refers to a difficulty he

⁷ See pages 75 and 124 respectively.

⁸ See page 60.

⁹ See page 182.

encountered and tries to justify the solution he found for his translation by placing the original construction next to it. In an extreme example, Yavuz even quotes a sonnet of W. Shakespeare full in English¹⁰ in his Turkish translation.

Throughout the book, there are many more examples of such questionable choices in Yavuz's notes. The question is: Do they work for the reader at all? To answer this, one needs to dwell on various functions of translator's notes.

Translator's notes are written for the reader of the translated version in order to clarify certain points that would not be easily visible for them, and accordingly can be considered as *intra-linguistic* translations (2012: 38). The problem here is that the target reader of the Turkish translation and that of the notes in English cannot be the same, because one cannot possibly assume that the most readers of the Turkish version understand English. Yavuz's readers then find themselves in a curious situation, where they are invited to have a glimpse of something, which they need to understand in order to better appreciate the text they are reading; yet, they return empty handed and confused, as the promised information is held back from them. Why then does this seemingly contradictory situation come about? What would be the purpose of the translator? Due to those particular notes, Yavuz perhaps does not address his target reader, but those who have proficiency in both Turkish and English. If this were the case, it would not be farfetched to assume that Yavuz, in fact, designed the notes in question not for the ordinary readers of the novel, but for the translation critics, in order to prove the soundness of his research on the novel and also justify some of his translational choices. In any case, this category of explanations does not seem to function as they are intended to do, thus would not be fit for purpose for the target readership.

Apart from the categories mentioned above, there are also some notes, in which the translator's explanations are unclear, and even at times, simply wrong. For instance, at the end of the note 19, Yavuz suggests that word *Shade* would not be used as surname in English. This is simply not correct; although rarely used, it does exist as surname in English¹¹. In note 167, for example, the translator quotes two lines (some parts underlined by the translator) from the source text in English and suggests that "In order to be able to understand what is going on here (i.e. in the translated version), one needs to see the original lines; (because) the underlined parts are pronounced exactly the same".¹² What is the reader supposed to understand here exactly? "What is going on" there really, as he puts it, would be quite puzzling, for even those, who could understand also the English part of the note. These types of translator's notes are also common in Turkish version and one could dare say that they do not make the reader's job any easier at all.

As we have witnessed, Yavuz tries to deal with the semantic load of references in *Pale Fire*, predominantly by specific translator notes. Some of them seem to be fit for purpose, thus could be regarded as useful aids; some others, on the other hand, have the potential of creating even adverse effects. Regardless of the categories they belong to though, these 190 notes in a 286-page-long book seem to cause another major setback: They inevitably come up constantly, in other words, the density of the notes is quite disproportionate¹³. Further, some of the notes are lengthy and contain very detailed

¹⁰ See note 149 in page 224.

¹¹ See www.surnamedb.com/Surname/shade

¹² See page 244.

¹³ Some pages have up to eight translator's notes; for instance page 269.

information¹⁴. Considering the fact that reading process would be paused by each of them constantly, one could suggest that the reader's reception would be disturbed a great deal.

Conclusion

There have been considerable developments in Translation Studies for the last fifty years. This has inevitably changed the ways in which literary translation criticism is seen traditionally. Today's literary translation criticism, with its progressive approaches to the prominent notions of the area such as text, meaning, translation, translator etc., has also evolved into a new dimension. In this new approach, along with historical, socio-economic, cultural facts that surround and take part in forming translational acts, also certain elements that influence the readers' perception of a *product*, that is the very published book, that envelops the translation in question. As this product with its accompanying paratextual aspects may have a considerable effect how the translation is perceived, it seems unavoidable for a critic to ignore them.

The Translator of *Pale Fire*, in his Turkish version, becomes expressly *visible* due to his translator's preface and extensive utilization of translator's notes. He seems to use these tools predominantly to penetrate deeper strata of the text in order to shed light on the intertextual connections of the novel. In the process of making the textual fabric more transparent, he comes into sight himself. As criticized earlier on however, the way he materializes in the text has also considerable downsides. On a deeper level, moreover, his disbelief in translation as a piece of creation that could compete with the original seems to force him to try to forge, not a self-reliant piece of translational art, but a copy that could not possibly attain the greater heights of the original. Yavuz attempts then to do his best to produce a text that could at best be capable of *resembling* the original. By doing so, he reduces his text to a *second-class reproduction*, thus undermines the reader's reception of translation's credibility as a first rate creative activity.

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¹⁴ Page 114, number 47 is one of the typical examples of such a use.

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