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# Jason Goodwin's 'Possible Worlds' Unveiled in Translation (Studies)

Merve AVŞAROĞLU* and Ayşe Banu KARADAĞ**

The books with a specific cultural theme written in a foreign language stand out as a remarkable type of texts in terms of Translation Studies. In such books, description of a native culture in a foreign language reflects features similar to a translation, and it is called 'foreign language creation,' the product of a translation process ongoing in the writer's mind. While these books seem to be the translation of a native culture into a foreign language, their translation back into the native language represents a 'back translation' in cultural sense without a physically existing ultimate source text, in other words 'textless back translation.' Within this context, the present study deals with English author Jason Goodwin's Ottoman-themed books titled *Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire* ([1998] 2000), *The Janissary Tree* (2006a), and *The Snake Stone* ([2007] 2008) as 'foreign language creations' and their Turkish translations as 'textless back translations.' Drawing on the portrayal of the Ottoman available in many passages, Goodwin's texts are approached from the perspective of 'orientalism' and the distinction between 'history' and 'fiction' in the first place. While these focal points offer a better understanding and interpreting of the 'orientalist' marks and the 'possible worlds' in the texts, an analysis of the translation methods used by the writer in his 'foreign language creations' and by the translators in their 'textless back translations' provides useful insight into the reasons and the effects of certain translation decisions.
Keywords: foreign language creation; back translation; textless back translation; orientalism; possible worlds; history; fiction; Jason Goodwin

## 1. Introduction

The books in which a specific native culture is narrated in a foreign culture reflect certain features that constitute an interesting groundwork for Translation Studies, since the translation of such books into the related native language represents a peculiar translation process different from the conventional types. The reason is that such books represent a distinct way of writing called 'foreign language creation' (Tu and Li 2017), which is considered as some sort of translation in the writer's mind of a particular culture. Likewise, the translation of

* Dr., Ministry of National Education, Turkey.
E-mail: merveavsaroglu@gmail.com; ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6597-9091.
** Professor at Yıldız Technical University, Istanbul.
E-mail: aysebanukaradag@gmail.com; ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0974-8053.
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these books into the language of that particular culture represents a special sort of 'back translation,' from a foreign language into the native language, which is called 'textless back translation' (ibid.).

Within the scope of Translation Studies, although it is produced by the writer and offered to the reader as an original text, the features of a 'foreign language creation' suggest that the text is rather a translated text than a source text. Similarly, the translation of 'foreign language creation' into the related native language seems to be a 'back translation' into the 'real' source. In this sense, 'foreign language creation' and 'textless back translation' are two important concepts that blur the boundaries between the source language and target language or the source text and target text.

Jason Goodwin's three books titled *Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire* ([1998] 2000), *The Janissary Tree* (2006a), and *The Snake Stone* ([2007] 2008) reflect the features of a 'foreign language creation' in that they describe the Ottoman culture in English. By the same token, their Turkish translations necessitate a close examining in terms of 'back translation' from a cultural point of view in general and 'textless back translation' in particular.

Goodwin's aforementioned Ottoman-themed books are abundant in passages that describe the historical periods of certain Ottoman rulers, Ottoman palaces, Ottoman harem and women, social life in the Ottoman Empire, and many other things peculiar to the Ottoman. Among those, especially the passages on harem and women draw attention in terms of the Ottoman in the eye of the foreigners. In the books, while some depictions belong to certain characters of Western origin, some others are accounts of the writer himself. It is interesting to notice that while the accounts of the Western characters position the Ottoman as 'the Other' in an exotic world, the writer's accounts as the narrator or the protagonist's thoughts often draw attention to this tendency directly. In this sense, it is indeed indispensable to give some thought to Edward Said's ([1978] 1979) conception of 'orientalism' to better understand and interpret different forms of the portrayal of the Ottoman in the books as 'foreign language creations.' Moreover, the clear difference in the depictions of the Ottoman in the book *Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire* ([1998] 2000) and the books from the same series, *The Janissary Tree* (2006a) and *The Snake Stone* ([2007] 2008), requires dealing with the books in terms of 'history' and 'fiction,' separated by 'truth valuation.' In this respect, it is also useful to approach Goodwin's books through Lubomír Doležel's (1998) views of "possible worlds of fiction and history." Therefore, the present study also intends to understand the 'foreign

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language creations' by Goodwin and their 'textless back translations' into Turkish through the focal points of 'orientalism' and 'possible worlds of fiction and history.'

## 2. Jason Goodwin: His English Books and Their Turkish Translations

Jason Goodwin (1964–) is an English writer who got a degree at Cambridge University in the field of Byzantine history. Goodwin is a writer with a considerable degree of historical knowledge, which is also evident in his books. He writes both literary and nonliterary books. *On Foot to the Golden Horn: A Walk to Istanbul* ([1993] 2003) and *Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire* ([1998] 2000) are his nonliterary books which were translated into Turkish. His Yashim series—composed of *The Janissary Tree* (2006a), *The Snake Stone* ([2007] 2008), *The Bellini Card* (2008a), *An Evil Eye* (2011), and *The Baklava Club* (2014)—are literary books. The first two books in the series, namely *The Janissary Tree* (2006a) and *The Snake Stone* ([2007] 2008), are the ones that were translated into Turkish.

The research material of the present study is composed of Goodwin's *Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire* ([1998] 2000), *The Janissary Tree* (2006a), and *The Snake Stone* ([2007] 2008) as 'foreign language creations' and their Turkish translations as 'textless back translations.'

*Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire* ([1998] 2000) is a history book consisting of three main sections and twenty-five parts in total. The book informs the reader about Ottoman lands, social, political, military, and religious lives of the Ottoman, their rulers, and periods of rise and collapse. The Turkish translation titled *Ufukların Efendisi Osmanlılar*, literally meaning 'Ottomans, the lord of the horizons,' by Armağan Anar was published by Sabah Kitapları in 1999.

The first book in Yashim series, *The Janissary Tree* (2006a), is about weird murders ongoing in the Ottoman Empire and an organized uprising against the Ottoman palace. There are two Turkish translations of the book, both of which are titled *Yeniçeri Ağacı*, literally meaning 'the Janissary tree.' The first one by Çiğdem Öztekin was published by Merkez Kitaplar in 2006. The second one by Fethi Aytuna was published by Pegasus Yayınları in 2016. The second book in Yashim series, *The Snake Stone* ([2007] 2008), is about a strange French visitor in Ottoman Istanbul whose motives turn out to be related with sacred treasures in a historical structure, the Snake Stone. Yashim, who was charged with resolving the ongoing

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murders in the first book, plays a central role also in the second book by uncovering a secret organization of people with secret identities. There are two Turkish translations of this book, titled *Yılanlı Sütun*, literally meaning 'the serpent column.' The first one by Ali Cevat Akkoyunlu was published by Merkez Kitaplar in 2008. The second one by Fethi Aytuna was published by Pegasus Yayınları in 2017.

## 3. An Enriching View to Jason Goodwin's Works: 'Orientalist' Marks and 'Possible Worlds' in the Texts

The word 'orientalism' is associated with Edward Said, the writer of the book *Orientalism* ([1978] 1979). Said ([1978] 1979) provides a comprehensive insight into the ways what he calls 'the Orient' is seen, described, and represented by what he calls 'the Occident.' In this sense, 'orientalism' is defined as "a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'" (Said [1978] 1979, 2). "Anyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient" (ibid.) is named as 'an Orientalist,' by the same token. The assumed contrast between the East and the West, in other words, 'the Orient' and 'the Occident,' is described as follows:

> The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience. (Said [1978] 1979, 1–2)

It is clear that 'orientalism' is based on the West's conceiving 'the Orient' as 'the Other.' In this respect, writers from various fields ranging from economics to administration, from literature to philosophy are said to make use of 'the Other' "as the starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, 'mind,' destiny, and so on" (Said [1978] 1979, 2–3).

Jale Parla is a Turkish scholar who has greatly contributed to understanding 'orientalism' in diverse aspects, especially through her PhD dissertation published in the form of the book titled *Efendilik, Şarkiyatçılık, Kölelik* (Mastery, orientalism, slavery) (1985). She describes 'orientalism' as "perceiving the East through the West's cultural and ideological institutions and the discourse adorned with the words, images, and doctrines created by these

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institutions"[1] (Parla 1985, 11). Parla points out Europe as the creator of such discourse. She draws attention to the West's imagining of the East as a text and suggests that:

> The writer of the text, that is to say the Western Orientalist, dominates over the Orient, the object of the information, by being the producer and the owner of this information. The Orient is described always with the same adjectives and images, the text is produced again and again, and the Orient, the object of the information, is represented as if it never changes. (Parla 1985, 12)

The underlined "same adjectives and images" (Parla 1985, 12) are crucial in terms of identifying the 'orientalist' marks in a text. In this respect, the writer's choices including "the kind of narrative voice he adopts, the type of structure he builds, the kinds of images, themes, motifs that circulate in his text" (Said [1978] 1979, 20) are indicative of the 'orientalist' language. Within this scope, "the things to look at are style, figures of speech, setting, narrative devices, historical and social circumstances, *not* the correctness of the representation nor its fidelity to some great original" (21; original emphasis). Said's emphasis on the insignificance of a loyalty to what is deemed as the original is an important detail here, since the aforesaid "images, themes, motifs" (20) are most likely to be the images of 'the Occident' rather than the genuine features of 'the Orient.'

The abovementioned perspectives introduced by the concept of 'orientalism' are found to shed light on 'orientalist' features of Goodwin's books. Parla's (1985) and Said's ([1978] 1979) references to a discourse composed of certain words, images, and narrative devices play a guiding role in dealing with a text bearing 'orientalist' marks. It is possible to approach Goodwin's books with this perspective, which enables considering them as "the West's translation of the East" (Alimen 2019, 61) and which will also bring in a better insight into the way the Ottoman is portrayed in the texts.

The most illustrating examples of the 'orientalist' marks in *The Janissary Tree* (2006a) and *The Snake Stone* ([2007] 2008) can be said to be the features of women and their lives in the harem, which are consistently mentioned in several parts throughout the texts. Table 1 shows the way these elements are reflected through certain words and images.

[1] Unless otherwise noted, English translations from Turkish sources belong to the authors.

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Table 1. Harem women and harem life in *The Janissary Tree* and *The Snake Stone*

| | ***The Janissary Tree* (2006a)** | ***The Snake Stone* ([2007] 2008)** |
|---|---|---|
| **Harem women** | "bangled" (6)<br>"swaying hip" (6)<br>"full breasts" (6)<br>"sleep with sultan" (28)<br>"naked" (105)<br>"perfumed breasts" (105)<br>"full thighs" (105)<br>"perfect creatures" (105) | "selected to share the sultan's bed" (100)<br>"she-tigers" (235)<br>"jewels ablaze" (235)<br>"loose-limbed" (235)<br>"fine skin" (235)<br>"perfect teeth" (235) |
| **Harem life** | "like a machine" (96)<br>"the sultan . . . a major piston" (96)<br>"the eunuchs, the women-were cogs" (96) | "dozens of women selected from every corner of the empire for their loveliness alone" (156) |

As seen in table 1, women of the Ottoman harem are described through words with sexual connotations. Harem is associated with 'a machine' in which the Ottoman sultan and the women are identified as its 'piston' and 'cogs,' respectively.

An important point in the represented 'image' in the books is that while Goodwin gives such a picture of the harem from the perspective of 'the Occident,' he also provides a contrasting view of 'the Orient.' The following passage is indicative of the writer's "locating himself vis-à-vis the Orient" (Said [1978] 1979, 20):

> Christians viewed the sultan's harem quite differently. Reading his way through some of the valide's favorite French novels, it had slowly dawned on Yashim that Westerners, as a rule, had an intensely romantic and imaginative picture of harem. For them it was a honeyed fleshpot in which the most beautiful women in the world engaged spontaneously at the whim of a single man in salacious acts of love and passion, a narcotic bacchanal. As though the women had only breasts and thighs, and neither brains nor histories. Let them dream, Yashim thought. (Goodwin 2006a, 96)

As it is obvious from the passage, Goodwin draws attention to the thoughts of the Ottoman Yashim, from 'the Orient,' which contradicts 'the Occident's' imagination of the harem life. Although Yashim fully comprehends the way the Westerners 'view' or 'imagine' the harem, he still 'lets them dream.'

In addition to Goodwin's accounts of the Westerners' portrayal of the Ottoman as 'the Orient' and the contrasting views of an Ottoman at the same time in *The Janissary Tree* (2006a),

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we see a direct reference to the existence of an 'orientalist' literature concerning the Ottoman in *Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire* ([1998] 2000):

> To foreigners especially the empire seemed an enjoyably creepy sort of place. Queer tales abounded of abductions, of white slavery, pale hands glimpsed through the grilles which covered upstairs windows, persistent whispers of strange sights to be avoided on the Bosphorus on moonless nights. A whole class of literature sprang up in Europe to deal with the Unspeakable Turk: everyone wanted to hear about harem maidens, ravishing, eunuchs, and slaves with their tongues slit guarding abominable secrets. (Goodwin [1998] 2000, 314)

It is clear from the passage that Goodwin emphasizes the reason why the Ottoman land is so popular as to be part of an 'oriental' literature created by the Europe. The examples given regarding the subject are representative of the themes and the images both Said ([1978] 1979) and Parla (1985) mention.

The contrasting accounts about the Ottoman leads one to think about whether something is a 'fiction' or not. At this point, Doležel's (1998) views on 'fiction' and 'history' need mentioning for a better understanding of the different narrative devices Goodwin makes use of in his books.

In his article "Possible Worlds of Fiction and History," Doležel (1998) makes a distinction between 'history' and 'fiction' and, by the same token, between 'historical texts' and 'fictional texts.' Considering a 'possible world' as only one possibility among many, Doležel (1998) thinks that even history itself represents a 'possible world,' since things could have been different in the past. Drawing on this notion, he considers 'historical worlds' and 'fictional worlds' as subcategories of the 'possible worlds.'

According to Doležel (1998), 'historical texts' constitute 'historical worlds,' and 'historical texts' are supposed to have 'truth valuation.' On the other hand, 'fictional texts' constitute 'fictional worlds,' and 'fictional texts' do not need to have 'truth valuation.' In this sense, 'truth valuation' draws the basic line between 'historical texts' and 'fictional texts,' and truth does not stand as a required criterion for the 'fictional texts' as in the 'historical' ones. Writing is only one act among others to create 'fictional worlds.' In this regard, 'fictional texts' constitute 'fictional worlds of literature,' which also has a subcategory of 'historical fiction.'

'Historical fiction' is a kind of text in which 'history' and 'fiction' intersect but which is still not restricted by 'truth valuation,' since it is 'fiction' by nature. Therefore, in the case of 'historical fiction,' it is improper to search for the truth. According to Doležel (1998), 'fictional

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worlds' do not need to overlap with the actual past. "They establish diverse relationships to the actual world, situate themselves at a closer or further distance from reality" (Doležel 1998, 788). Doležel (1998) points out 'transworld identity' of such relationships and refers to the entities which exist both in the 'historical worlds' and in the 'fictional worlds' as 'possible counterparts.' Since writers of 'fiction' are free to make use of historical elements as they wish in their texts, it is only natural to find these 'counterparts' in the way we are or we are not familiar with. Within this scope, the unique dimension of 'historical fiction' is described as follows: "It is a defining feature of the genre that fictional persons coexist and interact with counterparts of historical persons" (Doležel 1998, 793).

Within the light of Doležel's (1998) concepts, we can say that while *Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire* ([1998] 2000) is a 'historical text,' *The Janissary Tree* (2006a) and *The Snake Stone* ([2007] 2008) are 'fictional texts,' or, more specifically, 'historical fictions.' In this sense, *Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire* ([1998] 2000) is constrained by 'truth valuation,' whereas *The Janissary Tree* (2006a) and *The Snake Stone* ([2007] 2008) are not. Therefore, it is improper to inquire whether time, space, people, or events in *The Janissary Tree* (2006a) or *The Snake Stone* ([2007] 2008) reflect the truth.

Table 2 shows certain persons which reappear in Goodwin's texts, in other words, 'possible counterparts' from Doležel's (1998) point of view. It is obvious that "Lord Byron," "Pierre Gilles," "Eugenia," "Mavrocordato," and "Ypsilanti" appear in different books. Goodwin both mentions these people in *Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire* ([1998] 2000) and makes use of them as characters in *The Janissary Tree* (2006a) and *The Snake Stone* ([2007] 2008) in accordance with the plot. While the features of "Lord Byron" and "Pierre Gilles" in Goodwin's 'historical world' and 'fictional worlds' overlap, we see a difference in the way "Eugenia," "Mavrocordato," and "Ypsilanti" are portrayed in the 'historical text' and the 'fictional texts.' Within this scope, Doležel's (1998) concepts offer us a better understanding and interpreting of Goodwin's works and various entities in them.

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Table 2. 'Possible counterparts' in Goodwin's texts

| | ***Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire*** **([1998] 2000)** | ***The Janissary Tree*** **(2006a)** | ***The Snake Stone*** **([2007] 2008)** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Lord Byron** | English poet, an eager supporter of the Greek rebellion in the 1820s in Missolonghi | — | English poet, Maximilien Lefèvre's acquaintance in Missolonghi |
| **Pierre Gilles** | a scientist of ancient history | — | the author of the book Maximilien Lefèvre is quite interested in for his inquiries |
| **Eugenia** | the wife of the French emperor Napoleon III (as Eugénie) | the wife of Nikolai Derentsov, the Russian Ambassador in the Ottoman Empire | — |
| **Mavrocordato** | the Prince of Wallachia | a Greek merchant (as George Mavrocordato) | a Greek money dealer (as Monsieur Mavrogordato) |
| **Ypsilanti** | Prince Ypsilanti of the Phanariot aristocracy | — | a Phanariot Prince Yashim once worked for |

## 4. The Concepts of 'Foreign Language Creation' and 'Textless Back Translation' and Their Relations to Jason Goodwin's Works

Since there is a close relation between writing and translating, any developments in the variety of writings give way to the discovery of new phenomena in translation processes. One of the concepts affected by such developments seems to be 'back translation' with the emergence of a new type of writing called 'foreign language creation.' The works of Chinese scholars come to the fore in this respect.

According to Ting Guo (2017), we see a new kind of writing enabled by cultural exchanges. This is "local cultural content described by foreign language" (Guo 2017, 1354). In such a writing, the writer determines a specific culture as the content of his text and produces the text in a foreign language instead of the language used by the people from that specific culture. The native culture is narrated in a foreign language, and by a foreign writer in many

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cases. While the books of such type are offered to the users of that foreign language as an original text, the readers can easily understand from both the content and the language use that the book concerns not themselves but 'the foreign.'

How the emergence of 'foreign language creation' paves the way for a new understanding of 'back translation' is stated as follows:

> Wang Hongyin put forward the academic terms "foreign language creation" and "rootless back translation" in 2009. "Foreign language creation" refers to a novel of Chinese culture written in English, and its Chinese translation belongs to "rootless back translation", that is, back translation of English version into the non-existent Chinese "original version", among it the restoration of some quotations to the original text is called "original text restoration". (Guo 2017, 1355)

As it is obvious, since 'foreign language creation' is a text written in a language different from that of the narrated culture, it is regarded as some sort of translation. And since 'foreign language creation' is considered as a translation itself, its translation back into the language of the narrated culture is assumed as a special kind of 'back translation.' Drawing on the notion that there is not a physically existent ultimate source text as in a conventional translation process, the 'back translation' of a 'foreign language creation' is characterized as 'rootless,' and the process as 'rootless back translation.'

Yifeng Sun (2014), another Chinese scholar, regards 'foreign language creation' as "cultural translation" and the writers of 'foreign language creation' as "cultural translators." However, such translation is different from conventional translation processes, as it takes place in the mind of the writer, who describes a native culture in a foreign language. The essential feature of such writings pretty much resembling a translation is better described as follows: "The uniqueness of this type of translation is the general lack of a visible or tangible source text" and "in truth, traces and remnants of the 'original' are everywhere" (Sun 2014, 110). Such features of a 'foreign language creation' enable us to assume it as a translation and its writer as a translator.

Chinese scholars Qingyin Tu and Changbo Li (2017) offer a further insight into 'foreign language creation' by offering a categorization of the writers: (a) works of domestic writers, (b) works of overseas writers of the native culture, (c) works of foreign writers of native culture origin, (d) works of foreign writers. Tu and Li (2017) point out different motives of these writers in their production of a 'foreign language creation' and the effects of the themes and the language structures they use on the text and the reader.

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Although translation of a 'foreign language creation' is said to have been first named as a 'rootless back translation,' it is seen that the concept was later changed into 'textless back translation,' based on the idea that such a 'back translation' is indeed rooted in a native culture despite a lack of a physically existent text (Tu and Li 2017). 'Textless back translation' is defined in terms of Chinese–English language pair as follows: "The kind of back translation in which translators translate China-themed literary works written in foreign languages (such as English) back into Chinese and resell the translated texts to the Chinese readers" (Tu and Li 2017, 3). Regardless of the language pair, any 'textless back translation' can be considered as "a return of culture to its original habitat" (Sun 2014, 116). The 'textless' feature of such a 'back translation,' which is identified with "the imagined source text" (115), blurs the distinction between the source text and the target text in a conventional translation process. In 'textless back translation,' what the writer offers as an original text stands as a translation of a foreign culture and what the translator offers as a translation is actually a text that narrates the readers' own culture. Such a fact surely affects the way a writer produces a 'foreign language creation' and the way a translator gets engaged into 'textless back translation.' Indeed, translators of 'textless back translation,' who may consider themselves as "cultural spokesmen" (116), might "take liberty with the original as if to suggest that they know the 'real' original better" (115).

Within the light of these concepts, we can consider Goodwin's *Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire* ([1998] 2000), *The Janissary Tree* (2006a), and *The Snake Stone* ([2007] 2008) as examples of 'foreign language creation,' since these are Ottoman-themed books written by an English writer in the English language and seem to be Goodwin's translation of the Ottoman culture and the Turkish language. English readers can easily detect 'the foreign' in these texts, as "the traces and remnants of the 'original' are everywhere" (Sun 2014, 110). Table 3 shows only an illustrating part of the 'traces' in Goodwin's books in categories.

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Table 3. Cultural entities in Goodwin's texts as 'foreign language creations'

| | ***Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire* ([1998] 2000)** | ***The Janissary Tree* (2006a)** | ***The Snake Stone* ([2007] 2008)** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Categories**[2] | **Example (1)** | **Example (2)** | **Example (3)** |
| **Places** | Beylerbeyi Saray | Kara Davut Sokağı | the Han of Rüstem Pasha |
| **Names, nicknames, titles** | the *baba* or holy man | Orhan | su yolcu |
| **Institutions** | vakif | hammam | medrese |
| **Historical events** | the Auspicious Event | Mohács, 1526 | 1453: the Turkish conquest |
| **Historical figures** | Sokullu Mehmet Pasha | Sultan Mahmut II | Abdül Mecid |
| **Social life and daily habits** | *timar* | *köçek* | selamlik and haremlik |
| **Features of domestic life** | carpets of Anatolia | Iznikware | carpeted divan |
| **Food and drinks** | nargile | sherbet | köfte kebab |
| **Dress** | fez | chador and yashmak | Turkish slippers |
| **Means of transportation** | purdah carriage | donkey cart | screened litter |

Although the amount of information in table 3 is limited by spatial constraints, it still provides a considerable insight into what is narrated and how it is narrated in the books. As it is obvious from the categories, the Ottoman theme is handled in various layers. Readers have the chance of walking around an Ottoman palace or a street, meeting ordinary Ottomans or their rulers, getting to know different jobs or institutions, learning about major events and well-known figures in the Ottoman history, getting acquainted with daily life in the Ottoman Empire, tasting Ottoman food and drinks, or wearing Ottoman clothes. Goodwin seems to take the reader to a journey in the Ottoman period, and in doing so, he makes them familiar with the Turkish language by using Turkish expressions in various ways, as also evident in table 3.

[2] These categories are based on Sündüz Öztürk Kasar's (2020) semiotic classification in her article titled "Çeviri Göstergebilimi ile Kent Göstergebiliminin Bütünleşik Bağlamında Özde Çeviri Kavramının İncelenmesi" (Study of the concept of watermark translation in the syncretic context of semiotics of translation and urban semiotics). Categories of 'historical monuments' and 'units of measurement' contained in Öztürk Kasar's (2020) classification are not included in the present study.

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Assuming Goodwin's books as 'foreign language creations' enables us to consider their Turkish translations as 'textless back translations.' Although the books are Goodwin's works, their source resides in the Ottoman culture and the Turkish language. In this sense, the English books can be regarded as the products of Goodwin's translation process of the Ottoman culture in his mind. Likewise, the Turkish translations of the books can be regarded as the "homeward journey" (Sun 2014, 116) of the Ottoman culture and the Turkish language, thus a special kind of 'back translation,' namely 'textless back translation.'

A close examination and better understanding of 'foreign language creation' by a writer and 'textless back translation' by a translator is possible through Guo's (2017) framework of analyzing the translation methods. Therefore, Goodwin's English texts as 'foreign language creations' and the translators' Turkish translations as 'textless back translations' are analyzed within Guo's framework in the following sections.

## 5. The Writer's Translation Methods in *Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire*, *The Janissary Tree*, and *The Snake Stone* as 'Foreign Language Creations'

Guo (2017) points out five translation methods a writer employs in 'foreign language creation,' which is "a translation process of a creative kind, rather like a third text different from both the original and a conventional translated text" (Sun 2014, 111). These are 'transliteration,' 'literal translation,' 'free translation,' 'substitution,' and 'integrated translation' (Guo 2017). However, drawing on the findings from Goodwin's books, it is possible to include also borrowing, which is sometimes direct and sometimes accompanied by an explanation. The first thing to draw attention to here is that the language use of the writer is also considered as a translation method. The second thing is that each translation method used by the writer has different effects on the text and thus different impacts on the reader.

### 5.1 Borrowing

*5.1.1 Direct Borrowing.* Borrowing can be said to reveal what is 'foreign' in a text and introduce it directly to the reader without any adjustment to the target language. It is obvious that this direct use of 'the foreign' through borrowing leaves readers on their own during their process of reading and understanding.

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> Before heading across the Golden Horn to **Balat**, Yashim made a stop at the **kebab** shop at **Şişhane**. (Goodwin [2007] 2008, 132; emphasis added)

The protagonist Yashim stops by "Şişhane" to eat "kebab" before leading to "Balat," where he tries to find a pawnbroker named Baradossa. In similar passages, Goodwin takes the reader to Ottoman streets along with Yashim, the Ottoman Turk, to eat Turkish food. Therefore, the words "Balat" and "Şişhane," which are districts in Istanbul, and also "kebab," "the meat cooked without water directly in fire or in a pot,"[3] in this example and many other phrases in many other passages in the works make it clear that the writer borrows his material from another language and culture.

*5.1.2 Borrowing with Explanation.* While borrowing on its own lays the whole burden on the reader to interpret the borrowed word or phrase, any explanation accompanying it helps them understand the text more easily.

> ***Konak*** described **the governor's residence**, but also **any ordinary wooden house**; and its first meaning was **a halt on the caravan route**. (Goodwin [1998] 2000, 137; emphasis added)

In the above example, which is from a passage about the Ottoman structures, we see that Goodwin uses the word "konak," which has the meanings of "official residence of high-ranked state officers such as a governor"; "a huge and spectacular house"; "a place for staying overnight during a journey."[4] Goodwin uses this word in italics which points out that it is a borrowed word from another language and culture. Moreover, he provides three meanings of this Turkish word which help the reader understand the meaning of the borrowed word. We can say that the explanations Goodwin provides in his narration match up with the ones from the Turkish dictionary, respectively, regardless of the difference between 'ordinary' and 'spectacular,' since any house with a roof is deemed as "konak" in Turkish colloquial speech.

## 5.2 Transliteration

Transliteration makes a word coherent with the morphological and the phonetical structure of a particular language. However, the foreignness of the transliterated word can still be understood easily. Guo (2017) considers transliteration as a type of literal translation. It is

[3] *Türkçe Sözlük* (Turkish dictionary), 11th ed., s.v. "kebab."
[4] *Türkçe Sözlük* (Turkish dictionary), 11th ed., s.v. "konak."

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possible to say that the basic effect of transliteration on a text is "the particular culture flavor" (Guo 2017, 1357) reflected.

> He bought a pound of meat and pumpkin ***manti***, half a pint of sour cream in the dairy next door, and two rounds of ***borek***, still warm from the oven. (Goodwin 2006a, 254; emphasis added)

Yashim makes preparations for the kitchen in case the Polish ambassador, who is also his close friend, comes for dinner. There are specific places where he prefers to buy things. Among the things he buys are "mantı," "small pieces of dough wrapped in the shape of a fardel with mince inside" or "the food prepared with these pieces,"[5] and "börek," "a pastry cooked in different ways with cheese, mince, spinach, etc. which are put in rolled-out dough."[6] Goodwin transliterates these words as "manti" and "borek," and he also uses them in italics, which points out that although these words are written in accordance with English phonetic pattern, they are indeed foreign words which do not exist in the English vocabulary.

### 5.3 Literal Translation

Although transliteration is also a kind of literal translation, the apparent difference between transliteration and literal translation is that "usually, explanation words are added" (Guo 2017, 1357) in literal translation. This helps the reader better understand the text.

> Selim the Grim was terrible to the Shi'ite ***kisilbas*, literally 'red-heads'**, who wore red turbans and were seen as a danger to the state; he hunted them down in their thousands through eastern Anatolia. (Goodwin [1998] 2000, 91; emphasis added)

Goodwin mentions the era of Sultan Selim as an exceptional time period in terms of the Ottoman Empire's well-known tolerance towards its citizens of various origins regarding race and religion due to Sultan Selim's furious approach to the Shi'ite. He transliterates the word "Kızılbaş," which means "a person from a section of the Shi'ite order,"[7] as "kisilbas" and writes it in italics. Moreover, he provides a literal translation of the words "kızıl" and "baş," uses the expression "red-heads" accordingly, and points out this expression as "literally" meaning "kisilbas."

[5] *Türkçe Sözlük* (Turkish dictionary), 11th ed., s.v. "mantı."
[6] *Türkçe Sözlük* (Turkish dictionary), 11th ed., s.v. "börek."
[7] *Türkçe Sözlük* (Turkish dictionary), 11th ed., s.v. "Kızılbaş."

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5.4 Free Translation

Guo (2017) states that free translation is preferred when literal translation is impracticable and emphasizes the target language-oriented nature of the former and the source language-oriented nature of the latter. Guo (2017) also draws attention to the explanative feature inherent in free translation which assists the reader during the reading process.

> The head archivist was a mournful fellow with drooping mustaches, not a eunuch but a superannuated graduate of the **palace school**. (Goodwin 2006a, 144; emphasis added)

Yashim visits the palace archives for his investigations, and the archivist in charge is introduced as a graduate of "the palace school." Within the scope of the Ottoman educational system, "enderun" denotes "the school which raises government officers."[8] Goodwin provides a free translation of this Ottoman institution through the expression "palace school," which is an explanatory phrase that clarifies in the minds of the English reader the type of the Ottoman school the archivist is a graduate of.

5.5 Substitution

Guo (2017) remarks that the use of an equivalent expression from the target language as a substitute for the one from the source language enables the reader to interpret the text in an easier way. Therefore, substitution "shortens the distance of cognition" (Guo 2017, 1358).

> He ruled so long that he became **something of an Ottoman Queen Victoria**, the very embodiment of his state. (Goodwin [1998] 2000, 83; emphasis added)

Goodwin informs the reader about the period of the Ottoman Sultan Suleyman, who ruled the Ottoman Empire for the longest time period among all the sultans. In this sense, he makes an association between Sultan Suleyman of the Ottoman Empire and Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom, who was also a remarkably long-reigning British ruler of her time. Goodwin correlates the two rulers of different geography and culture in terms of political power and influence and makes use of Queen Victoria as a substitute for Sultan Suleyman. Therefore, the expression "something of an Ottoman Queen Victoria" helps the reader better understand the extent of Suleyman's period.

[8] *Türkçe Sözlük* (Turkish dictionary), 11th ed., s.v. "enderun."

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5.6 Integrated Translation

According to Guo (2017), it is also possible to make an integrated use of the above methods in pursuance of a desired effect on the text. In this sense, the choice of integrating specific methods determines the way the text has an impact on the reader or the reading process.

> When the **Reis Effendi (a sort of foreign minister)** chose to lament that he had not yet had the pleasure of the fine Venetian gold capes he heard so much about, he was sure to receive the very thing later that afternoon. (Goodwin [1998] 2000, 176; emphasis added)

Goodwin mentions a specific statesman while giving examples about different types of corruption the Ottoman Empire experienced during the seventeenth century. Among the examples he provides is "reis efendi," in other words "reisülküttap," which means "the chief of the sultan divan among the Ottomans until the 17th century" or "the foreign minister of the Ottoman State before the Tanzimat (Reform) period."[9] Goodwin borrows the word "reis" and uses it directly in his text while he transliterates the word "efendi" as "effendi." Moreover, he uses the expression "a sort of foreign minister," which conveys the meaning of "Reis Effendi." Such integrated way of translation both introduces 'the foreign' and provides an explanation for the reader.

## 6. The Translators' Translation Methods in the Turkish Translations of *Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire*, *The Janissary Tree*, and *The Snake Stone* as 'Textless Back Translations'

Guo draws attention to five translation methods used by a translator in 'textless back translation.' These are 'substitution,' 'omission,' 'free translation,' 'amplification,' and 'literal translation' (Guo 2017).

6.1 Substitution

Substitution in the 'textless back translation' takes a different dimension from the one in the 'foreign language creation,' as there is no translation but only some sort of research on the part of the translator. Since what is deemed as the source text is actually a translation, what the translator needs to do is "trace the original sources" (Guo 2017, 1361). Guo considers it

[9] *Türkçe Sözlük* (Turkish dictionary), 11th ed., s.v. "reisülküttap."

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improper to translate what is already a translation itself and invent something new regardless of the existing original. Therefore, substitution in the 'textless back translation' is regarded as "original text restoration" (ibid.).

> **ST:**[10]
>
> the Turkish poet Tevfik Fikret portrayed the decay of Constantinople in his ode 'Mist':
> Once more a stubborn mist has swathed your horizons…
> Veil yourself and sleep forever, whore of the world! (Goodwin [1998] 2000, 314)
>
> **TT:**
>
> Türk şairi Tevfik Fikret "Sis" Şiirinde İstanbul'u şöyle anlatmıştı:
> Sarmış gene afakını bir dudi muannit…
> Örtün evet ey haile, örtün evet ey şehr,
> Örtün ve müebbet uyu ey badirei der! (Goodwin 1999, 249)

We see that Goodwin inserts Tevfik Fikret's verses from his poem "Sis," or "Mist" in English, to draw an image of Constantinople while informing the reader about the past of Istanbul city, known as Constantinople before the Ottoman conquest in 1453. The verses used in the ST are actually Goodwin's translation of the Turkish poem into English while the verses in the TT are Tevfik Fikret's original words. Therefore, it is clear that the translator does not translate the translation and just substitutes Tevfik Fikret's original verses for the translation in the ST.

### 6.2 Omission

In 'textless back translation,' omission takes the form of not including a source text element in the target text. This is the case especially when "the meaning is self-evident in the translation" (Guo 2017, 1361). Translators may choose to omit certain elements in the source text which they think will be redundant in the target text, since the readers are already familiar with them. In such cases, omission enables a smooth reading without unnecessary wording. Omission may also be resorted to when a single element is represented by two languages in the source text. In this case, translators may inevitably choose to use only the expression written in the target language.

> **ST:**
>
> They were organized in **lodges, what we call tekkes**. (Goodwin 2006a, 78; emphasis added)

[10] ST, TT, TT1, and TT2 are the abbreviations of source text, target text, target text 1, and target text 2, respectively.

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**TT1:**

**Ufak localar** halinde teşkilatlanmışlardı, **biz bunları 'tekke' olarak adlandırıyoruz**. (Goodwin 2006b, 96; emphasis added)

**TT2:**

**Tekkeler**de bir araya geliyorlardı. (Goodwin 2016, 105; emphasis added)

Yashim gets in contact with an imam to get further clues about the sacred places of the old janissaries, and the imam points out "tekke" structures. Goodwin uses the expression "lodges, what we call tekkes" to define these places. "Tekke" means "a place where people from a religious sect shelter, pray, and perform rituals"[11] in Islam tradition. The expression in the ST clarifies the meaning of "tekkes" by means of "lodges." While TT1 is in accordance with the ST structure, we observe an omission in TT2, since the translator just uses the word "tekke." It is clear that the translator sees no need to make use of "lodges" to better define "tekkes" or say "what we call," as the information provided already concerns the Muslim Ottomans, not the 'foreign.'

6.3 Free Translation

According to Guo (2017), in 'textless back translation,' coming from the target culture and speaking the target language themselves, translators may consciously prefer a free translation of the source text, which is about their own culture. In this sense, translators are assumed to have "more right to speak in the truthfulness and accuracy of the original information" (Guo 2017, 1362). In such cases, it is possible to see certain adjustments in the target text "in order to take the reader's cognitive harmony into account" (ibid.).

**ST:**

Islam honoured travellers, too, and when Ibn Battuta, an elderly Moroccan scholar, completed the Hajj in 1329, he pressed on to Jerusalem and then, passed by the guilds across Anatolia, saw for himself the gallery of **'Turkish kings'** who upheld his faith in this rough borderland. (Goodwin [1998] 2000, 6; emphasis added)

**TT:**

Müslüman seyyahlara da itibar ediyorlardı ve Faslı yaşlı bilgin İbni Battuta, 1329'da Hac farizasını tamamladıktan sonra Kudüs'e gitti. Anadolu'daki loncaları dolaştıktan sonra dinini bu sert toprağında savunan **'Türk padişahlar'** galerisini kendi gözleriyle gördü. (Goodwin 1999, 17–18; emphasis added)

[11] *Türkçe Sözlük* (Turkish dictionary), 11th ed., s.v. "tekke."

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Goodwin gives the example of Ibn Battuta while informing the reader about the Ottoman's love of moving from one place to another. He mentions Battuta's seeing "the gallery of Turkish kings." It is observed that the translator does not follow the ST wording and uses the word "padişah," "the title given to the head of the Ottoman State, the ruler, the sultan"[12] instead of "kral," literally "the king." That there was not a political system of kingdom in the Ottoman Empire seems to explain why the translator does not adhere to the ST expression and makes a free choice of word which better suits the Ottoman political system.

### 6.4 Amplification

In translation process, amplification takes the form of adding in the target text some words or phrases which do not actually exist in the source text. According to Guo (2017), since translators are more familiar with the language and culture the source text is about, they may choose to expand their translations by adding more information.

> **ST:**
>
> In spite of himself he veered left, passing the domed baths which the great architect Sinan had built for **Roxelana**, the wife of Suleyman the Magnificent. (Goodwin [2007] 2008, 104; emphasis added)
>
> **TT1:**
>
> İçinden karşı koymasına rağmen sola saptı, büyük mimar Sinan'ın, Kanuni Sultan Süleyman'ın karısı **Rokselan ya da Hürrem Sultan** adına yaptığı kubbeli hamamın yanından geçti. (Goodwin 2008b, 101; emphasis added)
>
> **TT2:**
>
> Aksini düşünmesine rağmen sola saptı. Büyük mimar Sinan'ın, Muhteşem Süleyman'ın karısı **Hürrem** için yaptığı kubbeli çifte hamamın yanından geçti. (Goodwin 2017, 138; emphasis added)

Yashim walks around the historical Ottoman structures after his visit to the palace, and one of them is the bath Sultan Suleyman had built for his wife. Goodwin introduces her as "Roxelana." In TT2, we see the name "Hürrem," Roxelana's better known name in the Ottoman history. In TT1, it is observed that the translator uses not only the name "Rokselan" but also "Hürrem Sultan." By both using the name in the ST and adding the well-known name of Sultan Suleyman's wife in Turkish culture, the translator makes an amplification in his translation.

[12] *Türkçe Sözlük* (Turkish dictionary), 11th ed., s.v. "padişah."

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6.5 Literal Translation

Literal translation is a method about which the translators of a 'foreign language creation' are supposed to be careful. Since a 'foreign language creation' is a translation itself, a literal translation of an already translated text may result in an unnatural narration. In this sense, Guo (2017) draws attention to a possibility of "translationese," which is "the unnatural or awkward style of translated texts, especially as produced by the influence of source language structural features" (Palumbo 2009, 137).

**ST:**

It is God who has awoken us, **at the eleventh hour**, the Hour of Restoration! (Goodwin 2006a, 273; emphasis added)

**TT1:**

Tanrı bizi uyardı, bu **hesap günü**, Restorasyon Vakti! (Goodwin 2006b, 313; emphasis added)

**TT2:**

Allah bizi **on birinci saatte**, tahtı sahibine geri verme vaktinde uyandırdı! (Goodwin 2016, 343; emphasis added)

We see that the chief eunuch rises in rebellion backed up by the other eunuchs in the palace, and he points out a restoration and says that the time has come for it. He defines this time as "at the eleventh hour," which means "at the last possible moment; just in time."[13] In TT1, the translator prefers to use the expression "hesap günü," which means "apocalypse"[14] in Turkish. This expression can be said to have a close meaning to the one in the ST. However, in TT2, we see that the translator provides a literal translation of the ST and uses the expression "on birinci saatte," which does not make any sense in Turkish. Therefore, it is clear that such a literal translation leads to an unnatural expression in the target text.

## 7. Concluding Remarks

Goodwin's Ottoman-themed books have been identified as noticeable works with interesting features that enable them to be regarded as the products of some sort of translation in the mind of the writer who acts like a translator in his writing process. The abundance of

[13] *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 6th ed., s.v. "at the eleventh hour."
[14] *Türkçe Sözlük* (Turkish dictionary), 11th ed., s.v. "hesap günü."

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Ottoman themes inherent in the books have easily been observed, and their variety has been laid out in the form of a categorization. Many Ottoman elements, most of which are used in the Turkish language, ranging, for example, from a place to an institution or from ordinary men to powerful rulers, have made it clear that Goodwin's English books represent a special kind of writing similar to a "cultural translation" (Sun 2014, 108), namely 'foreign language creation.' Likewise, their Turkish translations, in other words, the translations of the translated texts back into the native language (i.e., Turkish), have been noticed in a "homeward journey" (116). This 'back translation' in cultural sense without a physically existing ultimate source text has made it possible to regard the Turkish translations of Goodwin's 'foreign language creations' as 'textless back translations.' Unlike a conventional translation process, the blurring of the clear-cut difference between the source language and target language and the source text and target text in the case of a 'textless back translation' has made it possible to consider Goodwin's usages also as translation decisions.

Within the scope of 'foreign language creation,' Goodwin's uses of borrowing, transliteration, and literal translation have been observed to introduce 'the foreign' to the English reader, while his uses of free translation and substitution have been found target-oriented, which is expected to enable the reader to understand the text in an easier way. Within the scope of 'textless back translation,' translators' uses of substitution have been identified as the concrete examples of "the return of culture to its original habitat" (Sun 2014, 116) through their non-translation and just substituting the English translations with their Turkish originals. While omission can be associated with the consideration that readers of the native language do not need further explanations to understand their own culture, amplification has indicated that the translators are more familiar with the native culture. In addition to amplification, free translation has also been observed to hint at translators' "liberty with the original as if to suggest that they know the 'real' original better" (115). On the other hand, literal translation has been identified as the reason behind 'translationese' in the Turkish language.

While the Ottoman image in Goodwin's books has been interpreted in the light of Said's ([1978] 1979) 'orientalism,' varying narrative devices have been better understood with Doležel's (1998) distinction between 'history' and 'fiction.' It has been noticed that 'truth valuation' has a determining effect on Goodwin's narration in the 'historical text' *Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire* ([1998] 2000) and the 'fictional texts' *The Janissary Tree* (2006a) and *The Snake Stone* ([2007] 2008). It has also been observed that

source-oriented translations in the 'back translation' of Goodwin's texts enable the 'orientalist' marks inherent in the English texts to continue to exist in the Turkish translated texts, which makes the Turkish reader be aware of the 'orientalist' depictions of their culture in a foreign language, text, and culture. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that a source-oriented approach in the case of 'back translation' of a 'foreign language creation' with 'orientalist' marks has a reinforcing effect on the maintenance of 'orientalist' discourse in the textless back translated texts.

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