



## Intertextuality as a Poetic Rewriting Strategy in Pelin Batu's Self-Translated Poems

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### Abstract

Intertextual elements contribute to increasing the depth of meaning in literary texts through their associations with present and past texts produced by different authors in the literary world. In Gérard Genette's terms, they bring together a *palimpsest* writing, entailing references that are either highlighted or unwittingly removed from literary texts. This study aims to demonstrate how Genette's concept of intertextuality is reflected in Pelin Batu's self-translated poems with examples from *The Book of Winds / Rüzgarlar Kitabı* (2009), *The Divan of Lost Things / Kayıp Şeyler Divanı* (2015) and *It All Began with a Story / Her Şey Bir Hikaye ile Başladı* (2018). This study comprises three parts. The first part discusses Genette's approach to intertextuality in depth, while the second part focuses on the debates regarding translation, self-translation, and intertextuality in translation studies. The third part tries to show how intertextuality has turned into a poetic rewriting strategy in Pelin Batu's aforementioned works. In conclusion, it has been determined that Pelin Batu, as a Turkish poet, enriches her poems through intertextuality as a rewriting strategy with quotations, allusions and borrowing from various figures of literature, visual arts, art history, philosophy, and science.

**Keywords:** Pelin Batu, Gérard Genette, intertextuality, self-translation, modern Turkish poetry.

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## Pelin Batu'nun Özçeviri Şiirlerinde Yeniden Yazma Stratejisi Olarak Metinlerarasılık

Öz

Metinlerarası unsurlar, yazın dünyasında farklı yazarlara ait güncel ve geçmiş metinlerle yazın eserleri arasında ilişkiler kurarak onların anlam derinliğinin artmasına katkıda bulunur. Gérard Genette'in terimleriyle, bu türden unsurlar, yazın eserlerinde öne çıkan veya farkında olmadan silinen göndermeleri içeren *palimpsest* yazı kavramını beraberinde getirir. Bu çalışma, Pelin Batu'nun *The Book of Winds / Rüzgarlar Kitabı* (2009), *The Divan of Lost Things / Kayıp Şeyler Divanı* (2015) ve *It All Began with a Story / Her Şey Bir Hikaye ile Başladı* (2018) eserlerinden örneklerle Genette'nin metinlerarasılık kavramının şairin öz-çeviri şiirlerine nasıl yansıdığını göstermeyi amaçlar. Çalışma üç ana bölümden oluşmaktadır. Birinci bölüm, Genette'in metinlerarasılık yaklaşımını derinlemesine tartışırken ikinci bölüm çeviribilimde çeviri, öz-çeviri ve metinlerarasılık tartışmalarına odaklanır. Üçüncü bölümde, metinlerarasılığın Batu'nun yukarıda belirtilen eserlerinde ne türden bir şiirsel yeniden yazma eylemine dönüştüğü gösterilmeye çalışılmıştır. Sonuç olarak, Türk şair Pelin Batu'nun, edebiyat, görsel sanatlar, sanat tarihi, felsefe ve bilim alanlarında eser veren isimlerden alıntı, anırtırma ve ödünçleme yoluyla öz-çeviri şiirlerini zenginleştirdiği, bu sayede bir yeniden yazma stratejisi olarak metinlerarasılığı etkin bir biçimde kullandığı fark edilmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Pelin Batu, Gérard Genette, metinlerarasılık, öz-çeviri, modern Türk şiiri.

## INTRODUCTION

It is widely assumed that each text entails traces of past or present texts produced in the literary scene. These traces potentially turn the act of writing into establishing intertextual relations between literary works, which structural linguists evaluate within the chain of possibilities in the diachronic and synchronic axes of language. While Saussure's concept of differential sign reduces the notion of intertextuality to the idea that meaning is formed by phonetic differences in the language system, it expresses the universe of meaning that occurs with such differences, positioning it as a unit that is not singular, does not have a fixed nature, and is related to other signs in the language (1959, p. 68).

For Bakhtin, all signs, not limited to differential signs, have a dialogic nature, gaining new layers of meaning each time they are used in new contexts. As such, whenever we read, "we are presented with a text occupying a certain specific place in space; that is, it is localized; our creation of it, own acquaintance with it occurs through time" (1981, p. 252). Thus, a text takes on a new meaning each time it travels from one space to another by engulfing all surrounding discursive elements and is deemed to have as many layers as the extent of its dissemination in the literary scene.

Kristeva's perspective on intertextuality is complementary to Bakhtin's thoughts, except that she implies the subjective processing of texts by each user in language contexts. That is why there always occurs a confrontation between the subjective and the objective, which creates a lingering tension "to put into process the subject and its stases, to act in such a way that the laws of meaning correspond to objective, natural, and social laws" (1998, p. 159). Here, the systemic ways of meaning making are dissolved to a point where the author dies and the text continues its journey with entirely new expansions of meaning among the readers, who reflect their subjectivity to its reception and contribute to its disengagement from the author. So, for Kristeva, a text comprises as many layers as the number of its readers, to the exclusion of the authorial power in the literary system.

Like Kristeva, Barthes calls attention to the author's absence when a text is received by the readers. Therefore, the text is open to any associations beyond the strict phrasing of words in syntactic positions. This is not only due to the associative nature of textual elements, but it also arises from the obscurity of the origins of textual references because "the citations which go to make up a text are anonymous, untraceable, and yet already read: they are quotations without inverted commas" (1977, p. 160). Such ambiguities potentialize the multiplicity of textual inferences, thus giving way to the deferral of meaning with contextual variations in the reception of the text by the readers.

From this point of view, the Derridean concept of *différance* plays a key role in the perception of intertextuality within literary texts. Seeing each textual element as an addition to the signifying process, Derrida views linguistic elements as "an infinite chain, ineluctably multiplying the supplementary mediations that produce the sense of the very thing they defer: the mirage of the thing itself, of immediate presence, of originary perception" (1977, p. 157). By doing so, he adds each attempt at reading a text to the previous efforts of understanding it, converting the reading process into an endless cycle of meaning-making with regard to each reader's intimately subjective relationship with the text.

For the concept of intertextuality, Genette draws an analogy to writing on parchment, with the possibility of multiple layers of script on the same piece of paper. For Genette, this creates a *palimpsest* effect because "on the same parchment, one text can become superimposed upon another, which it does not quite conceal but allows to show through" (1997, p. 398–399). In Genette's terms, this process bears traces of extratextual relations that a text establishes diachronically and synchronically with other texts in the literary system. In this respect, Genette questions the concept of intertextuality with reference to the intersection of various textual practices relating to the meaning making process in writing, including intertextuality, paratextuality, metatextuality, architextuality, and hypertextuality.

Based on Genette's conceptualization of intertextuality, this study aims to reveal how intertextuality is turned into a poetic rewriting strategy in Pelin Batu's self-translated poems through her overarching approach to writing and literary creation. While the first part of this study sheds light on Genette's approach to intertextuality, the second part briefly discusses the debates on the relations of translation, self-translation, and intertextuality in translation studies. The third part, however, tries to reveal the practicality of intertextuality as a poetic rewriting strategy with examples from Pelin Batu's self-translated books, *The Book of Winds / Rüzgarlar Kitabı* (2009), *The Divan of Lost Things / Kayıp Şeyler Divanı* (2015) and *It All Began with a Story / Her Şey Bir Hikaye ile Başladı* (2018).

### **Genette's Conceptualization of Intertextuality**

In Genette's terms, intertextuality refers to the inclusion of other texts in a literary text through quotations, allusions, or borrowing (1997, p. 1–2). Thus, their relationality is dependent on synchronicity or diachronicity, allowing for the emergence of implicit inferences in the reading process of literary texts. By using various intertextual elements, authors may increase the significance level of their texts and acquaint their readers with other texts, which enhances the influences of their texts in the literary scene, in return.

Here, paratextuality carries the significance of texts one step further with the addition of surrounding context to the scope of textual creation. Paratexts are produced synchronically with the "original" text, so extratextual elements such as book titles, book covers, prefaces, interviews, ads, editorials, critiques, etc., constitute examples of paratextuality (Genette, 1997, p. 3). Paratextuality generally includes both intratextual elements like prefaces, epilogues, prologues, introductory texts, and footnotes and extratextual elements like interviews and critiques regarding literary works. These texts disseminate information about the original texts and contribute to their reception among the readers. In this respect, paratextuality has parallels with intertextuality due to its connections with the textual practices performed at the horizontal level of a literary system.

The third concept relating to the textual layering in Genette's terms is metatextuality, which depends on suppressive relations of textual products with other texts in the literature scene (Genette, 1997, p. 4). This is realized through the inclusion of authors' critical reflections on other authors or literary works, with or without allusions or citing of their names, reminding the readers that the texts that they read have the feature of a 'commentary'. Therefore, it is complementary to hypertextuality, the fourth concept behind the intertextual relations in a text, framed in the axes of *hypo-text* and *hyper-text*, "anything that connects a text B (hypo-text) to an earlier text A (hyper-text)" (Genette, 1997, p. 5). Here, the diachronicity of texts with the pre-existing ones is implied, exposing their top-down relations within a historical framework in the literary system.

Architextuality, the fifth concept in Genette's conceptualization of textual layering, is defined as any taxonomic relation of a text to a specific genre, exhibiting its generic qualities in its textual structure (Genette, 1997, p. 4). With this term at hand, Genette connects such layers in a literary text with the general outlook of a literary genre in a specific text type as well. In this way, he brings together the genre-specific qualities by making direct references to authorial style and its reflections on textual structuring in literary creation processes. Due to the complex relations to which they refer, Genette's concepts contribute to expanding our limited understanding of literary creation to a *palimpsest* writing by revealing different textual layers prevailing in literary texts produced in connection with other texts in the literary world.

In the next part, a historical overview of the debates on intertextuality in translation studies will be presented with regard to the concepts of translation and self-translation.

### **Intertextuality, Translation, and Self-Translation in Translation Studies**

The concept of intertextuality has been discussed by many translation scholars. With his article “Translation, Interpreting, and Text Linguistics” published in 1981, Albrecht Neubert became the leading scholar to evaluate translated texts with a focus on textlinguistics and intertextuality in translation studies. In his paper, Neubert implies that source and target texts are syntactically, lexically, stylistically, and contextually positioned in the target system according to their communicative functions (1981, p. 131). Therefore, both texts are shaped by the expectations, social positions, and political judgments of the readers. Due to the textual interventions such as paraphrasing, addition, and subtraction prevalent in target traditions, translation leads to the semantic reorganization of a text in a different cultural context. This is enabled by intertextual lines of interaction between source and target texts, allowing different audiences to share similar reading experiences regulated by translators (Neubert, 1981).

While Neubert reduces the context of intertextuality to communicative function, Basil Hatim combines socio-textual and socio-cultural practices within translations by bringing together “nomenclature for institutions, habits and customs, modes of existence, labels for what is condonable or condemnable in given cultures or societies, etc.” and ‘thinking’ through the kinds of texts they naturally use or to which they have access” (1997, p. 32). In this way, Hatim establishes concrete relations among tangible and intangible elements in prevailing textual practices, including translations. This very much differs from Neubert’s conceptualization of intertextuality in that Hatim evenly juxtaposes the linguistic factors with the communicative aspects of textual writing processes in both source and target systems.

In contrast to Hatim’s implication of cultural means of intertextuality, Theo Hermans extends the concept of intertextuality to the history of translation, starting from the discussion of how past texts can be traced in texts written and translated in later periods. According to Hermans, a translated text is equivalent to a source text and thus ends its position as a translation (2003, p. 39). Thus, the absolute equivalence of the translated texts is deemed to singularize the content and meaning, leave no room for different voices, and narrow down the interpretive boundaries. Here, it is crucial to realize not only to what extent the translation engages in communicative action in the context of the target language, literature, and culture but also to what extent it relates to existing literary works and their translations beforehand. In this context, translations bring about a two-sided reading for the target audience: The first reading is related to the re-communication or representation of the source text, while the second reading is associated with intertextual elements specific to the translated text shaped by the translators’ decisions (2003, p. 41). In this manner, they potentialize the creation of new discursive elements and polyphony within translated texts, making it possible to publish new translations of the same text in different periods of history, which reestablishes intertextual relations between a translation and other texts for every process of translation in return.

Lawrence Venuti follows in the footsteps of Theo Hermans and brings forward the idea that the existence of linguistic, literary, and cultural traditions, the continuity of previous forms and practices, and the reception of translations among the target audience affect the outlook of intertextuality in the translation process. For Venuti, intertextuality occurs on three axes: 1) between the source text and other texts in the source literature system; 2) between the source text and the translated text; and 3) among the translated text and other texts in the target literature system (2009, p. 158). Although Venuti highlights that translation is deemed to bring losses in the intralingual interpretation of the source language context, its intertextual and inter-discursive relations with previous texts and themes, and its reception through para-textual elements (2009, p. 159), new translations enrich intertextual elements in

a text through the reflections of subjective reading experiences by translators and the influence of target readers' expectations on its reception.

In recent years, translation researchers have mostly drawn away from the analysis of intratextual elements to extratextual elements of intertextuality with "geographical discourse surrounding world literature through paratextual elements" (Alvstad, 2012), "intercultural intertextuality in particular of speeches attended by members of different cultures" (Schäffner, 2012), "how both text and paratext of a translation may engage in intertextual dialogues" (Witt, 2016), "functional obliteration of intertextuality due to the lack of an added paratext to the translation of Polish texts" (Kaźmierczak, 2019), "the functions of paratexts in establishing intertextual connections between two Chinese translations of E. B. White's *The Trumpet of the Swan*" (Chen, 2022). Thus, it can be asserted that with the growing body of literature focusing on intratextual and extratextual aspects of intertextuality in literary texts and their translations for different audiences, translation scholars have started to abolish the accommodation of translators as intermediaries that solely transfer the source text to the target system, with the elaboration of their subjectivities and positions and the socio-cultural contexts surrounding the translated texts in focus.

In the scope of self-translation, subjectivity is at the core of literary recreation as it directly relates to writers' decisions in the recreation of her/his own works in other cultural contexts. Here, the main factor is "the linguistic fluency of self-translators, many of whom either come from bilingual and bicultural backgrounds or have so mastered their second language that it can no longer be called "foreign" (Grutman & Bolderen, 2014, p. 327). In this manner, the division between the concepts of "foreignness" and "originality" is based on the extent to which self-translators intervene in the translation process since it is turned into an act of rewriting through the strategies that are applied differently in the so-called "foreign" than the "original", whose source is unknown to readers in any case. This incident brings forward the question of how translation strategies tend to engender a diverse number of intertextual layers in a poem and affect their translatability by taking the poem from the page to the vicinity of other languages (Jacobs, 2014, p. 479). As such, intertextuality brings about extra difficulties for reflecting the semantic relations in a literary text, thus making it seem like a futile effort. Even so, as Hokenson and Munson imply, intertextuality acts as "an interliminal space of reading" beyond "writer's identity" in the scope of "two texts as intercultural representations within a translingual zone of commonality" (2007, p. 12). Hence, it can be suggested that intertextuality may necessitate the self-translators to rewrite and adjust their literary works to other cultures so that the readers will perceive them as they are with regard to their effects in a certain cultural context.

In Batu's case, self-translation of intertextual elements helps to create different literary realms and to discern between the readers of English and Turkish versions of the same poem in her books, as mentioned in Kadri Karahan's interview:

*If I had to, I'm sure I would have produced Turkish poems as well. I even translated these English poems in the second book myself. I could have put the Turkish version without the English version; no one would have been any the wiser. But that's how they came out originally, and the poem cannot be translated no matter what. It can be translated very well, but it would be a completely different poem. If I didn't write them in English, it would be against me not to put them in the book.*  
(Kadri Karahan.net, 2010)

As such, it is clearly realized that Batu is not only the author but also the translator of her own poems and has different motivations while creating poems in English and Turkish languages. Thus, this study is limited to self-translated poems of Pelin Batu to see how the self-translating experience is

reflected in the recreation of intertextual elements in the case of her bilingual books published in Turkey so far.

### Reflections of Intertextuality in Pelin Batu's Self-Translated Poems

Pelin Batu was brought up in a multicultural environment due to her father's duty as a diplomat in various countries, ranging from Pakistan, Cyprus, and Czechia to the USA. After excelling in music, literature, and theater at Mannes College of Music and New York University in the USA, Batu obtained her PhD degree in 2012 with the dissertation entitled "The creation of the monstrous other through metamorphosis" from Western Languages and Literatures at Bosphorus University, Turkey. Her experiences of a semi-nomadic lifestyle in her younger years were substantially reflected in her literary creation process, with strong traces of interculturalism and intertextuality. Her first bilingual book *Glass / Cam* (trans. Güven Turan, Nazmi Ağıl, Zafer Ildız) was published in 2003 by the prestigious Yapı Kredi Yayınları in Turkey. This was followed by *the Book of Winds / Rüzgarlar Kitabı* (2009, Artshop, trans. Nazmi Ağıl, Pelin Batu), *The Divan of Lost Things / Kayıp Şeyler Divanı* (2015, Everest, trans. Pelin Batu), and *It All Began with a Story / Her Şey Bir Hikaye ile Başladı* (2018, İnkılâp, trans. Pelin Batu).

### Intertextuality in the Book of Winds / Rüzgarlar Kitabı (2009)

As a poet, Pelin Batu uses several epigraphs in *the Book of Winds / Rüzgarlar Kitabı* (2009). By citing prominent figures of literature and arts such as American and Mexican American author Leslie Marmon Silko (p. 22), Russian author Vladimir Nabokov (p. 24), French novelist Gustave Flaubert (pp. 26, 28), Irish poet and playwright William Butler Yeats (pp. 32, 120), Austrian expressionist painter Egon Schiele (p. 44), French poet Stéphane Mallarmé (p. 60), Italian artist Giorgio de Chirico (p. 80) and Austrian philosophical author Robert Musil (p. 112), she forms direct bonds between her poems and the art world and enhances the level of hypertextuality with the help of these references in the book.

Batu also benefits from metatextual references to visual arts and culture and expands the semantic outlook of her poems by commenting on how the pieces of visual arts like movies and paintings have influenced her way of perceiving things as if they were an indispensable part of visual imagery.

**Table 1.** Metatextual references in *the Book of Winds / Rüzgarlar Kitabı* (2009).

Poem	English version (EV)	Turkish Version (TV)	Back translation (BT)
Wind of Past(e)oral(e) / Past(oral) rüzgârı (pp. 140-141)	red flowers / Of iron-bleed earth (p. 140)	kızıl çiçekleri / demir-kanamış toprağın (p. 141)	scarlet red flowers / of iron-bleed earth
Wind of Artemision Mo(u)rning: The Words of Warm Gods / Artemis'in Ma(t)em-i Sabahı: İlk Tanrıların Kelâmı (pp. 152-153)	I can smell it in dry flowers, some a time / Everything will be white (p. 152)	Koklarım onu kurumuş çiçeklerde, az bir zaman, / Her şey beyaz olunca (p. 153)	I smell it in dry flowers, for a short time / When everything becomes white

As is seen in the excerpts above, she refers to Otar Iosseliani's movie *Pastorale* (Kuzma, 2015) with "red flowers / Of iron-bleed earth" (p. 140) in "Wind of Past(e)oral(e)" (pp. 140-141) with an explicit reference to Georgia under the scarlet red flag of Soviet era, where the movie was produced. She also revives Francesco de' Rossi's painting "Artemisia Mourning Mausolus" (Uffizi Gallery) in the poem

with the same title, especially with words like “white”, “beyaz” and “dry” and “kurumuş”, reminding of mourning and death in both languages.

Batu allows for an array of implicit intertextual references in the book. With the help of her interdisciplinary background in music, history, theater, and literature, she creates textual associations between her poems and other works of literature through implicit elements of intertextuality.

**Table 2.** Intertextual elements in *the Book of Winds / Rüzgarlar Kitabı* (2009).

Poem	EV	TV	BT
Wind of the Sould of Oil Over the Trees / <i>Yağ Sesinin Ağaçların Üzerindeki Rüzgârı</i> (pp. 20-21)	Many birds live long (p. 20)	<i>Bir sürü kuş ise çok yaşar</i> (p. 21)	Many flocks of birds live very long
Wind of Crepescular Longing for Jeff Buckley / <i>Jeff Buckley İçin Alacakaranlık Özleminin Rüzgârı</i> (pp. 32-39)	Today I light everything with the sun (p. 38).	<i>Bugün her şeyi güneşle aydınlatacağım</i> (p. 39)	Today I will light everything with the sun
Wind of Kandra / <i>Kandra Rüzgârı</i> (pp. 132-133)	until all are brothers and sisters / and then there is war (p. 132)	<i>Hepsi kardeş olana dek / Sonra savaş çıkar</i> (p. 133)	Until all are brothers and sisters / then a war breaks out
EV is the title of the poem	Wind of Black Cats Mourning the Death of the Black Cat (pp. 118)	<i>Kara Kedinin Ölümü için Yas Tunan Kara Kedilerin Rüzgârı</i> (p. 119)	Wind of Black Cats Mourning the Death of the Black Cat

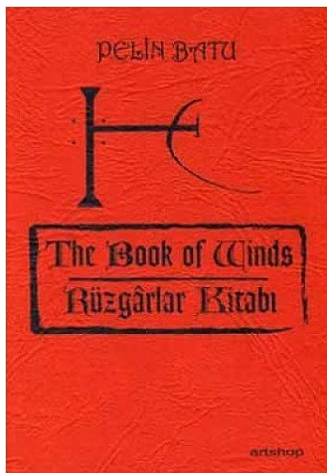
As is seen above, Batu attracts readers' attention to the line “Many birds live long” (p. 20) in “Wind of the Sound of Oil Over the Trees” (pp. 20-21) by implicitly reminding us of Persian female poet Forough Farrokhzad's line “Keep the flight in mind / The bird may die” (Poetry Nook) in a counter sense with this line. In “Wind of Crepescular Longing for Jeff Buckley” (pp. 32-39), Batu refers to American novelist Jonathan Safran Foer's *Everything is illuminated* (2002) (Jordion, 2010) with the line “Today I light everything with the sun” (p. 38), given with a literal translation in the Turkish version. Moreover, in “Wind of Kandra” (pp. 132-233), Batu resorts to a biblical reference of Adam and Eve with the line “until all are brothers and sisters / and then there is war” (p. 132), which resonates with the war between their sons Cain and Abel due to Cain's jealousy arising from the rejection of his sacrifice by God (Denova, 2021). The poem titled “Wind of Black Cats Mourning the Death of the Black Cat” (pp.118-119) is clearly reminiscent of Edgar Allan Poe's well-known short story *Black Cat* (1843) in both languages. However, there are not any certain lines that may be related to Poe's literary piece in the poem, limiting the reference to the short story in the title.

In the case of architextuality, Batu uses lifted lines or free verses in most of the poems. She generally does not follow a specific rhyme scheme nor standardize the meter through varying shortened or elongated sentences in both English and Turkish versions of the book. In “Wing of Small City I & II: his city, my city, old & new” (pp. 44-45), she uses prose form when she reminds the readers of her experiences in Vienna as “Wien, the lost grandeur of fallen empire; paper maché hearts of big bathrobes and waters of old pipes, [...]” (p. 44), which resonates like a piece of diary or memoir in return. In

another poem titled “Wind of the Mystery of the Juicy Lemon (as noted by and Old Wind” (pp. 78-79), she keeps the prose form again to refer to her watching a lover cut a lemon as “When my lover picked a lemon, he could not believe his eyes. [...]” (p. 78). In “Lodos (A Red and White Air” (pp. 162), she once more uses the prose form while mentioning her alienation in the middle of an unknown land as “I am the one without language – My words are dead seafish, seastars losing their color to sand, plagues that make our skins shine a Transylvanian red [...]” (p. 162). These examples show that Batu has the tendency to combine verse and prose, as she easily crosses the boundaries between these two forms in *the Book of Winds / Rüzgarlar Kitabı* (2009).

As a paratextual element, Batu’s main source is footnotes, in which she mentions book names or original authors of some titles or lines from her poems. However, there is no footnote embedded in the book. Thus, the only paratext regarding the book is the front cover of the book given in Figure 1.

**Figure 1.** The front cover of *the Book of Winds / Rüzgarlar Kitabı* (2009).



In *the Book of Winds / Rüzgarlar Kitabı* (2009), Batu has chosen to put her own drawing on the cover with the titles of the book written in English and Turkish respectively, suggesting that it has the feature of a bilingual book. The simplicity of the image and the font chosen for the title also give the impression of a medieval text that was written centuries ago, which is an intertextual element on its own.

From the perspective of translation, Batu keeps original references to mythological tales, religious texts, pieces of visual arts like movies and paintings and other literary works in both languages. By using literal translation without giving footnotes or explicating textual elements unless it is deemed necessary, she intentionally resorts to an alienating impact on both English and Turkish readers with direct transfer of linguistic expressions and uses intertextuality as a tool for covering the track of her writing since it is difficult to get a clear idea of whether her poems are “originally” written in English or Turkish. In this way, Batu enriches the poetic aspects of her writing by arousing the curiosity of readers towards her poems without clear origins of her act of meaning-making in both languages.

### **Intertextuality in *The Divan of Lost Things / Kayıp Şeyler Divanı* (2015)**

In *The Divan of Lost Things / Kayıp Şeyler Divanı* (2015), Batu uses several quotes from Turkish poet Yahya Kemal (p. 88), French philosopher Gaston Bachelard (p. 128), Al Baqarah, a sura from the Qur’an (p. 160), English author Saki (p. 164), French photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson (p. 178), and Italian poet Francesco Petrarca (p. 62). In this way, she enhances the hypertextual outlook of her book with direct and explicit references to other authors, philosophers, poets, and artists through their own words in the book.

When it comes to metatextuality, it is realized that her poems have concrete reflections of Batu’s complicated authorial relation with religious elements and pieces of visual arts.

**Table 3.** Metatextual references in *The Divan of Lost Things / Kayıp Şeyler Divanı* (2015).

Poem	EV	TV	BT
The Waiting Room / <i>Bekleme Odası</i> (pp. 24-27)	after the 100 <sup>th</sup> Yasin, roses are brought by young girls, / and a lady makes Noah’s pudding	100’üncü Yasin’den sonra, genç kızlar tarafından güller / getirilir / bir hanım aşure ve helva yapar bütün komşularına; (p. 25)	after the 100 <sup>th</sup> Yasin, roses are brought by young girls, / and a lady makes ashura and halva for all her neighbours;



	and halva for all her neighbours; (p. 24)		
From the Land of Pomegranates / <i>Nar Diyarından</i> (pp. 122-125)	Parajanov demon (p. 122)	<i>Parajanov iblisi</i> (p. 123)	Parajanov's iblis
The Painter / <i>Ressam</i> (pp. 150-151)	The cracked walnut symbolizes the vulva (p. 150).	<i>Kırık ceviz vulvayı temsil eder</i> (p. 151)	The broken walnut represents the vulva

In the table above, with the lines “after the 100<sup>th</sup> Yasin, roses are brought by young girls, / and a lady makes Noah’s pudding and halva for all her neighbours;” (p. 24), Batu refers to food-serving practice after a person is deceased in a Muslim household with the delicacies like “Noah’s pudding and halva” (Eker, 2020). While the reference is certainly biblical in the English version, the word becomes “*aşure* [Ashura]” (p. 25) in the Turkish poem, with the tendency to make it more familiar to the Turkish audience with the Islamized version of the word. Batu alludes to “Parajanov demon” (p. 122) and finds a way to innuendo “The Demon” by the Soviet filmmaker Sergei Parajanov, a movie inspired by Mikhail Lermontov’s poem (Parajanov-Vartanov Institute). In the Turkish line, “Parajanov demon” becomes “*Parajanov iblisi*” (p. 123) and yields a more religious context with the use of the word “*iblis*”. In this way, the Turkish version brings about a more culturally adjusted semantic axis for the readership. Another example of metatextuality can be found in the line, in which Batu evokes associations with visual arts. Here, she recaptures the painting “*Oedipus Rex*” (1922) by German painter Max Ernst. As mentioned on a website dedicated to Ernst’s artworks, “the nut represents the female and the crack in the nut is a symbol for the vulva” (Max-ernst.com). In the Turkish version, the line is recreated as “*Kırık ceviz vulvayı temsil eder*” (p. 151), which reflects the use of literal translation as a strategy.

To expand the frame of intertextuality, Batu builds genuine connections between her poems, Abrahamic religious texts, and the works of various literary figures from both Western and Eastern literatures.

**Table 4.** Intertextual references in *The Divan of Lost Things / Kayıp Şeyler Divanı* (2015).

Poem	EV	TV	BT
The Son / <i>Oğul</i> (pp. 18-21)	the world has gone, now I have to carry you (p. 20)	<i>Dünya gitti, şimdi seni taşımam lazım</i> (p. 21)	The world has gone, now I have to carry you
He Read Me a Poem of Crows / <i>Bana Kargalı Bir Şiir Okudu</i> (pp. 52-53)	It was only the crows of his eyes / that spoke (p. 52)	<i>Sadece gözlerinin kargalarıdır / konuşan</i> (p. 53)	It was only the crows of his eyes / that spoke
Elegy (After Sheikh Ghalib) / <i>Mersiye (Şeyh Galip'in Ardından)</i> (pp. 78-81)	if there is a rose that does not burn / a river that does not catch fire (p. 78)	<i>yanmayan gül var mıdır / ateş almayan nehir var mıdır</i> (p. 79)	is there a rose that does not burn / is there a river that does not catch fire
Montale & Co. / <i>Montale ve Şürekası</i> (pp. 160-163)	“ <i>Umulur ki şükredesiniz</i> ” (p. 162)	“ <i>Umulur ki şükredesiniz</i> ” (p. 162)	that ye may be grateful

The first intertextual reference can be found in the line “the world has gone, now I have to carry you” (p. 20). After a brief search, it is seen that this line is taken from a poem written by the Jewish poet

Paul Celan that reads as “The world is gone. I must carry you” (Foti, 2006) with a literal translation in the Turkish version. In “He Read Me a Poem of Crows” (pp. 52-53), Batu makes an explicit reference to Edgar Allan Poe’s “Raven” (1845) (Bradshaw, 2012) as with an allusion of “But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only / That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour” from the original poem. Additionally, she resorts to literary imagery from Ghalib’s *Ateş Gazeli* [Ghazal of Fire] with the lines “if there is a rose that does not burn / a river that does not catch fire” (p. 78) reflected as “Gül âteş gülbün âteş gülşen âteş cûybâr âteş [Rose fire rosa fire rose garden fire river fire” (Eren, 2005) in the original poem, which was transferred with a literal translation into Turkish. Moreover, Batu includes “Umulur ki şükredesiniz [that ye may be grateful]” (p. 162), fourteenth verse of Surah An-Nahl from the Qur’an (Kur’an Ayetleri), as a separate line by keeping the same Turkish line in both versions. This not only has an alienating effect on the readers of the English language but also implies the “holy” scripture of the Qur’an in both languages. As Batu resorts to literal translation in these lines, she tends to create similar effects on English and Turkish readers by prioritizing the meaning universe over the cultural context surrounding these linguistic elements.

In the context of architextuality, she maintains her poetic style with more elongated stanzas in addition to couplets in poems like “A Girl by the Shore” (pp. 48-51), “Ragtime” (pp. 64-65), “Gardens” (pp. 90-93), “Anatolika” (pp. 100-107) in both languages. In “Hospital-Grotesques” (pp. 28-29), she uses prose form in that she tells a brief story starting with the line “My husband was a healthy man. He liked apples, he was nice. [...]”, which is also kept in the Turkish version. Thus, it can be suggested that she sticks to the architextual elements of her writing style in both versions of the texts in the book.

As a paratextual element, Batu uses only one footnote for the translation of Petrarch’s saying “Pace non trovo, et non o da far Guerra / E temo, et spero; et ardo, et son un ghiaccio” as “I find no peace, and yet I make no war, / I fear and hope, and burn and I am ice” (p. 62) with “Huzur bulmam, ve fakat savaş da açmam, / ve korkarım, ve ümit ederim; ve yanarım, ve buzum [I don’t find peace, and yet I don’t start a war, / and I fear, and I hope, and I burn, and I am ice]” (p. 63) in the Turkish version. She starts with Italian, then translates it into English and goes on with Turkish without making seemingly significant changes in the meaning of the saying with the literal translation strategy, keeping the core semantic meaning in both English and Turkish versions.

Another paratextual element is the cover of the book, as shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2.** The cover of *The Divan of Lost Things / Kayıp Şeyler Divanı* (2015)



On the bilingual cover of the book, Batu added her own drawings to Lucas Cranach’s central piece titled “The Donkey Pope of Rome” (1523). “As a standing figure with a donkey’s head, a skin of fish scales, female breasts, a hoof and claw for feet, and the end of an elephant’s trunk for its right hand” (Hendrix, 2015), this drawing symbolizes “the futility of trusting in a religious authority that sanctioned the pursuit of perfection as the right way to heaven”. It is not surprising that Batu has used it on the cover because she openly defines herself as atheist (Haberdar.com, 2013).

From the perspective of translation, Batu intensively uses literal translation to keep the meaning universe of her poems similar for both readerships. Whereas the literal translation is generally seen as a limitation to creativity in translation, it potentially develops the poetic side of her writing with seemingly unidimensional outlook of her poems in both versions. As such, Batu uses intertextuality as a poetic writing strategy by directly transferring religious elements and implicit intertextual elements from other literary works to complement the meaning-making process and extend

the linguistic elements beyond the semantic meaning in the book. In this way, she enriches the meaning universe of her poetry, which complicates the reading process for target readers in return.

### Intertextuality in *It All Began with a Story / Her Şey Bir Hikaye ile Başladı* (2018)

In *It All Began with a Story / Her Şey Bir Hikaye ile Başladı* (2018), Batu expands the scope of hypertextuality with a higher place of direct quotations from American poet J. Allyn Rosser (p. 35), Jungian psychoanalyst Clarissa Pincola Estes (p. 41), English philosopher Thomas Hobbes (p. 99), ancient Greek rhetorician and philosopher Maximus of Tyre (p. 106), Belgian surrealist painter René Magritte (p. 126), ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus (p. 132), Hittite king Hattusili (p. 136), ancient Greek poet Hesiod (p. 140), Ezekiel (the Bible) (p. 162), French romanticist Gérard de Nerval (p. 174), French author Jean Paul Sartre (p. 217), Egyptian author Naguib Mahfouz (p. 220), Chinese classic text *Tao Te Ching* (p. 250), ancient Greek philosopher Socrates (p. 252), French author Victor Hugo (p. 258), Spanish poet and playwright Federico Garcia Lorca (p. 264), American historian and author Barbara W. Tuchman (p. 270), Polish poet Wisława Szymborska (p. 278), Belgian-American novelist, poet, and memoirist May Sarton (p. 286) and French post-impressionist painter Henri Rousseau (p. 310) with pollination ecologist Stephen Buchman (p. 184), Christian apostle St. Paul (p. 192), American poet Emily Dickinson (p. 211) and the work on alchemy titled *Morienus* (p. 280) in footnotes. As years pass by, the number of direct quotations increases in Batu's books, which forms new literary connections in her writing. Batu realizes this with her direct use of hypertextuality as a literary strategy to create associations among the present and past figures of literature, art, history, psychology, philosophy, and history in her poems.

Furthermore, Batu develops the metatextual layering in the book by including different elements of the visual arts, world cultures, history, philosophy, and religion in her poems.

**Table 5.** Metatextual references to cultural elements in *It All Began with a Story / Her Şey Bir Hikaye ile Başladı* (2018).

Poem	EV	TV	BT
Lady Chaos / <i>Leydi Kaos</i> (pp. 14-19)	black teeth of Japanese ancients (p. 16)	<i>Japon ihtiyarların kara dişleriyle</i> (p. 17)	With black teeth of Japanese elderly
Oblatio / <i>Adak</i> (pp. 158-161)	Zoroaster's haoma (p. 158)	<i>Zerdüşt'ün haoma ağacı</i> (p. 159)	Zoroaster's haoma tree

As such, she brings various knowledge practices together and extends the outlook of her poetry to a transcultural level by building an intercultural reading experience for both English and Turkish readers. Starting with the line "black teeth of Japanese ancients" (p. 16), Batu makes a reference to the custom of teeth blackening as a sign of maturity, beauty, and civilization in Southeast Asia (Live Japan, 2019) with a literal translation strategy, while she mentions "Zoroaster's haoma" (p. 158), a sacred plant in Zoroastrian religion (Eduljee, 2005) with the addition of "ağaç" (tree) to make it more comprehensible in the Turkish version. This proves the idea that she resorts to additions to her poems to increase the comprehensibility for the target readership whenever deemed necessary.

**Table 6.** Metatextual references to specific artworks in *It All Began with a Story / Her Şey Bir Hikaye ile Başladı* (2018)

Poem	EV	TV	BT
The Discombobulating Case of the Crow /	Another three of knowledge, if you will / Crow tree we have deemed it (p. 238)	<i>başka bir bilge ağacı da diyebilirsiniz ona / Biz karga ağacı deriz</i> (p. 239)	You may call it another tree of knowledge / we call it crow tree

<i>Vaka-ı Tuhafiye-i Karga</i> (pp. 234-241)			
Bosch's Bestiary (Upon the Closing of the Museum) / <i>Bosch'un Düşsel Varlıklar Ansiklopedisi (Müze Kapandıktan Sonra)</i> (pp. 294-297)	and all the strange fish and flying creatures / (with the ugly heads of teeth) need to be fed (p. 296)	<i>ve tüm o (diş dolu çirkin kafalı) / garip balık ve uçan mahlukat beslenmelidir</i> (p. 297)	and all of those (ugly heads full of teeth) / strange fish and flying creatures need to be fed
Woman Who Lives at the End of Time / <i>Zamanın Sonunda Yaşayan Kadın</i> (pp. 40-43)	In the Hour of the Wolf / when destruction needs to be wreaked (p. 42)	<i>Kurdun Saatinde / yıkımın gelmesi gerektiğinde</i> (p. 43)	In the Hour of the Wolf / when the destruction needs to arrive

She also adds more artworks into the context of her poems by including "The Tree of Crows" by German romanticist Caspar David Friedrich (Meisterdrucke) in a line in "The Discombobulating Case of the Crow / *Vaka-ı Tuhafiye-i Karga* (pp. 234-241). Another case of a metatextual reference is in "Bosch's Bestiary (Upon the Closing of the Museum)" (pp. 294-297). In this poem, Batu evokes an intriguing scene from the painting "The Fall of the Rebel Angels" (c. 1500-1504) by the Belgian painter Pieter Bruegel the Elder (Plessis, 2023). In "Woman Who Lives at the End of Time" (pp. 40-43), Batu directly reminds the readers of Ingmar Bergman's movie *the Hour of the Wolf* (1968). These metatextual elements not only increase the evocative potentialities of the poetic expressions in Batu's book but also help to expand the interart relations between Batu's poems and other art forms despite the limitations arising from the literal translation of the linguistic expressions with their semantic meaning in the dictionary.

Batu also traces an array of mythological tales, biblical and religious anecdotes, and literary works from different periods of history with intertextual references in the book.

**Table 7.** Intertextual references to the Greek and Roman mythologies and Abrahamic religions in *It All Began with a Story / Her Şey Bir Hikaye ile Başladı* (2018).

Poem	EV	TV	BT
Lady Chaos / <i>Leydi Kaos</i> (pp. 14-19)	In the beginning was chaos (p. 18)	<i>Başlangıçta kaos vardı</i> (p. 19)	There was chaos in the beginning
Luna / <i>Luna</i> (pp. 264-267)	I rise I fall / I am Luna of the night (p. 266)	<i>İnip çıkarım / gecelerin Lunasıyım</i> (p. 267)	I rise and fall / I am Luna of the nights

As a poet, she mentions several names and narrative elements from Greek and Roman mythologies. For example, the line "In the beginning was chaos" (p. 18) reminds the readers of Hesiod's famous poem *Theogony* (Trzaskoma et. al., 2016), in which the origins of the gods are discussed, while the lines in "Luna" (pp. 264-267) immediately remind of Hecate, who was the goddess of magic, witchcraft, the night, moon, ghosts, and necromancy. (Theoi.com). In these lines, Batu clearly benefits from literal translation with a focus on the core meaning of the linguistic elements in both languages.

**Table 8.** Intertextual references to Abrahamic religions in *It All Began with a Story / Her Şey Bir Hikaye ile Başladı* (2018).

Poem	EV	TV	BT
The Beginning (According to Lilith) / <i>Başlangıç (Lilith'e göre)</i> (pp. 20-27)	she was first his rib, then his wife (p. 22)	<i>ilkin onun kaburgası, sonra karısı olduğunu</i> (p. 23)	she was first his rib, then his wife
the Curse of Cassandra / <i>Kassandra'nın Laneti</i> (p. 66)	do not be fooled by her lovely face (p. 66)	<i>onun güzel yüzüne kanmayın</i> (p. 67)	do not be cheated by her beautiful face
Beautitude: As Accorded by A Tangerine / <i>Salt Saadet: Bir Mandalina Tarafından Bağışlanan</i> (pp. 182-183)	God is great (p. 182)	Allah büyüktür (p. 183)	Allah is great
Strange Beauty / <i>Garip Güzellik</i> (pp. 314-319)	"said / "Let there be light... / And there was light..." (p. 318)	"Işık olsun..." dediler, / "Ve ışık oldu..." (p. 319)	Said "Let there be light...", "And there was light..."

When it comes to anecdotes from Abrahamic religions in Batu's poems, it is indicated that she frequently positions the Bible as a grand source of knowing and comprehending the terrestrial truth around herself. As such, in "The Beginning (According to Lilith)" (pp. 20-27), Batu takes a more widely known story of genesis into the center as she uses the biblical reference to Adam's rib being the original source of Lilith's birth that makes her an inferior creature. In "the Curse of Cassandra" (p. 66), Batu reminds of the Holy Book by quoting "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows" (Galatians 6:7-8). For Batu, "God is great" (p. 182) as it is echoed in the Adan (Huda, 2019), the call for prayer repeated five times daily in Islamic countries. In the Turkish version, the sentence is adjusted to Turkish culture as "*Allah büyüktür*" (p. 183) since God's name is Allah in Islamic contexts whenever It is mentioned. In the lines from "Strange Beauty" (pp. 314-319), she refers to the origin of all life in the universe with the reminder of the beginning of life on earth accorded by Abrahamic religions including Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (Genesis 1:3). In these lines, Batu uses literal translation to create similar effects on both readerships by keeping close to the core meaning of linguistic elements in both languages.

**Table 9.** Intertextual references to other literary works in *It All Began with a Story / Her Şey Bir Hikaye ile Başladı* (2018).

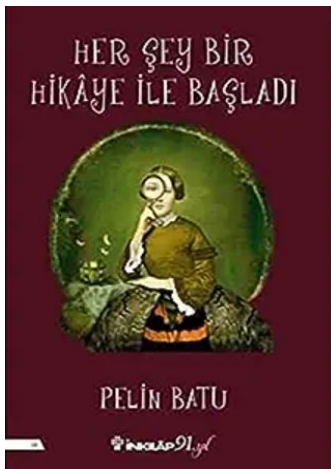
Poem	EV	TV	BT
Persephone of the Pomegranate / <i>Narın Persephone'si</i> (pp. 78-81)	Must we always / fall / for the forbidden fruit? (p. 78)	<i>Tavlanmamız mı / lazım hep / yasak meyveyle</i> (p. 79)	Do we always have to fall for the forbidden fruit?
The Invention / <i>İcat</i> (pp. 106-109)	it was all a dream / within a dream / within a dream (p. 106)	<i>hepsi rüya içinde / rüya içinde / rüyaydı</i> (p. 107)	All within a dream / within a dream / was a dream
Wise Tale of Goblins / <i>Gulyabanilerden Öğretici Bir Hikaye</i> (pp. 144-147)	an anonymous tale of goblins (p. 144)	<i>gulyabanilerle ilgili adsız bir masal</i> (p. 145)	an untitled tale about goblins

In the table above, Batu generally refers to literary works of her liking as “it was all a dream / within a dream / within a dream” (p. 106) from Poe’s poem titled “A dream within a dream” (Poe, 1850), “the lake is a lake is a lake” (p. 128) reminiscent of the line “a rose is a rose is a rose” from American poet Gertrude Stein’s famous poem “Sacred Emily” (Stein, 1913), and “an anonymous tale of goblins” (p. 144) taking the reader to George Macdonald’s reputed fairy tale “The Wise Woman: A Parable” first published in 1875 (Jarrar, 2013). Batu prefers to translate these lines with literal translation strategy with a focus on the semantic meaning in the Turkish version, which creates a similar effect on both readerships in return.

Similarly, Batu includes only one piece of writing in prose under the title of “Dogstar” (pp. 268-269) and keeps very close to the verse form as an architextual element. She diversifies her writing through lifted lines in “Persephone of the Pomegranate” (pp. 78-81) and “Beatitude: As Accorded by a Tangerine” (pp. 182-183), couplets in “Winter (or Ishtar’s Plead)” (pp. 34-35), “That Solitary Flower” (pp. 128-129) and “Luna” (pp. 264-267), shortened or elongated stanzas in “Heroine” (pp. 102-103), “Salome Whispers” (pp. 52-53) and “Still-life of a Blue Bar of Soap (Magic Reality after the Great War)” (pp. 304-304), and cubist shapes in “Kybele” (pp. 28-33), “Gods of Strife” (pp. 118-119), “The Weed” (pp. 200-201) and “Cloud Appreciation Society” (pp. 252-253). Hence, one can easily understand that Batu holds on to architextuality in poetry, with more pieces of writing in verse form in her later books than *the Book of Winds / Rüzgarlar Kitabı* (2009).

As a paratextual element, Batu uses more footnotes than her former books. For example, Batu gives footnotes for “Stephen Buchmann, *The Reason for Flowers: Their History, Allure, Biology and How They Change our Lives*” in “Stargazer” (pp. 184-185), “St. Paul” in “Cemetery Cypresses” (pp. 192-193), “From Emily Dickinson’s “A Narrow Fellow in the Grass” (p. 210) in “Zero at the Bone” (pp. 210-215), “From her book: *The Proud Tower: A Portrait of the World before the War: 1890-1914*” in “Pessimist of a Plough” (pp. 270-273), in “for the lines “This thing is extracted from you: / you are it’s mineral / and one can find it in you” (p. 280) in “Stone (Without a Door)” (pp. 278-281) with the same footnote in both versions. Created with literal translation strategy in both languages, these footnotes enhance the background knowledge of the readers on the literary figures and their works outside the Turkish context and connect different literary realms with one another by establishing evocatory fields of meaning-making in her poems.

**Figure 3.** The cover of *It All Began with a Story / Her Şey Bir Hikaye ile Başladı* (2018).



Batu has kept the title monolingual with the Turkish one only. The drawing is titled “the Moth House” (2012) by Maggie Taylor, who defines her works as “evocative single-scene narratives [...] [that] combine 19th Century photographs, found objects, and digital capture to craft surreal alternate realities rich in symbolism” as an intertext of different materials (Eby, 2023). With this cover, Batu provides an unwitting passage into her book that also suggests a gilded array of textual elements, from quotations of famous figures of literature, philosophy, the arts, history, science, and religion to allusions relating to mythological stories, religious anecdotes, and biblical events.

From the perspective of translation, Batu resorts to literal translation to keep the impact area of her writing similar for both readerships. While she keeps close to the semantic meaning of linguistic expressions in both languages, she exceeds the limitations of literal translation with intertextuality as a poetic rewriting strategy since she makes additions or removes some elements whenever she deems necessary. Thus, intertextuality

turns into a complementary aspect in Batu's poems with the direct transfer of intertextual elements to give a multi-layered outlook to her writing in both versions, which tends to change the negative attitude towards the literal translation as well.

## CONCLUSION

From Saussure to Bakhtin and Kristeva to Derrida and Genette, intertextuality has been associated with signification, discourse/narrative, communicative function, and difference of meaning in literary texts. Gérard Genette has been one of the leading scholars to elaborate on intertextual elements under specific categories, from direct and indirect references to other works of art and literature to paratexts in their surrounding contexts. In translation studies, however, his conceptualization has been generally limitedly applied to research that reduced the scope of analysis to intratextual elements like allusions or quotations of other texts or paratexts like prefaces and footnotes as extratextual sources of information in literary texts. Thus, this study discusses the concept of intertextuality as a poetic rewriting strategy by extending its definition to intratextual and extratextual aspects of textual recreation process with regard to self-translation in the case of Pelin Batu's poems in her bilingual poetry books.

As a poet, Pelin Batu refers to several works of literature, mythology, religion, art history, science, and history and creates a literary universe enriched by references from leading literary figures like Petrarch, Victor Hugo, Gustave Flaubert, Vladimir Nabokov, William Butler Yeats, Naguib Mahfouz, mythological narratives relating to Io, Zeus and Medusa, biblical incidents like the war between Cain and Abel, religious texts like the Qur'an and the Old Testament, and well-known works of art like Caspar David Friedrich's "Tree of Crow". This is reminiscent of her upbringing in a multicultural environment and experience as a multilingual reader, as reflected in the extensive use of intertextual references in her poems. As a self-translating poet, Batu often resorts to literal translation of these intertextual elements as a poetic rewriting strategy to bring a multi-layered reading experience to both readerships by offering novice thresholds of meaning-making and image-building with the direct transfer of linguistic elements in her self-translated poems. Hence, Batu's tendencies substantially turn her self-translation process into a *palimpsest* writing with the recreation, reintroduction and recontextualization of intertextual elements in both versions of her poems in the Turkish literary scene.

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