

THE “ONCE-FORGOTTEN” TURKISH BESTSELLER:  
(RE-)CONTEXTUALIZING SABAHATTİN ALİ’S  
*MADONNA IN A FUR COAT*

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*MADONNA IN A FUR COAT*

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## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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## ABSTRACT

The “Once-Forgotten” Turkish Bestseller:

(Re-)Contextualizing Sabahattin Ali’s *Madonna in a Fur Coat*

This thesis explores the reason(s) why Sabahattin Ali’s novel, *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*, was translated into English after 73 years and how it has been (re-)presented and (re-)contextualized in the Anglophone world. Apart from the Anglophone context, the thesis investigates the way Sabahattin Ali and his work have been re-created and re-contextualized in the Turkish context in order to be able to analyze the recent ‘unexpected’ and ‘surprise’ popularity of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* in the source culture. In the light of Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of “agency” and his field theory, the thesis also focuses on the key role of the publishers in the source and target cultures, as well as the editor of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* as social agents in the “consecration”, (re-)creation and (re-)contextualization of the book both in Turkey and in the international arena. In the thesis, a critical, descriptive and comparative analysis of *Madonna in a Fur Coat* and *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* will be carried out by employing Gideon Toury’s (1995) “operational” and “matricial norms” to foreground the differences between the source and target texts by pointing out the necessity of having (co-)translators and copy editors, who are native speakers of source language, in the case of books translated from minor(ity) languages and literatures in particular.

## ÖZET

“Bir Zamanların Unutulmuş” Türkçe Çok Satan Romanı:

Sabahattin Ali’nin *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*’sının Yeniden Bağlamsallaştırılması

Bu tez, Sabahattin Ali’nin *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* adlı romanının 73 yıl sonra İngilizceye çevrilmesinin sebeplerini ve söz konusu kitabın Anglofon dünyasında nasıl temsil/takdim edildiğini ve (yeniden) bağlamsallaştırıldığını incelemektedir. Bu Anglofon bağlamı dışında, söz konusu tez, *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*’nın son yıllarda kaynak kültürdeki ‘sürpriz’ ve ‘beklenmedik’ popülaritesini inceleyebilmek için Sabahattin Ali’nin ve romanının Türkiye bağlamında nasıl yeniden yaratıldığını ve yeniden bağlamsallaştırıldığını irdelemektedir. Pierre Bourdieu’nün “özne” kavramı ve alan kuramının ışığında, *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*’nın gerek uluslararası arenada gerekse Türkiye’de “kutsanması”, (yeniden) yaratılması ve bağlamsallaştırılmasında sosyal özneler olarak kaynak ve erek kültürdeki yayıncının ve özellikle özgün romanın editörünün oynadığı kilit role odaklanılmaktadır. Bu tezde, kaynak ve erek metinlerdeki farklılıkları ön plana çıkarmak için, özellikle minör ve/veya azınlık edebiyatlarına ait eserlerin çevirisinde ana dili kaynak dil olan redaktörler ve (eş)çevirmenlerin gerekliliğine işaret edilerek, *Madonna in a Fur Coat* ve *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*’nın eleştirel, betimleyici ve karşılaştırmalı metin analizi Gideon Toury’nin (1995) “süreç” ve “matris” normlarından faydalanılarak gerçekleştirilecektir.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

As Johan Heilbron puts it, the international translation system is, first and foremost, a hierarchical structure, with central, semi-peripheral and peripheral languages (1999, p. 433). A statistic from the 1980s report that more than 40 percent of all the translated books worldwide were translated from English (Heilbron, 1999, p. 434). Moreover, according to the figures of the Diversity Report 2008, which compiles statistics on books in translation across Europe over a period of more than 25 years and is based on the UNESCO Index Translationum as well as separate national book market statistics, “translations from English account 60 to 70 percent in most countries” (Wischenbart, 2008, p. 13). On the other hand, the translation flow into English is so limited that “only an estimated 2 or 3 percent of all translations are into English as the target language” (Wischenbart, 2008, p. 13). Therefore, it can still be said that English is definitely the most central language in the international literary polysystem. Like most languages, Turkish also occupies a peripheral position within the international translation system when compared to English. In Turkey, there is a notable inequality in the flow of translations from and into English, which also proves the ‘minor(ity)’ status of Turkish language and literature. Nevertheless, there has been a noteworthy increase in the number of translations from Turkish into English in the past decade. According to the Diversity Report 2016, it is possible to recognize the sharp rise of translations from Turkish (up from 1 to 14 titles within just three years) (Wischenbart and Kovač, 2016, p. 42), which resulted in various research conducted on Turkish literature in English translation. It is, therefore, needed

to refer to these studies in this thesis in order to be able to explore the status of Turkish literature in the Anglo-American world.

In entry titled “Turkish: Literary Translation into English” which gives general information about the historical background of Turkish language and literary translations from Turkish into English, Özlem Berk Albachten (2000) draws attention to the fact that literary translations from Turkish into English have mostly been infrequent and scattered (2000, p. 1434). On the other hand, she points out that there has recently been a small but significant increase in the flow of translations from Turkish literature into English by giving examples from the most frequently translated authors such as Yaşar Kemal and Nâzım Hikmet. Considering the fact that Berk Albachten’s article is one of the first descriptive studies displaying the recent situation of Turkish literature in English translation, it can definitely be regarded as an important resource for those who are interested in this topic.

Saliha Paker’s 2001 article in *The Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation* concentrates on Turkish literature in English translation. Paker explores and explains which works have been translated into English from Turkish modern poetry and fiction. And the information that she gives about the status of Turkish fiction in English-speaking world has a great deal of importance because she not only mentions which works have been translated into English but also underscores the fact that “numerous writers of great literary merit, like Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Sabahattin Ali, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Oğuz Atay, Yusuf Atılgan, have failed to attract the individual attention they deserve” (2001, p. 623). Paker wrote this article 16 years ago and most of the writers listed above such as Sabahattin Ali, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar and Yusuf Atılgan have been recently translated into English and this has inspired me to think about some shifts in the norms that govern the literary

taste both in Turkey and in the English-speaking world, which will be dealt with in detail in the following chapters.

Another work that studies Turkish literature in English translation is Paker's 'follow-up' article entitled "Reading Turkish Novelists and Poets in English Translation: 2000-2004" in which she surveys "the recent major literary contributions to the corpus of translations into English" (2004, p. 13) touching upon the contributions of some notable Turkish writers such as Yaşar Kemal, Orhan Pamuk and Elif Şafak who have earned Turkish literature international recognition. Added to this article, Saliha Paker and Melike Yılmaz compiled a bibliography of Turkish literature in English translation between 1949 and 2004, which is, with no doubt, a significant contribution to the field of Turkish translation history and a valuable resource for researchers exploring Turkish literature in English translation.

In her article entitled "Western Eyes: Contemporary Turkish Literature in a British Context," Alev Adil focuses on "some of the cultural, critical and commercial frameworks that operate in the dissemination of Turkish literature in global, particularly UK, markets" (2006, p. 129). Taking up Pierre Bourdieu's concept of "cultural intermediary" in the case of Turkish writing, Adil states that "Bourdieu conceptualized the cultural intermediary as someone who mediates between the production and consumption of culture but in the case of Turkish writing it is worth extending the term to consider the cultural intermediary as someone who mediates between cultural fields too" (2006, p. 137). Adil also touches upon the issue of minor literatures in global markets. And with reference to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1986), she explains why such literatures are called as 'minor,' "not to indicate any pejorative literary judgment but rather to mark the presence of a minority voice

within dominant cultural hegemonies” (2006, p. 132). This argument of Adil also supports my view of Turkish literature as a minor literature.

Another work that dwells on Turkish literature in English translation is Walter G. Andrews’ article entitled “Turkish Literature on the World Stage: Good News-Bad News.” Here Andrews mentions that “Turkish literature seems to be teetering on the brink of gaining the international visibility” (2008, p. 54). Drawing attention to some important attempts to make Turkish literature more visible within the Anglo-American literary system, Andrews also underlines the fact that all these attempts are still not enough to see Turkish literature respected on the world stage. Besides being a professional scholar of Turkish and Ottoman literature, giving lectures in the United States, Andrews also adopts a critical approach regarding the visibility of Turkish literature in the English-speaking world. Thus this article is a valuable source for those who would like to gain some knowledge about Turkish literature within the Anglophone literary system.

In her dissertation entitled “Writing/Translating in/to English: The ‘Ambivalent’ Case of Elif Şafak,” Arzu Akbatur tries to explore “the way Elif Şafak and her work (written and translated in/to English) have been received, represented and de/re-contextualized mainly in the Anglo-American world” (2010, p. iii). In order to be able to offer the general context regarding the reception and representation of Elif Şafak and her works in the Anglo-American world, she also gives a brief survey of Turkish literature translated into English. Furthermore, Akbatur aims to “display the ‘minority’ status of Turkish literature as well as the ‘minority’ status of translations into English in line with the discussions on ‘minority’ within translation studies” (2010, p. 18).

In 2011, Akbatur also published an article whose aim is to offer a survey of Turkish women writers in English translation. Here she also mentions the considerable increase in the number of translations from Turkish into English since the 1980s and claims that “this also holds true for the works of women writers, and, of women’s fiction in particular, which is closely related to the bond between writing and women’s increased consciousness” (2011, p. 161). Furthermore, she briefly discusses the role of translators in the recognition and dissemination of works from a “minor” language and lays emphasis on the concept of “agency.” However, Akbatur’s study remains limited because she focuses only the women Turkish writers in English translation.

Another PhD dissertation by Duygu Tekgöl, “Around the World in English: The Production and Consumption of Translated Fiction in the UK between Cosmopolitanism and Orientalism,” mainly analyzes “discourses of identity construction in the production and consumption of translated fiction in the contemporary British book culture (2012, p. 3). Tekgöl makes her analysis through a case study on Turkish literature and argues that “while Turkish culture used to be limited to a peripheral position, in recent years, Turkish literature has been making progress towards the cosmopolitan canon” (2012, p. 241). In addition, Tekgöl examines not only some contemporary novels by Orhan Pamuk, but also the professional profile of Maureen Freely, who translated most of Pamuk’s works and is probably the most well-known translator of Turkish literature in the English-speaking world. There is no doubt that Tekgöl’s study offers a valuable analysis of the repertoire of modern Turkish literature in the British literary market by focusing on the representation of the Turkish identity in the UK. On the other hand, given the fact that Tekgöl deals only with the British literary market, her study can be

considered limited because the American literary market is also very powerful and to ignore the relation between UK and USA literary markets might lead us to inadequate judgements.

In 2013, *Literature Across Frontiers* (LAF), a European Platform for Literary Exchange, Translation and Policy Debate, published a report entitled “Literary Translation from Turkish into English in the United Kingdom and Ireland, 1990-2012” prepared by Duygu Tekgöl and updated by Arzu Akbatur. The report displays not only the status but also the position of Turkish literature in the UK book market between the years of 1990 and 2012 with a bibliography of works of Turkish literature translated into English and published in the UK and Ireland between these years. The writers touch upon key publishing issues such as the selection of titles and the UK publishers’ “lack of interest” in Turkish literature. In addition, they mention some translation issues and included a list of translators working from Turkish into English providing the profiles of some of these translators such as Maureen Freely, Ruth Christie and Saliha Paker by underlining their active involvement in the field. It is an undeniable fact that this report is a valuable source for understanding the status and position of Turkish literature in the UK literary market. It is also significant for underlining some key issues, obstacles and problems regarding the publication and representation of Turkish literature in the UK.

What is perhaps even more noteworthy is the fact that well-known examples of modern Turkish literature have recently been translated. One such example is the now widely acclaimed *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* written by Sabahattin Ali in 1943. The novel was translated into English by Maureen Freely and Alexander Dawe and published by Penguin Random House UK in 2016, 73 years after its publication in Turkish.



As for the literature on Sabahattin Ali, there are various books and articles about his life and works. For instance, Sevgül Sönmez, an editor and literary historian, has a book entitled “*A’dan Z’ye Sabahattin Ali*” (Sabahattin Ali from A to Z) (2009) which explains almost every detail of the writer’s life in alphabetical order including his childhood, education, imprisonment, works, loves, family and death. There is one more book titled “*Sabahattin Ali – Anılar, İncelemeler, Eleştiriler*” (Sabahattin Ali – Memories, Reviews, Criticisms) (2014) edited by Filiz Ali, the daughter of the writer; Atilla Özkırımlı, a writer and literary historian; and Sevgül Sönmez.<sup>1</sup> Providing ample information regarding the author’s life and works, the book also includes reviews and criticisms on his novels, stories and poems published over the years. Apart from these two sources, Asım Bezirci’s book entitled “*Sabahattin Ali – Yaşamı, Kişiliği, Sanatı, Eserleri*” (Sabahattin Ali – His Life, Personality, Art, Works) (2007) and Afşar Timuçin’s book “*Öykü ve Romanlarıyla Sabahattin Ali*” (Sabahattin Ali with His Stories and Novels) (2011) are also significant resources for both readers and researchers who are interested in Sabahattin Ali’s life and works.

When examining the literature on Sabahattin Ali, it is also possible to find books about Ali’s unsolved and mysterious death. For instance, Kemal Bayram has a book entitled “*Sabahattin Ali Olayı: Derin Devletin Faili Malûm Cinayeti*” (The Incident of Sabahattin Ali: The Secret State’s Murder by Known Perpetrator) in 1978. Afterwards, Alev Çukurkavaklı, Kemal Bayram’s son and journalist, published a ‘follow-up’ book entitled “*Sabahattin Ali Olayı 2: Derin Devletin Şifresini Gizleyen Cinayet*” (The Incident of Sabahattin Ali 2: The Murder Hiding the Code of

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<sup>1</sup> This book is the updated edition of *Sabahattin Ali* compiled by Filiz Ali Laslo and Atilla Özkırımlı and published in 1979.

the Secret State) in 2012 both of which delve into the murder of Sabahattin Ali and investigate the role of the state in his mysterious death.

Apart from the books mentioned above, there are also various theses and dissertations focusing on Sabahattin Ali's life and works. For instance, Ramazan Korkmaz explores his life and books in detail in his dissertation titled "*Sabahattin Ali-İnsan ve Eser*" (Sabahattin Ali-Human and Work) (1991) which was later published in book format with the same title by Yapı Kredi Publications in 1997. In addition, in his M.A. thesis entitled "The Trial of Sabahattin Ali – Nihal Atsız: An Examination of the Effects of the Turkish Foreign Policy on Domestic Policy during the Second-World-War" (2012), Hasan Çolak focuses on the policy at the end of the war and the foreign and domestic circumstances that resulted in the trial of Sabahattin Ali-Nihal Atsız. Another M.A. thesis by Esma Nur Çetinkaya, "Subaltern Voices in Sabahattin Ali's Stories," examines some stories of Sabahattin Ali within the scope of subalternity and one of the most significant elements in the works she analyzes is "the concept of voice in fact the voicelessness" (Çetinkaya, 2016, p. iv).

As indicated above, the literature on Sabahattin Ali mostly comprises of the books about his life and works. However, within the context of translation studies, sources are highly limited. *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* has been recently translated into English and there are few resources examining the English translation of the book. Apart from the published English translation, David Gramling and İlker Hepkaner also translated *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* into English in 2011-2013,<sup>2</sup> and recently published an article titled "Translating the Translingual Novel in Early Turkish Republican Literature: The Case of Sabahattin Ali" (2016), which examines

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<sup>2</sup> David Gramling and İlker Hepkaner translated *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* into English in 2011-2013 but they compelled to withdraw their translation after Penguin Classics bought the novel's translation rights in English. However, when Ali's rights will be released, Gramling and Hepkaner will publish their translation online. (D. Gramling and İ. Hepkaner, personal communication, March 28, 2017).

Sabahattin Ali and his novel within the disciplinary framework of German Studies and Translation Studies. In their article, Gramling and Hepkaner analyze the book by focusing on the historical background of the early Republican Turkey. They put emphasis on the Republican Turkey's language reform in the first half of the twentieth century and draw attention to the syntax of Sir Raif, the protagonist of the book, which "tends to be more Ottoman in its complexity" (2016, p. 39). They also exemplify and explain these Ottoman usages by referring to their translation.

Moreover, the Turkish-German Studies Yearbook 2016 entitled "The Transcultural Critic: Sabahattin Ali and Beyond" published by Universitätsverlag Göttingen in 2017 mainly focuses on Sabahattin Ali and his works, especially *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* because the story is set both in Turkey and Germany. In the yearbook, there are various articles written in English and German. For instance, Sevgül Sönmez has an article entitled "Sabahattin Ali's Views on the Arts and Literature" which can be regarded as a comprehensive introduction to Sabahattin Ali's views on literature and the arts. Additionally, in his article titled "The Political behind the Fur Coat: Sabahattin Ali's *The Madonna in the Fur Coat* and Leopold Sacher-Masoch's *Venus in Furs* in an Intertextual Context," İlker Hepkaner argues that "Sabahattin Ali intentionally deployed intertextuality in order to take a political stand and critique his contemporary context" (2017, p. 63). Hepkaner also explores the current bestseller status of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* in Turkey and the specific marketing strategies adopted for its English publication with Penguin Classics in 2016. Therefore, Hepkaner's article in this book will be a valuable source for both the present study and other similar studies.

Last but not least, especially after *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* has become a national bestseller in Turkey, more books have been written and published about the

author and his works. For instance, Atilla Birkiye, an accomplished essayist, novelist and poet, published a book entitled “*Sabahattin Ali’nin Yapıtlarını Sevme Sözlüğü*” (The Dictionary of Appreciating Sabahattin Ali’s Works) (2016) which analyzes the author’s novels and stories by establishing a connection between his life and works. Additionally, Mehmet Güneş’s book “*Sabahattin Ali’nin Eserlerinin Kaynakları*” (The Sources of Sabahattin Ali’s Works) (2016) examines the autobiographical components of Ali’s works.

Apart from the books mentioned above, numerous articles exploring the reason(s) of the novel’s latest accomplishment have been published as well. For example, Orhan Koçak’s article entitled “*Kürk Mantolu Madonna’nın şaşırtıcı yeni popülerliğine dair: Yeni bir kozmopolitizm mi, yoksa melankolinin süregiden hükmü mü?*” (Regarding the recent surprising popularity of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*: Is this a new cosmopolitanism or the ongoing influence of melancholy?) (2017) may be the most comprehensive review focusing on the underlying reasons of the present popularity of the novel in Turkey. In his article, Koçak first analyzes the novel in detail, almost line by line and traces the core meaning of the sentences uttered by both the protagonist, Raif Efendi, and Madonna in a Fur Coat. Koçak then makes some assumptions regarding the surprising comeback of the novel in Turkey. The first issue he dwells upon is the cosmopolitan context in which the story was shaped. Koçak, however, admits that even if the novel had not had such a context, it seems very likely that the love story narrated in the second part of the novel has aroused today’s readers’ interest (2017, p. 71). He also suggests that there has been a need for a serene style like Sabahattin Ali’s in our literature (2017, p. 93). And after underlining the dominant role of the melancholy in Turkish culture, Koçak points out

that the melancholic atmosphere and style of the novel might have led it to become a national bestseller after almost 70 years (2017, p. 93).

Another article by Elif Türker, “‘*Kürk Mantolu Madonna*’ ile katarsis” (Catharsis through ‘*Kürk Mantolu Madonna*’) (2016) aims to find answers to questions about the recent revival of the novel in Turkey by correlating the book with Aristotle’s concept of ‘catharsis.’ In her article, Türker approaches the novel’s latest success philosophically and states that *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* has become a tool of catharsis for its readers in Turkey (2016, p. 88). When examining the book within the context of tragedy, Türker believes, or wants to believe, that readers have been going through a similar catharsis with the narrator of the novel (2016, p. 91), which she thinks might be one of the reasons why *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* has been read and appreciated this much in Turkey.

As for the aim of this thesis, I will explore the reason(s) why Sabahattin Ali’s novel was translated into English after all those years and how it has been (re-)presented and (re-)contextualized in the Anglophone literary system. The hypothesis of this study, therefore, is that one of the factors determining whether a book written in a ‘minor(ity)’ language will be translated into English is that the book shall occupy a central position in a peripheral literature. That is to say, the ‘surprise’ revival of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* in the source culture led it to be published in English after 73 years.

In Chapter Two, I will present the theoretical and methodological framework of this thesis. In order to examine the position of Turkish literature within the literary polysystem, I will refer to Itamar Even-Zohar’s Polysystem Theory (1979). I will also benefit from the core-periphery model applied by sociologists (Heilbron, 1995, 1999; Linn, 2006) to draw attention to the peripheral position of Turkish language

and literature compared to English. The notion of “minority” within the context of translation (Venuti, 1998a, 1998b; Cronin, 1998) will help me to contextualize *Madonna in a Fur Coat* as a translation from a ‘minor(ity)’ language and literature. Also, Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of agency and field theory to the sociology of translation (Bourdieu, 1983, 2008; Sapiro, 2008; Gouanvic, 2005) will be of help especially in underlining the important roles of the publishers of the book in the source and target cultures and the editor of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* as social agents in (re-)contextualization of the book both in the source and target cultures. Then, I will offer my research methodology by focusing on the primary and secondary sources of the study. I will also refer to the interviews and questionnaires I conducted within the scope of this thesis.

Chapter Three of the thesis will focus on the status of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* by Sabahattin Ali in Turkey. Firstly, I will briefly give the historical overview of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* and Sabahattin Ali in order to demonstrate the journey of the book in Turkey since it was first published in 1943. This journey entails dwelling on the ‘surprise’ success of the book in Turkey after almost 70 years. I will make use of the concept of “agency” while explaining the reasons why the book has become a bestseller in Turkey after such a long period. Then, I will discuss how this ‘surprise’ success and/or other contextual factors might have caused the novel to be translated into English after 73 years.

In Chapter Four, I will dwell on the ‘surprising’ revival of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*, which has recently been witnessed in Turkey. My purpose is to find out the reason(s) why the book has become a national bestseller after almost 70 years. For this reason, I will focus on the initiatives and incidents which played part in making the author more visible over the last two decades. I will also underline the

role and importance of social media in the popularization of literary works in recent years and analyze the translational journey of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* by focusing on when and into which languages it has been translated so far.

In Chapter Five, I will offer a comparative, descriptive and critical analysis of *Madonna in a Fur Coat* and *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* by employing Gideon Toury's (1995) "operational" and "matricial norms" in order to be able to foreground the differences between the source and target texts and to point out the necessity of both translators and copy editors who are native speakers of source language in translating novels from especially minor(ity) literatures. Before the comparative analysis, I will briefly mention the stylistic features of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* in order to be able to analyze both the source and the target text properly.

Chapter Six of the thesis will focus on the (re-)contextualization and (re-)presentation of *Madonna in a Fur Coat* in the Anglophone world in order to analyze the ways the book is (re-)presented and received in the Anglophone context, especially by the publisher, booksellers and reviewers. I will also present and examine the discourses on *Madonna in a Fur Coat* formed by the reviewers in the Anglophone world. Last but not least, I will explore how the popularity of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* has influenced the (re-)presentation and (re-)contextualization of *Madonna in a Fur Coat* in the target culture.

## CHAPTER 2

### THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter aims to present the theoretical and methodological framework on which this thesis is founded. In this study, a systematic approach is needed in order to be able to position Turkish literature within the international literary polysystem and to demonstrate its peripheral position compared to English. Therefore, I will refer to the Polysystem Theory (1979) devised by Itamar Even-Zohar. Also, the core-periphery model applied by sociologists (Heilbron, 1995, 1999; Linn, 2006) is required to touch upon the peripheral position of Turkish language compared to English which is doubtlessly the most central language in the international translation system.

Additionally, the notion of “minority” within the context of translation (Venuti, 1998a; 1998b; Cronin, 1998) will help to contextualize *Madonna in a Fur Coat* as a translation from a ‘minority’ language and literature. Last but not least, Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of agency and field theory to the sociology of translation (Bourdieu, 1983, 2008; Sapiro, 2008; Gouanvic, 2005) will be of help especially in demonstrating the significant roles of the publisher and editor of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* as social agents in (re-)contextualization of the book both in the source and target cultures.

#### 2.1 The Polysystem Theory and the position of Turkish literature within the international literary polysystem

In the early 1970s, Itamar Even-Zohar devised the Polysystem Theory as a reaction to the static prescriptive models. According to Even-Zohar’s model, the polysystem is conceived as a heterogeneous, hierarchized conglomerate (or system) of systems



which interacts to bring about an ongoing, dynamic process of evolution within the polysystem as a whole (Shuttleworth, 2009, p. 197). Since “there are hierarchies within the polysystem -center-and-periphery relations, or dynamic stratification” (Even-Zohar, 1979, p. 293), there is a constant state of tension between the center and the periphery.

Even-Zohar mostly focuses on “the function of translated literature for a literature as a whole or its position within that literature” (1990b, p. 45). For avoiding making strict assumptions, he states that “whether translated literature becomes central or peripheral, and whether this position is connected with innovatory (“primary”) or conservatory (“secondary”) repertoires, depends on the specific constellation of the polysystem under study” (1990b, p. 46). Even-Zohar suggests three circumstances in which translated literature might occupy a central position within the literary polysystem. He explains these conditions as follows:

It seems to me that three major cases can be discerned, which are basically various manifestations of the same law: (a) when a polysystem has not yet been crystallized, that is to say, when a literature is “young,” in the process of being established; (b) when a literature is either “peripheral” (within a large group of correlated literatures) or “weak,” 1 or both; and (c) when there are turning points, crises, or literary vacuums in a literature. (Even-Zohar, 1990b, p. 47)

As Even-Zohar puts it, if a literature is “peripheral” or “weak” or both, then translated literature can maintain a central position within the literary polysystem because “for such literatures, translated literature is not only a major channel through which fashionable repertoire is brought home, but also a source of reshuffling and supplying alternatives” (1990b, p. 48).

On the other hand, when the original literature is already “central” or “strong,” translated literature occupies a peripheral position. When considered from this point of view, translations from Turkish literature maintain a peripheral position

in the Anglophone literary system. This is due to the fact that there are strong centrifugal forces in place in the UK literary system, and along with other peripheral literatures here, Turkish literature has been marginalized and foreignized (Tekgül, 2012, p. 249).

## 2.2 The core-periphery model

According to Stella Linn, translation flows can be understood in terms of the “core-periphery model” applied by sociologists (Heilbron 1995; 1999) to the production of cultural goods (Linn, 2006, p. 28). She explains this model as follows:

Centrality or (core position) is determined not so much by a language’s number of native speakers as by the number of people for whom that language is a second language and the extent to which the language is translated. In other words, the more centrally it is located in the global translation system, the more translations a language generates. (Linn, 2006, p. 28)

Therefore, a language is more central in the world-system of translation when it has a larger share in the total number of translated books worldwide (Heilbron, 1999, p. 433). There is no doubt that the dominant position of English in the translation market, i.e. its large share in translation flows, has become a global phenomenon (Akbatur, 2010, p. 19). Over the past several decades, translations have always amounted to a significant percentage of total book production, and this percentage has consistently been dominated by translations from English (Venuti, 1995, p. 12). On the European continent the position of English is more predominant with about 50-70 percent of the published translations from English (Heilbron, 1999, p. 434). In other words, English is the most translated language worldwide, but one of the least translated into (Venuti, 1998a, p. 10; 1995, p. 12-14). In 2008, Heilbron touches upon this issue once again and states the following:

In most developed countries in the latter half of the 20th century, the growth in translated books (especially from English) has accompanied increasing cross-border mobility. The only apparent exceptions are the most dominant powers, the United States and the United Kingdom. Typically, no significant increase in the remarkably low translation ratio has taken place in these countries since the end of World War II. (Heilbron, 2008, p. 188)

Heilbron's statement makes it clear that despite many changes in the book market since WW II, the situation of translation flow from and into English in the US and the UK has remained the same. In the Diversity Report 2008, figures clearly show that English is doubtlessly the dominant original language for translated books, and its share has been dramatically growing over the past decades. By 2004, ca. 60 percent of all translations across Europe have English originals (Wisichenbart, 2008, p. 14). This situation is restated in the Diversity Report 2010 by focusing on "the uneven distribution of languages in general, with translations from English representing roughly two out of every three translated books" (Wisichenbart and Kovač, 2010, p. 13). Translation flow into English; however, is still at the minimum level.

### 2.3 Turkish as a 'minor(ity)' language

As Michael Cronin puts it, the relationship between translation and minority languages has been a relatively neglected topic for much of the existence of translation studies (1998, p. 169). However, since the 1990s, the concept of "minority" has been adopted in translation studies especially by Lawrence Venuti who explains this concept as follows:

I understand 'minority' to mean a cultural or political position that is subordinate, whether the social context that so defines it is local, national or global. This position is occupied by languages and literatures that lack prestige or authority, the non-standard and the non-canonical, what is not spoken or read much by a hegemonic culture. (Venuti, 1998b, p. 135)

According to Venuti, minorities also include “the nations and social groups that are affiliated with languages and literatures, the politically weak or underrepresented, the colonized and the disenfranchised, the exploited and the stigmatized” (1998b, p. 135).

As I have indicated above, English is by far the dominant language in the translation market. Therefore, almost all languages other than English have now become minor languages (Cronin, 1998, p. 172). And this clearly shows the uneven and asymmetrical power relations between English and other languages. According to Cronin, languages are divided into those languages which are target-language (TL) intensive and those which are source-language (SL) intensive (1995, p. 88). In this respect, English is a TL intensive language “where there is intense translation activity from English into other languages but where there is markedly less translation traffic in the opposite direction” (Jacquemond, 1992, p. 139-140; Cronin, 1995, p. 88). A SL intensive language, on the other hand, could be any minority language “where translations are largely from other source languages that enjoy majority status” (Cronin, 1995, p. 88). That is to say, like any other minority language, Turkish, too, is a SL intensive language which “depends heavily on translations from English whereas it exports far less translations into this language” (Akbatur, 2010, p. 26).

However, as mentioned above, in recent years a significant increase has been observed in the flow of translations from Turkish into English. There have been many successful attempts and achievements that have made Turkish literature more visible in the global book market. For instance, in 2005, thanks to the establishment of TEDA, the Translation Subvention Project (Türk Edebiyatını Dışarıya Açma

Projesi) which was started by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in Turkey,<sup>3</sup> the number of Turkish literary works translated into English has considerably increased. The purpose of this project is the dissemination of Turkish culture through the translation and publication of Turkish cultural, artistic and literary works. This project has significantly raised awareness, for instance, among British publishing houses, and 14 literary translation projects have been funded through TEDA between the years of 2005 and 2012 (Tekgöl, 2012, p. 251).<sup>4</sup>

In 2006, Orhan Pamuk received the Nobel Prize in Literature which has aroused considerable interest in Turkish literature among international publishers. And according to Akbatur, this might be one of the reasons why Turkey was the guest of honor in the 2008 Frankfurt Book Fair (2010, p. 20; 2011, p. 163).

In addition, the Cunda International Workshop for Translators of Turkish Literature (CIWTTL) (Türk Edebiyatı Çevirmenleri Cunda Uluslararası Atölyesi (TEÇCA)) was founded in 2006 by Saliha Paker and has been run by Boğaziçi University.<sup>5</sup> The primary aim of this workshop is to promote the translation of Turkish literature into English.<sup>6</sup> Also, in June 2007, the First International Symposium of Translators and Publishers of Turkish Literature was held by the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Boğaziçi University in cooperation with translators, authors, publishers, associations and copyright agencies.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> For further information, please see <http://www.tedaproject.gov.tr/EN,53638/whats-teda.html>.

<sup>4</sup> For more detail, please see Appendix 6 – Literary translations funded by TEDA, published by UK publishing houses, listed in chronological order in Duygu Tekgöl (2012).

<sup>5</sup> The workshop was conducted in collaboration with the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism until 2015. It was also supported by the EU Culture Programme's Literature Across Frontiers (LAF) Project between the years of 2009 and 2012.

<sup>6</sup> This information has been quoted from the following website: [http://tecca.boun.edu.tr/?page\\_id=43](http://tecca.boun.edu.tr/?page_id=43)

<sup>7</sup> The second symposium was held on May 29-30, 2009 and the third one was organized on May 27-28, 2011 at Boğaziçi University. For more information, please visit <http://www.tedaproject.gov.tr/EN,54711/2nd-international-symposium-of-translators-and-publishe-.html> and <http://www.tedaproject.gov.tr/EN,54706/the-third-international-symposium-of-translators-and-pu-.html>.

There is no doubt that all these attempts and achievements have had a significant influence on the promotion of Turkish literature abroad, especially in Anglophone countries. However, in spite of the growing number of books translated from Turkish into English and all the developments making Turkish literature more visible in the international arena, Turkish literature still occupies a minority status and Turkish is still a minor language compared to English.

#### 2.4 Bourdieu's concept of agency and field theory

Based on the key notions of field, *habitus*, capital and *illusio*, Pierre Bourdieu devises the theory of action “by constructing a fundamental relationship between the social trajectory of the agent (based on his or her incorporated dispositions, or *habitus*) and the objective structures (specified under fields)” (Gouanvic, 2005, p. 148). The main concept of Bourdieu's theory is the notion of field, which he explains as follows by focusing on the case of the literary field:

I would say that the literary field is a force-field as well as a field of struggles which aim at transforming or maintaining the established relation of forces: each of the agents commits the force (the capital) that he has acquired through previous struggles to the strategies that depend for their general direction on his position in the power struggle, that is, on his specific capital. (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 143)

*Habitus*, on the other hand, is a term used by Bourdieu “for the totality of professional dispositions and attitudes of agents within a given field or practice” (Chesterman, 2007, p. 177). For this reason, not only translators but also other “translation agents” such as publishers, editors, critics, etc. have their own *habitus* (Gouanvic, 2005, p. 148; Eker Roditakis, 2015, p. 161). They play a significant role “in the international circulation of books, in their original language as well as in translation” (Sapiro, 2008, p. 154). In this respect, it would not be wrong to suggest

that the sociology of translation explores “the social conditions of the international circulation of cultural goods” (Heilbron and Sapiro, 2007, p. 95).

In order to be able to underline the “great” role of the publisher in the value of a work of art, Pierre Bourdieu asks this question: “Who creates the ‘creator’?” and answers it as follows:

The question can be asked in its most concrete form (which it sometimes assumes in the eyes of the agents): who is the true producer of the value of the work – the painter or the dealer, the writer or the publisher, the playwright or the theatre manager? The ideology of creation, which makes the author the first and last source of the value of his work, conceals the fact that the cultural businessman (art dealer, publisher, etc.) is at one and the same time the person who exploits the labour of the ‘creator’ by trading in the ‘sacred’ and the person who, by putting it on the market, by exhibiting, publishing or staging it, consecrates a product which he has ‘discovered’ and which would otherwise remain a mere natural resource; and the more consecrated he personally is, the more strongly he consecrates the work. (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 76-77)

That is to say, Bourdieu defines the act of publishing as an act of “consecrating”.

Accordingly, he suggests that the publisher “creates the creator.” This means that the publisher plays a key role in legitimating literary products (Sapiro, 2008, p. 155).

Bourdieu’s concept of agency and field theory, therefore, will help me to focus on the key role of the publishers, Yapı Kredi Publications and Penguin Random House UK; and the editor of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*, Sevengül Sönmez, as social agents in the consecration, re-creation and (re-)contextualization of the book both in Turkey and in the international arena.

Moreover, according to Johan Heilbron and Gisèle Sapiro (2007), one of the dimensions that needs to be taken into consideration when examining translations in their specific social context is the fact that “the dynamics of translation depends on the structure of the space of reception and on the way in which relevant

intermediaries (translators, critics, agents, publishers) shape social demand” (p. 93). This approach will be of help especially in underlining the power of the publisher and the editor of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* both in the ‘remarkable’ comeback of the book in Turkey and in its publication in English by the world’s leading publishing house.

## 2.5 Methodology

The primary sources of this thesis are the interviews conducted with Sevengül Sönmez, editor of Sabahattin Ali’s books published at Yapı Kredi Publications and questionnaires carried out with İlker Hepkaner and David Gramling, who translated the book in 2011-2013; Alexander Dawe, the co-translator of the published *Madonna in a Fur Coat*; Meriç Güleç, the managing director in ONK Copyright Agency; and Metin Avdaç, the producer and the director of the documentary entitled *Sabah Yıldızı: Sabahattin Ali* (The Morning Star: Sabahattin Ali). Since Hepkaner and Gramling live in USA, I sent them the questionnaire via e-mail. I also carried out an online questionnaire with Alexander Dawe and Meriç Güleç, since they did not prefer to have a face-to-face interview.<sup>8</sup>

In his book entitled *Research Methodology* (2012), Ranjit Kumar classifies interviews into two categories as structured and unstructured interviews according to the degree of flexibility (2012, p. 144). Unstructured interviews provide the researchers almost complete freedom in terms of content and structure (Kumar, 2012, p. 145). In a structured interview, on the other hand, the researcher asks predetermined set of questions as specified in the interview schedule (Kumar, 2012,

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<sup>8</sup> Before I started to conduct my interviews and questionnaires, I applied the INAREK/SBB Ethics Sub-Committee which carries out ethical review of research related to graduate theses and projects conducted within the Institute for Graduate Studies in Social Sciences at Boğaziçi University. After the review process evaluating all potential risks and/or adverse effects of the thesis, my research has been approved by the INAREK/SBB Ethics Sub-Committee.



p. 145). Therefore, with reference to his categorization, I call the interviews I conducted within the scope of this thesis as “structured interviews.”

In the questionnaires and interviews, I used open-ended questions, since they “provide respondents with the opportunity to express themselves freely, resulting in a greater variety of information” (Kumar, 2012, p. 153). Since my respondents were from different areas of expertise, I had to prepare different questions for each of them. Nevertheless, all of my questions were directly related to *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*, *Madonna in a Fur Coat* and Sabahattin Ali.

In order to be able to analyze the discourses formed by the publisher and reviewers, I benefited from the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) which helped me in examining both the extratextual materials (reviews and interviews) and textual materials (paratexts and translation itself). Last but not least, I made use of the Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) during the analysis of the source and target texts.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF *KÜRK MANTOLU MADONNA* BY  
SABAHATTİN ALİ

In this chapter, I will focus on the historical background of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* by Sabahattin Ali in Turkey since it was first published in 1943. Because Sabahattin Ali's works mostly contain autobiographical features, I will first give a brief account of his life, including his education, imprisonments, works and translations. In what follows, I will present the historical overview of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* by focusing on the reviews and criticisms expressed especially by his Marxist and socialist friends and literary critics when the novel was first published. Therefore, this part will play a significant role in analyzing the change of the views regarding *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* in almost 70 years and also (re-)contextualizing its English translation.

### 3.1 A short biography of Sabahattin Ali

Sabahattin Ali was born in 1907 in the Ottoman town of Egridere.<sup>9</sup> His career as a writer began at an early age. In 1924, when he was 17, his first articles were published in the newspaper of Balıkesir Teachers' Training School (Sönmez, 2009, p. 113). He also published his first poems in a journal titled *Çağlayan* in 1926 (Sönmez, 2009, p. 150). After graduating from Istanbul Teachers' School in 1927, he received a four-year government scholarship to study language and literature in Berlin and Potsdam in 1928, which is a "part of a larger initiative aimed at creating a new Turkish intellectual youth educated in Western European languages"

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<sup>9</sup> Today, this is Ardino, a town located in southern Bulgaria.

(Dickinson, 2017, p. 8). Even though he stayed in Germany only one and a half years, this experience considerably influenced his life and works. For instance, as Sevgül Sönmez states, *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* “carries traces of his years in Germany and gives us clues about Sabahattin Ali’s reading habits. The books Sabahattin Ali read in his boarding house room are the books that Raif Efendi reads in his own boarding house room” (2017, p. 19).

After Sabahattin Ali came back from Germany in 1930, he was appointed as a German language teacher in Aydın, Turkey. In the same year, he met Nâzım Hikmet who was working as an editor and secretary in the magazine entitled *Resimli Ay* (Monthly Illustrated)<sup>10</sup> where Sabahattin Ali’s first social-realist story, title, was published (Sönmez, 2009, p. 12). In 1931, he was arrested and imprisoned in Aydın for making communist propaganda. He spent three months in prison and was later cleared of blame. His imprisonment was an important milestone in his life and had a strong influence on his works. He met, for instance, Yusuf from Kuyucak<sup>11</sup> in the Aydın Prison in 1931 (Sönmez, 2009, p. 92). After he got out of prison, he was appointed as a German language teacher in Konya, Turkey. Once again, he was arrested; this time, for insulting the president Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in one of his poems as a result of which he was sentenced to 14 months in prison. In October 1933, he was released and was reappointed as a teacher on condition that he proved he had changed his critical views on Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Therefore, he wrote a poem titled “*Benim Aşkım*”<sup>12</sup> (My Love) published in *Varlık* magazine in 1934.

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<sup>10</sup> *Resimli Ay* is a literary magazine which was founded by Zekeriya and Sabiha Sertel and was published from 1924 to 1931.

<sup>11</sup> Sabahattin Ali kept in touch with Yusuf after he got out of prison. Considering the fact that Yusuf from Kuyucak became the protagonist of Ali’s first novel, *Kuyucaklı Yusuf* (Yusuf from Kuyucak), it can safely be assumed that Ali must have been highly affected by his friend.

<sup>12</sup> In the poem, Sabahattin Ali highly praises Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and even states that Atatürk is the only love for him.

*Kuyucaklı Yusuf* (Yusuf from Kuyucak), Sabahattin Ali's first novel, was published by *Yeni Kitapçı* in 1937, but it was confiscated shortly after its publication on the grounds that it was opposed to family life and military service (Sönmez, 2009, p. 13.). In 1940, his second novel, *İçimizdeki Şeytan* (The Devil Within Us) was published by *Remzi Kitabevi*. He also started to write *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* during his second military service, and it was serialized in *Hakikat* newspaper between 1940 and 1941, then published in book format by *Remzi Kitabevi* in 1943.

As indicated above, in a relatively short time he spent in Berlin and Potsdam, Sabahattin Ali learned German, and thanks to his competence in this new language, he obtained a position as a government employee in the Republic of Turkey. Additionally, he was often called upon as an expert of German literature for government sponsored projects, such as *İnönü Ansiklopedisi* (Inönü Encyclopedia) (Dickinson, 2017, p. 8). In 1938, he started to work as an interpreter for Carl Ebert<sup>13</sup> at the Ankara State Conservatory. Sabahattin Ali was also a prolific translator. He translated many books, stories and articles from German into Turkish.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, he was a founding member of the state-funded Translation Bureau which "played a major role in shaping the canonical translation activity in Turkey after its establishment in 1940" (Tahir Gürçağlar, 2008, p. 163).

About one year before his death, Sabahattin Ali was imprisoned once again because of his critical articles published in the journal *Markopaşa*, which he co-founded with Aziz Nesin in 1946. Even though *Markopaşa* was banned by the

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<sup>13</sup> Carl Ebert, born in Germany in 1887, became the director of Berlin State Opera in 1931. Under the Nazi regime, Ebert left Germany and emigrated to Ankara, Turkey since he was invited to help the establishment of the school of theatrical and operatic arts in Ankara. In 1936, he started to give lectures at the Ankara State Conservatory. He stayed in Ankara until 1954 and died in California, USA in 1980.

<sup>14</sup> For instance, Sabahattin Ali translated *Fontamara* written by Ignazio Silone into Turkish, and it was published by *Akba Kitabevi* in 1943. For more detail about his translations, please see *Çeviri Eserleri* (His Translations) in Sevgül Sönmez (2009).

government, Ali published *Merhum-paşa*, *Malumpaşa*, and *Alibaba* respectively (Sönmez, 2009, p. 14). In August 1947, his stories collected under the title *Sırça Köşk* (The Glass House) was published, but after a while it was confiscated with the Council of Ministers' decision (Sönmez, 2009, p. 15). Therefore, he could not choose but flee from the country. However, he was murdered while attempting to cross the border into Bulgaria. Nevertheless, his body was never found and his death remains a mystery.

### 3.2 Historical overview of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*

As mentioned before, *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* was serialized in *Hakikat* newspaper between December 18, 1940 and February 8, 1941 under the main title “*Büyük Hikâye*” (Big Story) as shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1. The first serial of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* (*Hakikat*, December 18, 1940, Year:1 – No:149, p. 2)

The novel was first presented as follows: “We have begun to serialize Sabahattin Ali’s big story on the second page which was prepared by the author himself for our newspaper,” which can be seen in Figure 2 below.

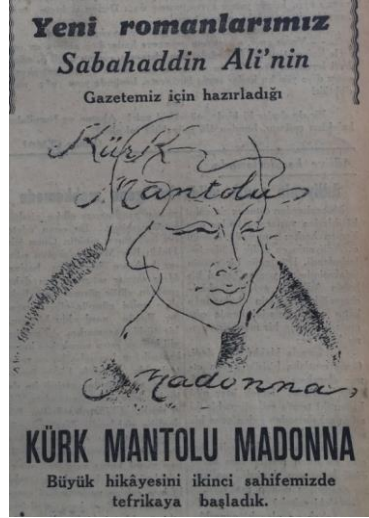


Figure 2. The first presentation of the serialization of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* (*Hakikat*, December 18, 1940, Year:1 – No:149, p. 1)

Sabahattin Ali wrote *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* in his tent during his second military service and he did not give up writing even if his right wrist was cracked when he fell off his horse (Sönmez, 2009, p. 331). According to Azamet Arsever, a friend of the author, Sabahattin Ali started to write this story at the request of Cemal Hakkı Selek, the owner of *Hakikat* newspaper, who demanded a non-political and engrossing love story from him (Bezirci, 2007, p. 204).

However, since Cemal Hakkı Selek refused to pay his fees by asserting that “the novel did not sell at all” (Hepkaner, 2017, p. 67), Sabahattin Ali composed a letter on February 10, 1941, which reads:

For the first time in my life as an author, I was told that my writings didn’t generate interest. Why? Nobody felt the need to investigate this. Was it really just that the novel didn’t stick? If it indeed did not, does the fault lie with the novel or with the quality of the readers of *Hakikat* newspaper? Since my work has been publicly available for some time, when you asked

me to write for your newspaper, it's perfectly obvious that you wouldn't ask for a novel in the vein of Iskender Fahrettin, Esat Mahmut, Peride Celal, [Kerime] Nadir and Mükerrerrem Kamil. If the readers of the evening newspapers only like this kind of writing, does the fault lie with me? Did you know what you were doing to someone like me who cares a great deal about his art and takes pains to not turn it into a "commodity that meets demand" when you unabashedly wrote "sadly people didn't care for it."<sup>15</sup> (Sönmez, 2017, p. 17)

Furthermore, after *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* was published in book format in 1943, it was heavily criticized by some of Sabahattin Ali's Marxist friends. For instance, Behice Sadık Boran, a Turkish Marxist politician, author, translator and sociologist, published a critical review on *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* in *Adımlar* magazine in May 1943. In her review, Boran openly criticizes and underestimates Ali's novel just because it narrates a love story:

*Kürk Mantolu Madonna* is *not* the sort of work that we are accustomed to and expect from Sabahattin Ali. The author, who displays the situation of our towns and villages in his novels and stories, mentions local issues in *The Devil Within Us* even if it takes place in Istanbul, tries to show so-called intellectuals' true colors and writes maybe the greatest novel in our language with *Yusuf from Kuyucak*, narrates *just* "a love story" in *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*.<sup>16</sup> (Boran, 1943, p. 33; my translation, emphasis added)

In addition, Boran states that *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* does not occupy a significant position among Sabahattin Ali's other works. According to her, it is an ordinary story that can be easily read and easily forgotten; even if it is a well-narrated story, it is not

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<sup>15</sup> "Yazı hayatımda ilk defa olarak yazımın tutmadığı suratıma çarpıldı. Neden? Bunu araştırmaya lüzum bile hissedilmedi. Acaba roman hakikaten tutmadı mı? Tutmadı ise kabahat romanda mı, *Hakikat* gazetesi karilerinin seviyesinde mi? Benim şimdiye kadar intişar etmiş bulunan eserlerim meydana olduğuna göre, benden gazeteniz için yazı isterken İskender Fahrettin, Esat Mahmut Beylerden veya Peride Celal, Kerime Nadir, Mükerrerrem Kâmil Hanımlardan bekleyeceğiniz neviden bir roman istemiş olamayacağınız aşikârdır. Akşam gazeteleri karileri ancak bu nevi yazıları tutuyorlarsa kabahat bende mi? Sanatı üzerine benim kadar titreyen ve bunu "talebe muvafık emtia" haline getirmekten benim kadar kaçan bir insana, eliniz titremeden "roman maalesef tutmamıştır" diye yazarken ne yaptığının farkında mı idiniz?" (Ali, 2008, p. 366)

<sup>16</sup> "Kürk Mantolu Madonna, Sabahattin Ali'den alıştığımız ve beklediğimiz çeşitten bir eser değildir. Roman ve hikâyelerinde bize kasaba ve köylerimizi tanıtan, İçimizdeki Şeytan'da İstanbul'a geçmekle beraber yine onda da bize yerli bir mevzuu veren, sözde intellektüel grupların iç yüzünü deşen, Kuyucaklı Yusuf'la dilimizin belki en güzel romanını veren muharrir, Kürk Mantolu Madonna'da sadece "bir aşk hikâyesi" anlatıyor." (Boran, 1943, p. 33)

the sort of book that reflects Sabahattin Ali's literary identity. Boran explains her views as follows:

You can read *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* on a day when you did not go to work because you are in a bad mood or when you want to enjoy yourself by lying down on a comfortable couch in the evening when you feel so tired. It is neither tiring nor boring. It is a well-narrated story. However, when you close the book after reading the last line, you immediately forget you read that kind of book. *If Sabahattin Ali had not written this book, he would not have lost anything as a novelist and storyteller.*<sup>17</sup> (Boran, 1943, p. 34; my translation, emphasis added)

Additionally, Nâzım Hikmet, the Turkish poet and political activist described as “romantic communist” (Goksu and Timms, 1999), criticizes *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* in his letter of May 1943, where he states that although he loved the book, he got angry with Sabahattin Ali. He remarks that he was amazed at the first part of the novel which he found original. However, according to the notable poet, the first part of the novel is considered to be wasted with the second part that narrates a love story and takes place in Berlin (Ali, 2008, p. 395). Nâzım Hikmet also points out that this kind of an experience was necessary both for Sabahattin Ali and Turkish literature, and that Ali accomplished this task (Ali, 2008, p. 395).

In one of his letters to Sabahattin Ali, Nâzım Hikmet indicates that Ali was the first person who comes to mind among the authors who are competent in writing a novel or a story (Ali, 2008, p. 398). Therefore, he asks Sabahattin Ali to be faithful to the social-realist genre and implicitly demands from him stories about the actual proletarian and industrial workers (Koçak, 2017, p. 70). For this reason, *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* was disregarded especially by Ali's Marxist friends.

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<sup>17</sup> “Biraz keyifsiz olup da işe gitmeyip evde kaldığınız bir gün veya yorgunca olduğunuz bir akşam, rahat bir sedire uzanıp kafanızı yormadan vakit geçirmek istediğiniz zaman *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*'yı tatlı tatlı okuyabilirsiniz. Yormaz da, sıkmaz da. İyi anlatılmış bir hikâyedir. Fakat son satırı okuyup kitabı kapadıktan sonra da böyle bir kitap okuduğunuzu hemen unutupersiniz. Sabahattin Ali bu kitabı yazmamış olsaydı, romancı ve hikâyeci olarak bir şey kaybetmiş olmazdı.” (Boran, 1943, p. 34)



Here, it should be pointed out that there has been a striking change in the image of Sabahattin Ali over the years. Even though his “socialist” identity was at the forefront in those years, he has been seen as a more “romantic” figure nowadays, especially after his ‘romance,’ *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* has become so popular in Turkey. There is no doubt that it is also possible to observe a similar change in the image of Nâzım Hikmet, Ali’s close friend. In her M.A. thesis entitled “The Image of Nazım Hikmet and his Poetry in Anglo-American Literary Systems in 2002” (2005), Başak Ergil suggests that “there was a remarkable change in the image of Hikmet and his poetry, the turning point of which seems to be the late 1970s, a period when the capitalist world order became more dominant and socialist regimes collapsed” (2005, p. 278-279). After this turning point, Nâzım Hikmet started to be conveyed as a more “romantic,” “heroic,” “utopian” figure and the lyrical aspects of his poetry were foregrounded (Ergil, 2005, p. 279). It is obvious that Sabahattin Ali and Nâzım Hikmet shared a similar fate both before and after they died.

It is obvious that Sabahattin Ali was inspired by his own experiences while writing *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*. Besides, there are various rumors about who Madonna in a Fur Coat is. For instance, Muvaffak Şeref claimed that Madonna was the violinist in the Hungarian orchestra playing in Taksim, Istanbul; the blonde woman who was also wearing a fur coat (Sönmez, 2009, p. 332). According to Melahat Togar’s claims, Sabahattin Ali confessed that the protagonist of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* was the violinist in the Hungarian orchestra (Sönmez, 2009, p. 334). On the other hand, Sabahattin Ali mentioned Madonna in his letter of July 1933 written to Ayşe Sıtkı İlhan:

I madly fell in love with a woman called Frolayn Puder in Germany. (This woman is famous with the name of 28 among friends.)... On the foggy and

rainy days of October, I remember going to the movies and museums with 28...<sup>18</sup> (Sönmez, 2009, p. 334; my translation)

We can conclude that Sabahattin Ali mentioned Madonna in a Fur Coat in his letter because the novel was initially the draft of a story entitled “Twenty Eight” according to Pertev Naili Boratav (Bezirci, 2007, p. 205). Considering the fact that the surname of the protagonist is also Puder, it would not be wrong to say that Madonna in a Fur Coat is the woman with whom the author fell in love in Germany.

We may also reach this conclusion by considering the answer Sabahattin Ali gave for the criticisms accusing him of betraying the social-realist genre: “This work was prepared inside my mind many years ago. It was impossible *not* to write it”<sup>19</sup> (Sönmez, 2009, p. 336; my translation, emphasis added).

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<sup>18</sup> “Almanya’da Frolayn Puder isminde bir hatuna ziyadesiyle âşıktım. (Bu kadın arkadaşlar arasında 28 namıyla meşhurdur.) ... sisli ve yağmurlu teşrinievvel günlerinde 28 ile müzelere veya sinemaya gidişim aklıma gelir...” (Sönmez, 2009, p. 334)

<sup>19</sup> “Bu eser benim kafamın içinde yıllar öncesinden hazırlanmıştı, yazıya dökmek imkânsızdı.” (Sönmez, 2009, p. 336)

## CHAPTER 4

### *KÜRK MANTOLU MADONNA* IN TODAY'S CONTEXT

In this chapter, I will dwell on the 'surprising' revival of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*, which has been recently witnessed in Turkey. My aim is to find out the reason(s) why the book has become a national bestseller after almost 70 years. Therefore, I will mention the initiatives and incidents which played a significant role in making Sabahattin Ali more visible over the last two decades. I will touch upon various documentaries, exhibitions, projects and events on Ali that have been carried out within this period. Additionally, I will underline the role and importance of social media in the popularization of literary works in recent years. Last but not least, I will try to provide insight into the translational journey of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* by focusing on when and into which languages it has been translated so far.

#### 4.1 The recent 'surprising' revival of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* in Turkey

Even though *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* was published in 1943, it can be safely claimed that today it is Sabahattin Ali's most famous novel in Turkey and has topped the country's bestseller list for the past three years. It has recently become a national bestseller, selling around a quarter of a million copies for each of the past three years (Armstrong, 2016). In fact, the Nobel laureate Orhan Pamuk's latest novel *Kafamda Bir Tuhaflık* (2014) (*A Strangeness in My Mind* (2015)) sold less than 231,000 copies compared to the 350,000 copies *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* sold in 2015 ("Madonna in a Fur Coat' makes a glorious," 2016).

A recent study conducted by the search engine Yandex released a list of the most searched books on the Internet from November 1 to November 15, 2016 in

Turkey. The results of the study showed that *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* was the most searched book on the Internet within this particular period (“İnternette en çok aranan,” 2016).

Furthermore, according to the Activity Report for October 2014 - October 2016 prepared by Turkish Librarians’ Association General Headquarters, *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* was the most borrowed book from libraries in 2015.<sup>20</sup> Surely, it is also possible to observe the ‘popularity’ of the novel on social media. Recent data have revealed that Turks posted more than 60,000 photos with the hashtag #kurkmantolumadonna while the writer’s name was posted more than 200,000 times on Instagram (“Sabahattin Ali’s ‘Madonna in a Fur Coat,’” 2016).

Given the fact that a novel seldom becomes a national bestseller 70 years after its publication – especially in Turkey where people are not very fond of reading books,<sup>21</sup> perhaps the first question to be asked would be the reason why Sabahattin Ali’s *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* has recently become so popular in Turkey. What are the underlying reasons for this ‘extraordinary’ success story? What is behind its glorious comeback?

#### 4.2 The underlying reasons for the book’s ‘extraordinary’ accomplishment

Obviously, there have been quite a lot of initiatives to memorialize Sabahattin Ali over the last two decades.<sup>22</sup> A large number of events have been organized and

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<sup>20</sup> For further information, please see [www.tk.org.tr/index.php/TK/article/download/2738/2698](http://www.tk.org.tr/index.php/TK/article/download/2738/2698).

<sup>21</sup> According to the survey conducted by Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK) in 2016, the book reading rate in Turkey accounts for 0.1% which points out that people in Turkey read books for just one minute a day. For more detail, please visit <http://t24.com.tr/haber/tuik-verilerine-gore-turkiyede-kitap-okumaya-ayrilan-zaman-gunde-sadece-1-dakika,370472>.

<sup>22</sup> There is no doubt that countless initiatives have been launched to commemorate Sabahattin Ali up until today. However, I prefer to include the ones that are more comprehensive and have recently been carried out since my focus is on Sabahattin Ali’s latest reputation.

various projects have been conducted in accordance with this purpose. For instance, several documentaries were filmed about the author's life, his works and death, and these documentaries have been screened in many cities across Turkey. Furthermore, various mobile exhibitions have been held to commemorate the author and these exhibitions have also been displayed in various cities of the country. Additionally, numerous projects and events have been conducted to make the author more visible throughout the country.

On the other hand, the songs composed from his poems have also contributed to Sabahattin Ali's latest reputation, since almost all of them have been adored and declaimed by most people in Turkey. Moreover, social media has a considerable impact on this revival because *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* has become a social media phenomenon in recent years in Turkey, which will be dealt with in detail in the following parts.

I shall therefore point out the role and works of the agents, whose aim has been to commemorate and appreciate Sabahattin Ali, in order to explain the underlying reasons for the book's glorious comeback after so many years in Turkey.

#### 4.3 The key role of the agents in this success story

As stated in Chapter Two, translation agents such as publishers, editors, critics, etc. play a major role in the international circulation of books, not only in their original language but also in translation (Sapiro, 2008, p. 154). Considering the fact that all translation agents have their own *habitus* (Gouanvic, 2005, p. 148, Eker Roditakis, 2015, p. 161), it may be argued that they play a determining role in (re-)creating and (re-)contextualizing books both in the source and target cultures.

In a similar vein, the habitus of the publisher and the editor of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* as social agents is certainly one of the factors that led the book to become a national bestseller in the source culture and to enter into “the world republic of letters”; i.e. to be “consecrated”, through being translated into English (Casanova, 2004).

Considering the intensive works of these agents in order to be able to appreciate and commemorate Sabahattin Ali, perhaps it would not be wrong to state that not only the publisher, Yapı Kredi Publications, but also the editor, Sevgül Sönmez, played a key role in this success story. Since Yapı Kredi Publications is one of the subsidiaries of Yapı Kredi, which is the fourth largest bank in Turkey, it can be assumed to be a forceful agent. In addition, Sevgül Sönmez, who is considered a highly competent and highly committed editor, is definitely the most trustworthy source of Sabahattin Ali in Turkey. She prepared *A’dan Z’ye Sabahattin Ali* (Sabahattin Ali from A to Z) in 2009, which is undoubtedly the most detailed source of Sabahattin Ali that has so far been available.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, Sönmez has carried out numerous projects and events to commemorate and appreciate the author, which will be explained in detail in the following parts.

Last but not least, Filiz Ali, the daughter of Sabahattin Ali, can also be considered as a significant agent who played a major role in the re-creation of the author and the novel in the source and target cultures. Filiz Ali has contributed to and participated, as the guest of honor, in almost all the events held to celebrate and commemorate her father. Given the fact that Filiz Ali has also given interviews both in Turkey and in the Anglo-American world regarding her father’s life and works,

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<sup>23</sup> Sönmez is now preparing the updated edition of *A’dan Z’ye Sabahattin Ali* and all the languages into which *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* was translated will also be added into this edition. (S. Sönmez, personal communication, April 29, 2017)

especially (and not surprisingly) regarding *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*, it would not be irrelevant to state that she is perhaps the most effective and active agent who has led Sabahattin Ali and *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* to enter “the world of republic letters” (Casanova, 2004).

Here, one may ask, ‘How exactly did these agents attain such a success?’ Therefore, in the following parts, I shall touch upon most of the recent organizations and projects conducted to appreciate Sabahattin Ali, in most of which the aforementioned agents have played a key role.

#### 4.3.1 Documentaries

There is no doubt that one of the significant initiatives that has made Sabahattin Ali more visible in Turkey is the documentaries about his life. Since these documentaries have been screened in many cities and towns across Turkey, they have had significant influence on arousing considerable interest in the author’s works. According to the records of Sevengül Sönmez, there are five documentaries about Ali’s life story (S. Sönmez, personal communication, April 29, 2017).

The first one is Nilgün Eroğlu Maktal’s documentary titled *Dağlar ve Rüzgar* (Mountains and the Wind) released in 1998. It was produced by TRT (The Turkish Radio and Television Corporation) for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sabahattin Ali’s death and was shot in the Strandzha Mountain and Sinop Fortress Prison. The documentary, which has been screened in various cities across Turkey, examines the troubled life and tragic death of the author, who brought a new dimension to Turkish literature with his realistic and critical approach.

Another documentary titled *Sabahattin Ali-Portreler Galerisi* (Sabahattin Ali-The Gallery of Portraits) was shot by Avni Özgürel in 2008. The 30-minute-long documentary was produced by TFT Production upon the request of TRT and was shown on TRT Belgesel (TRT Documentary) channel.<sup>24</sup> The documentary is a part of the project titled *Portreler Galerisi* (The Gallery of Portraits), whereby Özgürel's aim was to prepare more than 70 documentaries about various authors, poets, translators, critics and politicians who left their marks on the recent history of Turkey with their works, lives and views.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, the main purpose of this project is to familiarize these people with the wider public. Considering the current reputation of Sabahattin Ali, it would not be wrong to say that the project seems to have achieved its purpose at least in making Sabahattin Ali more visible.

Also, a short film entitled *Filiz Hiç Üzülmesin* (May Filiz Never Be Upset) was made by Rutkay Aziz within the scope of the project *Türkiye'nin Hatıra Defteri* (The Memory Book of Turkey) in 2008.<sup>26</sup> This short film, which was aired on CNN Türk in 2008, draws attention to the brutal murder of the author. In an interview conducted on January 23, 2008, Rutkay Aziz, the director of this 10-minute-long film, states that the aim is to reveal the veil of mystery that has not still been lifted although Sabahattin Ali was murdered 61 years ago.<sup>27</sup>

The other documentary entitled *Sabah Yıldızı: Sabahattin Ali* (The Morning Star: Sabahattin Ali) was filmed by Metin Avdaç in 2012. The feature length documentary which is 115 minutes long describes the life and death of the author. Avdaç, the producer and the director of the documentary, thoroughly investigated the

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<sup>24</sup> You may find the documentary here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-6Vdk7E3fU>.

<sup>25</sup> For more detail, please see

<http://www.kameraarkasi.org/yonetmenler/belgeseller/portrenergalerisi.html>.

<sup>26</sup> You may find the short film at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-i4DJD6bpn4>.

<sup>27</sup> For further information about the interview, please visit <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/sabahattin-ali-nasil-olduruldu-8071207>.



author's life from his birth to his death, and it took almost two years to shoot the whole film because of the long research conducted not only in Turkey but also in Germany and Bulgaria. The film's premiere was held on April 2, 2012, the 64<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sabahattin Ali's death. Avdaç explains the purpose of the documentary as follows:

In the documentary, we tried to discuss Ali's identity as a man of litterateur, his passions, his beloved ones, and the world of his ideas, as well as the socio-political dynamics of the era that led his unsolved murder, and we started on a journey starting from the origins of Sabahattin Ali, who was born in 1907. ("Sabahattin Ali was commemorated," 2017)

In the documentary, there are scenes from *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* which take place in the National Gallery in Berlin. Additionally, a passage from the book has been vocalized for the documentary. When I asked the reason why *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* takes an important place in *Sabah Yıldızı: Sabahattin Ali* in the questionnaire I conducted with Metin Avdaç, he responded that since *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* is the author's most popular book, he aimed to make gesture for the readers who love the novel (M. Avdaç, personal communication, May 9, 2017). Avdaç also underlined the fact that although there are various scenes from Ali's first novel *Kuyucaklı Yusuf* or his stories, they do not draw much attention compared to *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* (M. Avdaç, personal communication, May 9, 2017). The documentary has been screened not only in various cities across Turkey but also in Germany, Bulgaria and Sweden all of which are listed below:

Munich (Germany), Ardino (Bulgaria), Stockholm (Sweden), Ankara (20 times), Istanbul (at least 30 times), Izmir (15 times), Kuşadası (two times), Bergama, Didim, Denizli (two times), Aydın, Güre, Trabzon, Artvin, Van, Erzurum, Diyarbakır, Çorlu, Antalya (three times), Mersin, Kırklareli (two times) Adana and Sinop. (M. Avdaç, personal communication, May 9, 2017)

Last but not least, *Sabahattin Ali-Şehirler ve Yüzler* (Sabahattin Ali-Cities and Faces) was filmed by Cem Hamuloğlu in 2012.<sup>28</sup> The documentary was produced by Vira Medya (Vira Media) at the request of TRT TÜRK, one of the channels of TRT. Since in this documentary Filiz Ali herself examines her father's life story in detail, it provides a behind-the-scenes look at the author's life and his unsolved death.

As I have indicated above, three of these documentaries were shown on the television and the other two have been screened in various cities across Turkey over the last two decades. Therefore, it is possible to assume that these documentaries have led Sabahattin Ali to come to the fore after so many years in Turkey and they might have affected the reading rate of his books.

#### 4.3.2 Exhibitions

In addition to the documentaries, various exhibitions about Sabahattin Ali have been organized over the last two decades. Firstly, *Bir Usta, Bir Dünya: Sabahattin Ali* (One Master, One World: Sabahattin Ali) was held by Yapı Kredi Sermet Çifter Library in 1997. As indicated above, Yapı Kredi is one of the largest private banks in Turkey and has incorporated Yapı Kredi Cultural Activities, Arts and Publishing, which is one of the most well-known and prestigious culture and art organizations in Turkey, offering its services to the public via Yapı Kredi Cultural Center and Yapı Kredi Publications. Therefore, it can be considered as a very powerful agent. The aforementioned exhibition was a part of a collective exhibition titled "One Master,

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<sup>28</sup> You may find the documentary here: <https://www.izlesene.com/video/sabahattin-ali-sehirler-ve-yuzler-trt-turk/8828151>.

One World” whose aim was to keep social memory alive and so raise interest among art lovers.<sup>29</sup>

In addition, the mobile exhibition entitled as *Fotoğrafını Bekliyorum* (I’m Waiting for Your Photograph) was organized by Sevengül Sönmez in 2012. Its catalog was published with the title *Fotoğrafını Bekliyorum* (I’m Waiting for Your Photograph) by Yapı Kredi Publications in 2012. The exhibition was open to visit from February 3 to March 3, 2012. It received more than 500 visitors in a day (S. Sönmez, personal communication, April 29, 2017). In the exhibition, various photographs taken by Sabahattin Ali, his personal documents and belongings were displayed. Moreover, on February 18, 2012, Filiz Ali signed the author’s books in the exhibition (“Çektiği ve çekemediği fotoğraflarıyla,” 2012). As mentioned above, since it was also a mobile exhibition, it was held in many cities across Turkey. Also, the exhibition titled *Bir Fotoğraf Camı - Çektiği ve Çekemediği Fotoğraflarıyla Sabahattin Ali* (A Photographic Plate-Sabahattin Ali in Photographs He Did Take and Could Not Take) was held in the building of Yapı Kredi Publications in 2008 and the exhibition was also organized in Istanbul, İzmir and Diyarbakır Book Fairs held by TÜYAP (S. Sönmez, personal communication, April 29, 2017).

Thus, it may be argued that the immediate consequences of these exhibitions might have been positive in contributing to the reputation of the author, hence increasing interest in his works.

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<sup>29</sup> For more detail, please see <https://www.yapikredi.com.tr/en/culture-and-arts/archive-exhibitions>.

#### 4.3.3 Projects

Numerous projects have also been conducted in commemoration of Sabahattin Ali. For instance, various competitions have been organized across the country. One of them, a poetry and story competition entitled *Sabahattin Ali Şiir ve Öykü Yarışması* (Sabahattin Ali Poetry and Story Competition) was organized by Balıkesir Edremit Municipality in 2010.<sup>30</sup> The purpose of the competition was to commemorate Sabahattin Ali in this town where he spent his childhood<sup>31</sup> and 750 people from different cities applied with 4,500 works (“Sabahattin Ali Şiir ve Hikâye,” 2010).

In 2013, *Sabahattin Ali Makale Yarışması* (Sabahattin Ali Article Competition) was held by the Sainte Pulchérie French High School in Istanbul. The topic of the Third Inter-High Schools Article Competition was “Silence in Sabahattin Ali’s Works.” The juries of the competition were Filiz Ali, Sevgül Sönmez, Semih Gümüş and Doğan Hızlan (“Sabahattin Ali Makale Yarışması,” 2013). Additionally, *Sabahattin Ali Edebiyat Okulu* (Sabahattin Ali Literature School) was established with the contributions of Yapı Kredi Publications in 2015. The aim of the school was to perform reading activities focusing on Sabahattin Ali’s works and motivate young readers to be interested in different fields of literature. However, teachers rather than students requested to attend the classes. Therefore, on March 19, 2015, the protocol of the project was signed between Yapı Kredi Publications and the Ministry of National Education of Turkey which enabled teachers to participate in this training

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<sup>30</sup> In 1973, *Yeni Adımlar* magazine declared that they would hold a competition and give the winners Sabahattin Ali Story Award. However, the award could be given only once. In 1981, a new Sabahattin Ali Story Award was started to be given with the attempts of Sabahattin Ali’s family and this award lasted until 1985. Besides, *Hürriyet Gösteri* magazine gave a review and essay award for once for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ali’s death in 1989. (Sönmez, 2009, p. 415-417) Nevertheless, I prefer not to include these projects here since I am dealing with the recent initiatives which might thrust the author to the forefront in recent years.

<sup>31</sup> On February 25, 2016, the statue of Sabahattin Ali was erected in the main square, Cumhuriyet Meydanı in Edremit. Also, his wax statue has been displayed in the Sarıkız Kazdağı (Mount Ida) Ethnography Gallery in Edremit Güre Neighborhood (Erdoğan, 2016).

program (S. Sönmez, personal communication, April 29, 2017). The general coordinator of the project was Sevengül Sönmez. The first students of the school graduated on April 11, 2015 having been awarded certificates (“Edebiyat, Sabahattin Ali Edebiyat,” 2015). Due to the fact that various programs have been suspended after July 15, 2016, the school could not admit students in 2016 (S. Sönmez, personal communication, April 29, 2017).

#### 4.3.4 Other events

In order to commemorate and appreciate Sabahattin Ali, various public events have been organized over the last two decades and they have been held in various cities across Turkey. For instance, *Sabahattin Ali Kültür Günleri* (Sabahattin Ali Culture Days) supported by many unions and non-governmental organizations have been held in Kırklareli province since 1990. This annual event, whose aim is to honor Sabahattin Ali’s memory, has been considered so prominent and comprehensive that Aliye Ali, the wife of the author, and Filiz Ali participated in all of the events held between 1993 and 1997 (Sönmez, 2009, p. 412).

Furthermore, the year 2013 was dedicated to Sabahattin Ali by Bursa Nilüfer Municipality. Within the scope of the project entitled *Yılın Yazarı* (The Writer of the Year), various organizations such as exhibitions, theater performances, movie screenings and public speeches given by Filiz Ali and Sevengül Sönmez were held throughout the entire year. In addition, thanks to the project *Nilüfer’de Kadın Hayata Yakın* (Women are close to the life in Nilüfer), Sabahattin Ali’s novel *Kuyucaklı Yusuf* (Yusuf from Kuyucak) was read and examined with 700 women in

the country side under the coordination of Sevengül Sönmez (“Nilüfer’de ‘Sabahattin Ali Yılı,’” 2013).

In 2007, various organizations were held to celebrate the author’s 100<sup>th</sup> birthday within the project titled *Sabahattin Ali 100 Yaşında* (Sabahattin Ali is 100 Years Old). Yapı Kredi Publications not only played a significant role in carrying out these organizations, but also published a special issue for *kitap-lık* magazine to celebrate Ali’s 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, which can be seen in Figure 3.



Figure 3. The special issue of *kitap-lık* magazine  
(<http://kitap.ykykultur.com.tr/dergiler/kitap-lık/sabahattin-ali-100-yasinda>)

Also, the panel entitled *100. Doğum Yılında Sabahattin Ali* (Sabahattin Ali in His Centennial) was organized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in the National Library of Turkey in Ankara on February 26, 2007. Several scholars from various universities gave speeches about Sabahattin Ali and his works.<sup>32</sup> In addition, the Department of Comparative Literature at Istanbul Bilgi University organized an

<sup>32</sup> For more detail, please see <http://testsite.kultur.gov.tr/TR,84/dogumunun-100-yilinda-sabahattin-ali.html>.

event titled *Sabahattin Ali 100 Yaşında* (Sabahattin Ali is 100 Years Old) in santralistanbul on December 24, 2007.

#### 4.3.5 Songs

As mentioned above, Sabahattin Ali is not only a notable writer in Turkish literature; he was also a prolific poet. His first poems were published in a journal titled *Çağlayan* in Balıkesir when he was 19 years old. Moreover, his first book published in 1934 was also a poetry book entitled *Dağlar ve Rüzgâr* (Mountains and the Wind). Ali wrote and published 73 poems in total and only nine of these poems were written in *aruz* prosody (Özkırımlı, 2012). Therefore, most of his poems can easily be read and understood even today.

In the interview conducted by *Ulus* newspaper on September 23, 1940, Sabahattin Ali answered the question “What is poetry?” as follows: “I think poetry is a specific means of expression. It is an expression of instant excitements. I do not think that it can be described”<sup>33</sup> (Sönmez, 2009, p. 446; my translation). As he stated in the interview indicated above, Sabahattin Ali mostly wrote heartfelt poems about not only the women he fell in love with, but also the days he spent in prison. Many of his poems especially bear the traces of his time behind the bars.

Since almost all of his poems are based on actual events, they are considered as highly touching and sincere. Not surprisingly, most of them have been composed by renowned composers and have been sung by the beloved singers in Turkey as shown in Table 1 below. Almost all of them have been adored and declaimed by most people for many years.

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<sup>33</sup> “Şiir bence muayyen bir ifade tarzıdır. Ani heyecanların ifadesidir. Tarif edilebileceğini sanmıyorum.” (Sönmez, 2009, p. 446)

Table 1. Sabahattin Ali Poems Set to Music

Name of the poem	Name of the song	Composer	Singer(s)
From the story “Ses”	Leylim Ley	Zülfü Livaneli	Zülfü Livaneli
Çakır	Çakır	Ali Kocatepe	Nükhet Duru
Çocuklar Gibi	Çocuklar Gibi	Ali Kocatepe	Sezen Aksu
Dağlar	Dağlar Dağlar	Ali Kocatepe	Sezen Aksu
Dağlar	Dağların Türküsü	Sadık Gürbüz	Sadık Gürbüz Fuat Saka
Eskisi Gibi	Ben Gene Sana Vurgunum	Ali Kocatepe	Nükhet Duru
Hapishane Şarkısı I	Kartal	Kerem Güney	Kerem Güney
Hapishane Şarkısı I	Göklerde Kartal Gibiydim	Cem Akgün	Edip Akbayram, Yasemin Göksu
Hapishane Şarkısı III	Geçmiyor Günler	Kerem Güney	Kerem Güney
Hapishane Şarkısı III	Geçmiyor Günler	Ahmet Kaya	Ahmet Kaya
Hapishane Şarkısı V	Aldırma Gönül Aldırma	Kerem Güney	Kerem Güney, Edip Akbayram
İstek	Yanıyor Beynimin Kanı	Kerem Güney	Kerem Güney
İstek	Yanıyor Beynimin Kanı	Mazlum Çimen	Banu Kırbağ
Kara Yazı	Kara Yazı	Ahmet Kaya	Ahmet Kaya, Edip Akbayram
Ağlayı Ağlayı	Ağlayı	Kerem Güney	Kerem Güney
Bir Doğum Günü İçin	Dünyaya Geldiğin Zaman	Kerem Güney	Kerem Güney
Kız Kaçıran	Kız Kaçıran	Ahmet Kaya	Ahmet Kaya
Mayıs	Mayıs Ayların Gülüdür	Ekrem Ataer	Ekrem Ataer, Banu Kırbağ
Rüzgâr	Rüzgâr	Kerem Güney	Kerem Güney
Rüzgâr	Esme Rüzgâr	Gülbahar Uluer	Gülbahar Uluer
Kıyamadığım	Benimsin Diyemediğim	Ali Kocatepe	Nükhet Duru

(Sönmez, 2009, p. 441)

However, there are presumably a lot of people who do not know that the lyrics of these songs actually belong to Sabahattin Ali. On the other hand, over the last decade, thanks to the common usage of Internet and social media, people have started to become aware that these songs were actually composed of Sabahattin Ali’s poems, because a great deal of news such as “The Famous Songs You Didn’t Know



Sabahattin Ali Wrote” have been published on various Internet pages.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, such news have been shared by a great number of users in social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter. Thus, after so many years Sabahattin Ali has come to be known as a poet as well.

#### 4.3.6 The social media effect

As already pointed out above, there is no doubt that social media has had a significant impact on the glorious comeback of not only Sabahattin Ali, but also *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*. People in Turkey posted more than 60,000 photos with the hashtag #kurkmantolumadonna while the writer’s name was posted more than 200,000 times on Instagram in 2015 (“Sabahattin Ali’s ‘Madonna in a Fur Coat,’” 2016). Moreover, the photo composition of the book alongside a cup of coffee or tea has been one of the most popular images on Instagram which can clearly be seen in Figure 4. It has even become a social media phenomenon.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> For more detail, please visit <http://t24.com.tr/haber/sabahattin-ali-siiri-oldugunu-bilmediginiz-10-bilinen-sarki,365601>, <https://onedio.com/haber/sabahattin-ali-siiri-oldugunu-bilmeyebileceginiz-insani-alip-goturen-11-meshur-sarki-528386>, <http://www.leblebitozu.com/sabahattin-ali-siiri-oldugunu-bilmeniz-gereken-10-meshur-sarki/>.

<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, the Turkish weekly humor magazine *Uykusuz* posted a caricature in its official Twitter account on October 17, 2016. The caricature depicts a scene in which the girl wanting to buy the book decides to buy the photo composition with a cup of coffee instead of the book itself when she finds out that its photo is much cheaper. To access the caricature, please visit <https://twitter.com/uykusuzdergi/status/787935979269128193>.

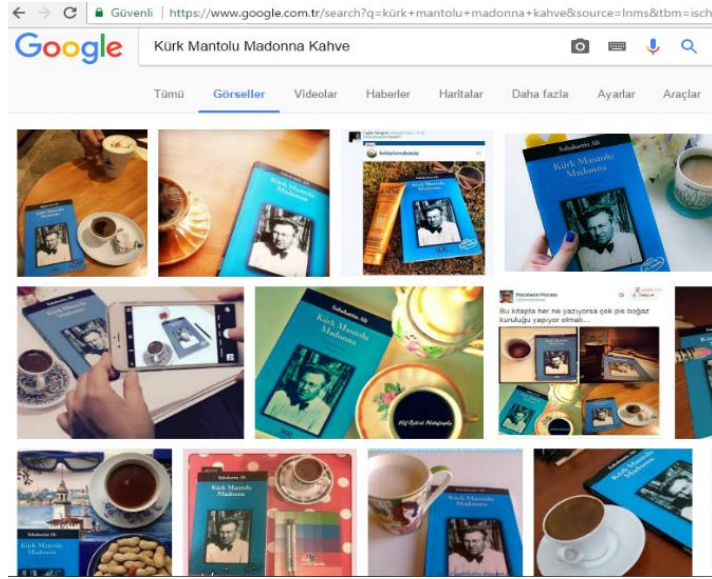


Figure 4. Google Image Search results when searching *Madonna in a Fur Coat* and *Coffee*

Additionally, the host of a Turkish morning show recently despised both the book and its film adaptation, because she thought the book was about Madonna the pop star even though she insisted she had read the book, as a result of which she was, as she claimed, “lynched” on social media. Therefore, *Madonna in a Fur Coat* ranked first in the list of Twitter’s 10 trending topics and Sabahattin Ali also ranked second in the same list in a few hours (“‘Çok okunan’ Kürk Mantolu Madonna,” 2016).

In the meantime, some sentences quoted from the book have been widely shared in many social networks. Sentences uttered by the main character, Raif Efendi, have even been considered as kind of aphorisms. A great number of lists entitled “Meaningful Statements Quoted from *Kürk Mandolu Madonna*” have been prepared and shared on social networks.<sup>36</sup> Thus, given the ‘power’ of social media, it

<sup>36</sup> To see examples, please visit <https://onedio.com/haber/kurk-mantolu-madonna-dan-20-guzel-alinti-435679>, <http://www.leblebitozu.com/sabahattin-alinin-kurk-mantolu-madonnasindan-15-muhtesem-alinti/>.

can safely be assumed that these aphoristic statements have also made a contribution to the resurgence of both the author and the book.

#### 4.4 The translational journey of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*

*Kürk Mantolu Madonna* has been translated into 19 different languages and published in 21 countries so far. It will also be published in two more countries, which are USA and Spain at the end of 2017. Even though the book has recently become a bestseller in Turkey, it was actually translated into numerous languages many years ago.

Somewhat surprisingly, the novel was first translated into Russian by Radi Fiş and L. Medvedko in 1949. The fact that Nâzım Hikmet was interested in Turkish publications in Moscow might have led it to be first translated into Russian in 1949, six years after its first publication (S. Sönmez, personal communication, April 29, 2017).<sup>37</sup>

It was also translated into Chinese by Guang Shi in 1959. According to Sevgül Sönmez, Sabahattin Ali was working with Wolfram Eberhard, a significant sinologue and professor in the Department of Sinology at Ankara University, at the Translation Bureau in Ankara. Ali was also studying at the Faculty of Language, History and Geography at Ankara University. Therefore, it is possible to think that the reason why it was translated into Chinese in 1959 might be related with Ali's relationship with Eberhard (S. Sönmez, personal communication, April 29, 2017).

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<sup>37</sup> As Aslı Takanay points out in her PhD dissertation in progress entitled "The Relational Processes of a Translation Flow: The Case of Literary Translations from Turkish into Russian during the Post-Stalin Era (1953-1991)," most of Ali's stories and novels have been translated into Russian and Nâzım Hikmet wrote forewords and afterwords for these translations in which Ali's "socialist" identity came to the forefront.

As Heilbron puts it, the international communication about books mostly depends on the role of the leading centres of the international system. Once a book is translated into a central language by an authoritative publisher, it immediately catches the attention of publishers in other parts of the globe (Heilbron, 1999, p. 436). For instance, if an author from a minor(ity) language is published in English, it is highly possible that her/his book(s) will be published in various other languages, because it is the best suggestion for publishers elsewhere. However, as it is seen in Table 2 located in the Appendix, the reverse situation has occurred in this instance. *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* was initially translated into ‘minor’ languages such as Vietnamese, Bulgarian, Romanian, etc.

As for the major languages, on the other hand, the novel was translated into French in 2007, i.e. 48 years after the publication of the Chinese translation. One year later in 2008, it was translated into German<sup>38</sup> and finally after the book’s ‘surprising’ revival in Turkey, it was translated into English through which both Sabahattin Ali and *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* entered into “the world republic of letters” (Casanova, 2004).

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<sup>38</sup> The German translation of the book has also generated interest in German-speaking countries. In fact, it has been printed six times so far. Sevengül Sönmez believes it might be due to the predominance of Turkish people living in the German-speaking countries who might have read this book (S. Sönmez, personal communication, April 29, 2017).

## CHAPTER 5

### COMPARATIVE AND CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF *MADONNA IN A FUR COAT AND KÜRK MANTOLU MADONNA*

In this chapter, I will carry out a comparative and critical analysis of *Madonna in a Fur Coat* and *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* by employing Gideon Toury's (1995) "operational" and "matricial norms." Before the comparative analysis, I will briefly mention the stylistic features of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* in order to be able to analyze both the source and the target text properly. My main purpose in comparing the source and target texts is to foreground the differences between them and to point out the necessity of having (co-)translators and copy editors who are native speakers of the source language in translating novels from especially minor(ity) literatures.

#### 5.1 Stylistic features of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*

As Susan Sontag puts it, "style and content are indissoluble [...] the strongly individual style of each important writer is an organic aspect of his work and never something merely 'decorative'" (Sontag, 1965, p. 137). While carrying out a comparative and critical analysis of *Madonna in a Fur Coat*, it is, therefore, significant to take the stylistic features of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* into consideration.

Considering the period of the 1930s and 1940s in Turkey, it would not be wrong to state that Sabahattin Ali used a relatively plain style and language in his stories and novels. Besides, Sabahattin Ali is one of the writers who were "ardent advocates of the Turkish Language Reform"<sup>39</sup> [who] started to convey their own

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<sup>39</sup> The Turkish Language Reform includes "both the change of alphabet (from Arabic letters to Latin letters, 1928) and of the language itself (1932 and onward)" (Berk Albachten, 2015, p. 166).

works into the new Turkish, trying to “purify” their texts of Arabic and Persian influence” (Berk Albachten, 2015, p. 172). As an author who supported the Turkish Language Reform and believed in the necessity of the purification of the Turkish language, Sahabattin Ali rewrote some of his stories published or serialized in various magazines before they were published in book forms (Sönmez, 2009, p. 176), which can be considered as self-intralingual translations.<sup>40</sup>

By the time *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* was serialized in the early 1940s, the comprehensive linguistic conversion from the Arabic to the Latin alphabet, from Arabo-Persian syntactic conventions to neological “pure Turkish” replacements had been already implemented (Gramling and Hepkaner, 2016, p. 33). The style and language of the novel, therefore, can be described as ‘plain’ and ‘flowing’ when considered within the context of the 1940s.

On the other hand, even if Sabahattin Ali agreed upon the need for the purification of Turkish language and tried to use ‘purified’ Turkish words instead of Arabic and Persian ones in his stories and novels, there are considerable Ottoman usages in *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*, which would not be classified as ‘archaic’ when the novel was first published in 1943. Today, however, most of these Ottoman Turkish words can be considered as highly ‘old-fashioned’ or ‘archaic’, usages most of which cannot be understood without dictionaries. Yapı Kredi Publications, the publishing house of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*, therefore, must have felt the need to explain some of these Ottoman words since their present-day Turkish equivalents were provided in the footnotes in later printings of the novel.

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<sup>40</sup> For further information about (self)intralingual translations of Turkish fiction, please see Özlem Berk Albachten (2015).

Furthermore, the usage of mostly long and, even sometimes, complicated sentences is one of the significant stylistic features of Sabahattin Ali (Korkmaz, 1991, p. 341). This stylistic feature takes an important place in *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*, too. There are considerable long and relatively complicated sentences in the novel, which can pose some challenges for the translators and thus determine the translators' strategy which will be dealt with in detail in the following sections.

## 5.2 Comparative, descriptive and critical analysis of *Madonna in a Fur Coat*

With this comparative, descriptive and critical analysis of *Madonna in a Fur Coat*, my purpose is to find out the possible reasons behind the decisions of the translators. Therefore, I will primarily focus on the “operational,” and “matricial norms” which can be observed in the omissions, additions, changes of location and manipulations of segmentation carried out by translators (Toury, 1995, p. 59). Under the matricial norms, I will especially focus on the manipulations of segmentation which bring the source text closer to target culture expectations and so reinforce the acceptability of translation (Toury, 1995, p. 59). Additionally, these manipulations provide valuable insight into the strategies used by translators which are, in this case, mostly “domesticating” (Venuti, 1995), since they can be described as “an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values” (Venuti, 1995, p. 20).

As mentioned above, matritial norms can also be observed in the additions to the target text or the omissions from the source text, which demonstrate the formative role of the translator in the textual presentation of the source text in the target culture. When I have explored the matricial norms in the form of additions to or omissions from the source text, I have not confronted with any kind of shifts

forming a pattern. Neither the omissions nor the additions thoroughly manipulate the plot of the novel. Additionally, I have not discovered any ideological or political purposes behind them. Thus, they seem to be arbitrary manipulations rather than deliberate ones.

Within this comparative and critical analysis, I will therefore point out mistranslations and domestications in the target text to demonstrate which translation strategies were used in the translation of this “once-forgotten” bestseller from a minor(ity) language.

#### 5.2.1 Mistranslations

When comparing the source text, *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*, with the target text, *Madonna in a Fur Coat*, I have realized that Maureen Freely’s and Alexander Dawe’s translation has considerable “negative shifts”<sup>41</sup> (Popovič, 1976, p. 16) both syntactically and semantically. Even if these negative shifts do not lead to any severe changes in the plot of the novel, it is obvious that important details such as meaning of words, subjects and objects in the sentences, had been misunderstood which resulted in many mistranslations in the target text.

Below are some examples:

Target Text:

*My brother-in-law’s sister* set them up at the Ministry of Economic Affairs.  
(Ali, 2016, p.19)

Source Text:

*Bacanak İktisat Vekâleti’ndedir, birer işe yerleştirdi.* (Ali, 2012, p. 27)

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<sup>41</sup> Popovič defines the concept of ‘negative shift’ as “An incorrect solution of information caused by a misunderstanding of the translation. It may be motivated by an unfamiliarity with the language or by a superficial interpretation of the original structure. The negative shifts may be characterized in the translation text as the so-called ‘mistranslation’ or subinterpretation of the original text” (1976, p. 16).



[Source Text in My Translation:

*My brother-in-law* [working] at the Ministry of Economic Affairs found each of them a job there. (Ali, 2012, p. 27)]<sup>42</sup>

It would not be wrong to state that the names of family members in Turkish are so complicated that even Turkish people may sometimes have trouble distinguishing them from each other. The Turkish word “bacanak” in the text, for instance, is used for the husband of one’s sister-in-law and, as far as I know, there is not a particular word to describe it in English. It is obvious that Freely and Dawe could not properly understand the meaning of this word because of this cultural-specific issue, which is, therefore, mistranslated.

Additionally, as mentioned in the previous section, there are many Ottoman Turkish words in the source text some of which led the translators to some inconsistent (mis)translations:

Target Text:

One dark and rainy day in *November* – how clearly I remember it – [...] (Ali, 2016, p. 50)

Source Text:

Günün birinde, gayet iyi hatırlıyorum, yağmurlu ve karanlık bir *teşrinievvel* gününde, [...] (Ali, 2012, p.54)

[Source Text in My Translation:

One day, I clearly remember it, one rainy and dark day in *October* [...] (Ali, 2012, p. 54)]

We can certainly identify the word “teşrinievvel” originally derived from Arabic as an ‘archaic’ word, since it is not used for the word “October” any more. Besides, it is possible that most of the Turkish people may have never heard this word in their

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<sup>42</sup> In this chapter, in the comparative and critical translation analysis, the extracts in square brackets will be followed by my own translations, which I have tried to produce as literally as possible for readers who do not know Turkish to better judge the argumentation about the extracts. Additionally, I will italicize the words on which I lay emphasis in order to be able to foreground the differences between the source and target texts easily.

daily lives. Yapı Kredi Publications, therefore, gave its present-day Turkish equivalent “Ekim” [“October”] by inserting a footnote two times; one at the beginning, the other at the end of the novel. Interestingly enough, it was first mistranslated as “November.” For the second time, however, it was correctly translated as “October”.

Target Text:

At the beginning of *October*, when the olives were ripening and I began to think it might be time to call for my beloved, the letters suddenly stopped. (Ali, 2016, p. 148)

Source Text:

*Teşrinievvel* başlarında, tam zeytin işlerinin kızışmaya başladığı ve benim onu çağırmayı düşündüğüm sıralarda birdenbire mektupların arkası kesildi. (Ali, 2012, p. 144)

Similarly, the Ottoman Turkish word “cenup” which means “south/ern” was first mistranslated as “northern.” The word, however, was not explicated with a footnote in the source text unlike the example above.

Target Text:

The square was deserted, except for *a few policemen* outside the theatre on the *northern* side. (Ali, 2016, p. 64)

Source Text:

Meydan boştu. *Cenup* tarafındaki büyük tiyatro binasının önünde *bir polis* dolaşıyordu. (Ali, 2012, p. 67)

[Source Text in My Translation:

The square was empty, except for *a policeman* walking back and forth in front of the theatre on the *southern* side. (Ali, 2012, p. 67)]

Since the word “cenup” is an old-fashioned word originally derived from Arabic, the translators – and even native speakers of Turkish – may not be familiar with this word, which may be the reason behind the mistranslation. However, a few pages later, the same word was translated as “southern”:

Target Text:

Skirting the *southern* side of the Tiergarten, I took my time, finally arriving at a canal. (Ali, 2016, p. 85)

Source Text:

Ağır ağır yürürken Tiergarten’ın *cenup* kenarından geçen bir kanala kadar gelmiştim. (Ali, 2012, p. 87)

It may be argued that such mistranslations might stem from just an oversight rather than misunderstanding. However, interestingly enough, the same word was, once again, mistranslated as “northern”:

Target Text:

Out on the street I began walking aimlessly. There was no one outside and most of the shops were still closed. I was heading *north*. (Ali, 2016, p. 122)

Source Text:

Sokakta rasgele yürümeye başladım. Ortalık تنها, dükkânların çoğu kapalıydı. *Cenup* istikametine gidiyordum. (Ali, 2012, p. 120-121)

These inconsistent (mis)translations have led me to think about how Freely and Dawe worked together, and which methods they used in this collaboration. In the online questionnaire I conducted with Dawe, I asked about their collaboration while translating the novel and he responded the following:

As with other books that we co-translated we began with a very close look at the first few pages. I did an initial draft and then we spent a few weeks going over the pages in detail, searching for the right mood, voice, tone and timbre – the music in the prose. This is a fairly intuitive process so we rarely discuss translation theory per se, or even particular problems that often crop up in Turkish to English literary translation. Rather we open up a creative safe space in which both of us are free to experiment with various possibilities as we mutually fine-tune and further our ideas and solutions. So once we get going on a project we rarely have in depth conversations in which we hammer out details of what we are doing, or labor over small conflict areas; the idea is to encourage the translation to naturally unravel in English. [...] So this approach gave us a chance to individually feel and then understand Sabahattin Ali’s style more closely and of course to see how this might be best portrayed in English. [...] So in the second stage we are then poised to move more nimbly through a text, bearing in mind that brief initial discussion concerning mood and intent, and the “workshop” we did on those first few pages. In the final stage we go over any outstanding queries to discuss and clarify. Mainly we are able to come to a quick decision on most of these, as by that stage of

the game we have already discreetly distilled the book into an English moonshine. (A. Dawe, personal communication, May 5, 2017)

As can be inferred from the answer Dawe gave, it can be concluded that Freely and Dawe first translated the novel separately and then, in the final stage, they went over the outcome together. Although it is difficult to trace the level of their collaboration on the target text, mistranslations of some specific words given in the examples above suggest that there were indeed two different translators on the scene, whose translations did not blend in thoroughly.

In addition to the mistranslations at the word level (possibly stemming from an oversight), there are some mistranslations at the sentence level, which seem to be mostly resulting from misunderstandings. In some sentences, for instance, the subject could not be identified properly, which led the sentence to be mistranslated:

Target Text:

Once again, I could hear noise outside and whispering. The older girl had just come home from school, and she came in to kiss her father's cheeks. [...] Taking off her coat and tossing it onto a chair, she left the room. *Raif Efendi* looked as if *he* were used to such behaviour and didn't consider it very important. (Ali, 2016, p. 29; emphasis added)

Source Text:

Dışarıda gene gürültü, hızlı konuşmalar başlamıştı. Mektepten dönen büyük kız içeri girdi, babasının yanaklarını öptü: [...] Paltosunu sıyırıp bir iskemlenin üzerine attıktan sonra, hemen dışarı çıktı. Raif Efendi'nin bu hallerine alışmışa benziyor ve fazla ehemmiyet vermiyordu. (Ali, 2012, p. 35-36)

[Source Text in My Translation:

Once again, noises and heated conversations were heard from outside. The eldest girl, having just come home from school, came into the room and kissed her father's cheeks: [...] After taking off her coat and tossing it onto a chair, she left the room. *She* looked as if *she* were used to Raif Efendi being in such a condition and so didn't consider it important. (Ali, 2012, p. 35-36)]

Since Turkish is one of the null-subject languages, non-native speakers of Turkish can have difficulty in identifying the subject in some sentences, especially in the

ones whose subjects are not expressed. Therefore, the example above shows us that Freely and Dawe, too, were unable to identify the correct subject of the sentence, “Raif Efendi’nin bu hallerine alışmışa benziyor ve fazla ehemmiyet vermiyordu.” [“*She* looked as if *she* were used to Raif Efendi being in such a condition and so didn’t consider it important.”] and translated it as if *Raif Efendi* were used to such behaviour because the subject of the sentence in the source text is not explicitly expressed. Here is another example with regards the misidentification of the subject:

Target Text:

Even so, apart from the poor old man, *Nurettin Bey treated every member of the household like a servant.* (Ali, 2016, p. 22)

Source Text:

Buna rağmen, *evde* zavallı ihtiyardan başka *herkesin borusu ötüyordu.* (Ali, 2012, p. 29-30)

[Source Text in My Translation:

Despite this, *every member of the household had their say*, apart from the poor old man. (Ali, 2012, p. 29-30)]

Reading the passage in the source text, it is understood that not only Nurettin Bey, who is the husband of Raif Efendi’s wife’s sister, but also the other members of the household treat this poor old man like a servant. They, for instance, uncaringly send him to the store in the dead of night even if he is old and sometimes sick in bed. When we look at the target text, however, we can clearly see that a shift of expression occurred in the sentence in which Nurettin Bey treats not only Raif Efendi but also every member of the household like a slave. There is no doubt that this example clearly demonstrates the somewhat ‘superficial’ interpretation of the original structure and context, which resulted in a shift of expression and inevitably mistranslation.

Additionally, in some cases, not only the subjects but also the objects of the sentences are not identified accurately. These sort of sentences, therefore, were indispensably mistranslated.

Target Text:

‘I actually don’t really enjoy dancing, but *sometimes the person I’m dancing with does* and so I find a way to bear it.’  
‘I’m not sure I’ll like it.’ (Ali, 2016, p. 110)

Source Text:

“Ben zaten dans etmekten fazla zevk almam, *bazen dans ettiğim kimse hoşuma gider* ve bu yüzden o sıkıntıya katlanırım.”  
“*Bu iş için hoşuna gideceğimi tahmin etmem!*” (Ali, 2012, p. 110)

[Source Text in My Translation:

“I actually don’t really enjoy dancing, but *sometimes I like the person I’m dancing with* and so I find a way to bear it.”  
“*I don’t think you’ll like me when I’m dancing!*” (Ali, 2012, p. 110)]

As it is clearly seen in the example above, the translators could not properly interpret the original sentence, “Bu iş için hoşuna gideceğimi tahmin etmem!” [“I don’t think you’ll like me when I’m dancing!”]. It could be produced as Freely’s and Dawe’s translation “I’m not sure I’ll like it,” if the sentence in the source text was like “*Bunun hoşuma gideceğini tahmin etmem!*” From this point of view, it may be argued that in some cases the translators seem to have interpreted the original structure, as Popovič puts it, superficially.

Throughout this comparative and descriptive analysis, I have also found out some words which might be ‘confusing’ for the translators just because they are similar to each other in the way of spelling and, therefore, ‘convenient’ to be mistaken for one another.

Below is the specific example of these ‘confusing’ words.

Target Text:

That’s when her expression relaxed a little. She closed her eyes for a moment, *as if to listen more closely*. (Ali, 2016, p. 104)

Source Text:

O zaman onun çehresinde rahat bir gevşeme oldu. *Dinlenir gibi* bir saniye gözlerini kapadı. (Ali, 2012, p. 104-105)

[Source Text in My Translation:

That's when her expression relaxed a little. She closed her eyes for a second *as if to rest a while*. (Ali, 2012, p. 104-105)]

Since the passive form of the Turkish word “dinlemek” [“to listen”] is written as “dinlenmek” [“to be listened”] in Turkish, it can easily be mistaken for the word “dinlenmek” [“to rest”] by non-native speakers of Turkish if they do not interpret the original structure and context thoroughly. The example above, therefore, shows us that Freely and Dawe mistook this word for the passive form of another Turkish verb, which resulted in another instance of mistranslation.

It may be argued that translations from especially minor languages had better be performed by native speakers of both source and target languages in order to prevent these kind of misunderstandings. Additionally, the outcome should ideally be read through a comparison of the source and target texts by a copy editor, who is competent in both the source and target languages.

Regarding the editing process of *Madonna in a Fur Coat*, I asked Dawe by whom their translation was edited and whether they faced heavy editorial interventions. He replied this question as follows:

Filiz Ali kindly read the final manuscript and offered a few important changes. And of course there was an editing process led by Penguin, but no heavy interventions were imposed. Most of these changes or suggestions were superficial, either bringing the text in line with their house style (matters of spelling and punctuation, for example) or simply tightening up the prose on a surface level. (A. Dawe, personal communication, May 5, 2017)

Since I could not interview Filiz Ali due to her excessively busy program, I do not know whether she read the final manuscript by comparing it with the source text.

However, considering the mistranslations indicated above, it seems possible to argue

that most probably Filiz Ali did not make a comparative reading in this process. Additionally, in the editing process led by Penguin, a comparative reading between the source and target texts is not expected due to the minor(ity) position of the Turkish language in the target culture, which appears to be one of the reasons in the existence of so many mistranslations in the target text.

### 5.2.2 The Ottoman-Turkish usages

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* was written in the early 1940s, almost 10 years after the Turkish Language Reform. Therefore, there are many Ottoman-Turkish words, which add a sense of ‘antiquity’ into the novel and cannot be easily understood by the readers of our day.

Although Sabahattin Ali’s language is regarded as plain and fluent considering the period in which he wrote his works, it may be argued that these Ottoman-Turkish usages may sound distorting the plainness of his language in view of present-day readers. That is why Yapı Kredi Publications might have felt obliged to intervene into the text and explain some of these words with their present-day equivalents in later printings of the novel.

Nevertheless, the number of these Ottoman-Turkish words in the novel is much more than the ones for which footnotes have been inserted. These words explained via footnotes are listed below:

muvaqqat, nikbin, sarıh, tezlil edilmek, mustatıl, istihfaf etmek, vazıh, inkisar, şahadetname, riyaziye, rikkat, merbut, infial, akse, musahabat-ı ahlâkiye, Sanayii Nefise Mektebi, murahas, mutavassıtlık, mükâleme, karine, hicap, iptila, teşrinievvel, imtizaç, istiğna, tebarüz etmek, müstağni, itizar, müziç, kesp etmek, nahvetli, tedai, kâsüf etmek, Kânunuevvel, ceht, alelumum, teşrinievvel, gusulhane, müstait. (Ali, 2012)



It may be argued that the aim of these footnotes is to explain the words which might have been selected on the grounds that they play a significant role in the plotline of the novel. Or, the publishing house might have set out to select only the words which can be considered as ‘archaic’ today, since there are also many Ottoman-Turkish words that are still in use today. Some of the words which were not explained via footnotes are as follows:

sergerde, müreffeh, müstemleke, terkip, beyzi, muhayyile, muntazaman, muvazene, fecaat, cenup, gayrimuayyen, mukavelename, salahiyet, teessür, refika, tecessüs, mukavim, mahut, serlevha, hodbin, münekkit, nebatat, istidat, mukallit, tekâsüf etmek, emvali metruke. (Ali, 2012)

On the website of the Turkish Language Association (TDK), the identification “eskimiş” [“old-fashioned”] is used for the words above, most of which originally derive from Arabic or Persian. Therefore, it would not be wrong to state that the Ottoman-Turkish usages in *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* are not limited to the ones explained with footnotes.

When examining the translations of these Ottoman-Turkish words, it is clearly seen that the overall effect created with these ‘old-fashioned’ words, which give the reader clues about the time of the story got lost in *Madonna in a Fur Coat*.

Below is an example:

Target Text:

I’d fixed up the house by then, ordering new furniture from Istanbul, *along with* a bathtub, for which I’d retiled the old *washroom* all much to the shock and *disdain* of the people of Havran and my family in particular. (Ali, 2016, p. 22)

Source Text:

Evi tamir ettirmiş, bütün Havranlıların, tabii en başta akrabalarımın hakarete kadar varan *istihfafları* ve hayretleri arasında, İstanbul’a sipariş ettiğim bir çok ev eşyası *meyanında* bir de banyo getirtmiş ve eski *gusulhaneye* fayans döşeterek oraya koydurmuştum. (Ali, 2012, p. 144)

Moreover, even if there are a lot more Ottoman-Turkish words in, for example, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar's *Saatleri Ayarlama Enstitüsü*, which was also co-translated by Freely and Dawe, when examining the target text, *The Time Regulation Institute* (2014),<sup>43</sup> it is clearly seen that the translators resorted to the same translational strategy. The translation was criticized by Armağan Ekici in a review. As a matter of fact, Freely accepted this criticism and responded to it as follows:

One day, we hope, there will be a translator who will have as his or her first purpose to find English words that capture the harmonies of their Turkish originals, while also signalling their playful manipulation of historical contexts and associations. There will, I'm sure, be many future translations of this fine classic, so the door is open for a scholar-translator to do just that. For Alex and me, the aim was to celebrate, and seek to recreate, Tanpınar's highly textured, and gorgeously ironic, narrative voice. (Freely, 2016)

In the interview I conducted with Alexander Dawe, I asked him whether they had difficulty in translating these 'archaic' words and which translation strategies they used in this process. He answered the following:

As far I as can remember these did not pose problems. I found Sabahattin Ali's Turkish to be remarkably clear. [...] For example, comparing him to Tanpınar, whose work is strewn with Ottoman words and perplexing passages, Sabahattin Ali was far more accessible. (A. Dawe, personal communication, May 5, 2017)

Even if Dawe stated that these words did not cause any problems while translating the novel, when the translation is closely examined, it becomes clear that these words sometimes led to some misunderstandings and mistranslations as indicated in the previous part. Additionally, I also asked David Gramling and İlker Hepkaner, who

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<sup>43</sup> *The Time Regulation Institute* was translated into English by Maureen Freely and Alexander Dawe and published by Penguin Random House in 2014. The translation, however, was highly criticized by Armağan Ekici, the Turkish critic and translator, for the interventions in the target text such as combining or dividing sentences or changing of punctuation, and for the too many mistranslations stemming from impreciseness and the main expectation of the English-speaking readers to see a "fluent, smooth and neutral flow of the English language" in translations. For detailed information, please see Armağan Ekici (2015). You may also find another review by Ekici on the same topic here: <http://t24.com.tr/k24/yazi/how-to-regulate-time,639>.

translated *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* into English in 2011-2013, the same question in the questionnaire I carried out via e-mail. They responded as follows: “It was a challenge, certainly, but also we think it is what made the whole translation process beautiful. If Ilker could have it his way, every culture specific word would have paragraphs of footnotes, but it is not possible” (D. Gramling and İ. Hepkaner, personal communication, March 28, 2017).

It may definitely be argued that since the English language has not gone through such a drastic transformation as the Turkish Language Reform, it is almost impossible to find equivalents in the target language for these Ottoman words, which would create the same overall effect of the source text. Therefore, Freely and Dawe, too, translated these Ottoman words into their more or less present-day English equivalents, which inevitably resulted in the missing of the effect created with these ‘old-fashioned’ words.

### 5.2.3 Domestications

The fact that English is the most dominant language in the international translation system undoubtedly determines the way translations from especially minor(ity) languages are carried out and presented in the target language and culture, and shapes translators’ translational styles and strategies.

As Armağan Ekici puts it in his critical review of Freely’s and Dawe’s previous translation, *The Time Regulation Institute* by Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, the works from minor(ity) languages such as Turkish are mostly translated into English in line with the domestication strategy in order not to ‘scare away’ the target reader

(2015, p. 8).<sup>44</sup> Therefore, in addition to the “negative shifts” indicated above, some other shifts can be seen in *Madonna in a Fur Coat* resulting from Freely’s and Dawe’s translational style and strategy. Considering, for instance, Orhan Pamuk’s novels in Maureen Freely’s translations,<sup>45</sup> it may be claimed that Freely generally aims at an easier reading experience for the English-speaking reader (Eker Roditakis, 2015, p. 220). Additionally, this translational style and strategy can undoubtedly be observed in Freely’s and Dawe’s co-translation of *The Time Regulation Institute*, which was highly criticized by Armağan Ekici for the very reason indicated above. Freely responded to his criticisms in the interview conducted by Cansu Canseven as follows:

The real problem with Anglophone readers (and editors, and publishers) is that they are reluctant to read anything in translation whatsoever! We who campaign to redress that tragic flaw believe that we can, through literary translation, subvert the conventions of contemporary Anglophone writing, and in so doing, to refresh and reshape it. And I am in no doubt that the great sentences of great Turkish writers have breathed new life into my own work in English. (Freely, 2016)<sup>46</sup>

In the online questionnaire I carried out with Alexander Dawe, he stated that Sabahattin Ali’s sentences overly packed with clauses had been a challenge in rearranging them gracefully in English (A. Dawe, personal communication, May 5, 2017). Also, in the online questionnaire I conducted via e-mail with Gramling and Hepkaner, they, too, expressed that they faced some challenges with the syntax

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<sup>44</sup> It needs to be underlined that not all translators adopt this sort of a strategy while translating novels from Turkish into English. Güneli Gün, for instance, the translator of two novels by Orhan Pamuk – *The Black Book* (1995) and *The New Life* (1997) – responded to the criticisms against her translations by proudly claiming to be an “unruly, disobedient” translator, an “Author Two”, who refuses to “play the part of a docile handmaiden to literature who renders someone else’s words from one language to another.” (qtd. in Eker Roditakis, 2015, p. 149). It may be inferred from this statement that Gün does not prefer using the expected standard British English in order to be able to break the “illusion of clearness” and become a visible translator in the target culture. Please see Güneli Gün (1999).

<sup>45</sup> Maureen Freely translated three novels by Orhan Pamuk: *Snow* (2004), *The Black Book* (retranslation, 2006) and *The Museum of Innocence* (2009), and two non-fiction books: *Istanbul: Memories and the City* (2005) and *Other Colors* (2007).

<sup>46</sup> For the complete interview, please see <http://t24.com.tr/k24/yazi/the-past-is-always-with-me,636>.

during the translation process. For instance, some sentences were too long for the English syntax, and it was a challenge to keep the sentences undivided and still make them accessible in English (D. Gramling and İ. Hepkaner, personal communication, March 28, 2017).

It is obvious that the syntax of the Turkish language and Sabahattin Ali's long and complicated sentences posed many challenges for the translators of *Madonna in a Fur Coat*, which resulted in divided and shortened sentences in the target text. Moreover, long sentences were sometimes reinterpreted and summarized briefly, as can be seen in the example below:

Target Text:

But my beautiful thoughts had deserted me. (Ali, 2016, p. 87)

Source Text:

Biraz evvel zihnimden birbiri arkasına geçen ve her biri mühim ve alaka verici olmakta diğerine taş çıkartan o güzel fikirlerden bir tanesi bile meydanda yoktu. (Ali, 2012, p. 89)

[Source Text in My Translation:

Not even one of those beautiful thoughts passing through my mind a short time ago, one after the other, every one of which more important and intriguing than the next, was anywhere to be found. (Ali, 2012, p. 89)]

As it becomes evident in this example, even though Sabahattin Ali describes the protagonist's beautiful thoughts in detail, this relatively long sentence was summarized in just a few words in the target text, which can be considered a way of domesticating in accordance with the interests of the target system.

Yet, the strategy of dividing or omitting as a solution to the challenge of translating long sentences seems to have led the translators to make mistakes:

Target Text:

But in my zeal to tell the whole truth, I put too much emphasis on my shortcomings, thereby distorting it. (Ali, 2016, p. 103)

Source Text:

Ona yalan söylememek, kendimi tahrif etmemek, hiçbir şeyi değiştirmemek için o kadar gayret sarf ediyor, hatta bu gayrette bazen ileri giderek kendi aleyhimdeki noktaları o kadar tebarüz ettiriyordum ki, bu suretle gene hakikatten ayrılmış oluyordum. (Ali, 2012, p. 103)

[Source Text in My Translation:

In order not to lie to her, distort myself or change anything, I was exerting so much effort and sometimes I was even exaggerating it and making my shortcomings so clear that I was drifting away from the truth once again. (Ali, 2012, p. 103)]

We can infer from the source text that the protagonist does not want to lie to Madonna under any circumstances and he, therefore, tries to explain himself without hiding or changing anything about his life. In the target text, however, it is understood as if he was hiding something from her and he was trying hard to tell her the truth. Accordingly, it may be argued that this strategy aiming to make long sentences ‘more accessible’ in English might sometimes cause mistranslations in the process.

It would not be wrong to claim that sometimes this sort of a domesticating strategy might also cause over-interpretation, while dividing and shortening the long sentences in the source text. For example;

Target Text:

All my life, I'd been waiting for her. Searching for her. *Scanning my surroundings for some sign of her. Bitter experience had given me second sight, and had it ever been wrong?* (Ali, 2016, p. 84)

Source Text:

Hayatım müddetince hep onu aramış, onu beklemiştim. *Bütün dikkatini, bütün varlığını bir noktaya biriktirerek her tarafta bu insanı araştıran, her rast geldiğini bu bakımdan tetkik ede ede adeta marazi bir meleke ve hassasiyet kesp eden hislerimin yanılmasına imkân var mıydı?* (Ali, 2012, p. 85-86)

[Source Text in My Translation:

All my life, I'd been looking for her, waiting for her. *Was it possible that my feelings, which searched for her at every turn by focusing their attention and existence on a single point and had acquired an almost morbid ability and*

*sensibility by examining anyone they came upon in this respect, had ever been wrong?* (Ali, 2012, p. 85-86)]

It is obvious that the long and complicated sentence in the example was divided and shortened as far as possible in the target text. However, when the texts are examined comparatively, it becomes clear that an over-interpretation occurred. In the source text, Sabahattin Ali uses the phrase “adeta marazi bir meleke ve hassasiyet kesp eden” [“had acquired an almost morbid ability and sensibility”] while describing the protagonist’s feelings. In the target text, however, this “morbid ability and sensibility” was simplified and regarded as a “bitter experience.” When considered from this point of view, it may be argued that Freely’s and Dawe’s translational style resulted in not only misunderstandings but also over-interpretations.

#### 5.2.3.1 The manipulations of segmentation

As Toury states regarding the “matritial norms,” the purpose of the manipulations of segmentation is to bring the source text closer to the target cultural norms and enhance the acceptability of translation (Toury, 1995, p. 59).

As indicated above, Sabahattin Ali’s long sentences in the source text were divided in accordance with the syntactic features of Standard English providing the target audience with an easier reading. Here, Freely and Dawe seem to have adopted several translational tactics within the scope of the domestication strategy, such as the usage of various conjunctions in order to build an interconnected text.

Considering their previous co-translation of *The Time Regulation Institute*, it may be argued that all of these tactics and strategies are characteristic of Freely’s and

Dawe's translational style. Below are two specific examples revealing the traces of this translational style.

Target Text:

Returning to the *pension*, I contemplated the dull days that lay ahead. Every time I sat at the supper table, it would be to listen to middle-class people berating the inflation that was eroding their fortunes, or dictating how Germany was to be saved. Every night, I would go back up to my room, to read stories by Turgenev or Theodor Storm. I saw then that over the past fortnight, my life had begun to take on meaning. I saw, too, what it would mean to lose it. (Ali, 2016, p. 58)

Source Text:

Pansiyona döner dönmez eski manasız günlerin başlayacağını, yemekte Almanya'nın kurtuluşu planlarını veya enflasyon yüzünden servetini kaybetmiş orta halli insanların şikâyetlerini dinleyeceğimi, odamda Turgenev'in veya Theodor Storm'un hikâyelerine kapanacağımı düşündükçe, bu son iki hafta içinde hayatımın nasıl bir mana almaya başladığını ve bunu kaybetmenin ne olduğunu fark ettim. (Ali, 2012, p. 61-62)

[Source Text in My Translation:

As soon as I returned to the boarding house, as I thought about how the old, meaningless days would start anew, how over dinner I would listen to the plans for saving Germany or the complaints of the middle-class people who had lost their fortune due to inflation, and how I would retreat into my room and lose myself in the stories of Turgenev or Theodor Storm, I realized how my life had begun to find its meaning over the past two weeks and what it would mean to lose it. (Ali, 2012, p. 61-62)]

Target Text:

But a dark thought still haunted me – that this stillness might, in the end, be more damaging than fearful hesitation. That it might stall what was alive between us, until it was as cold as stone: with every step not taken, we would be taking one step further apart from each other. Though these fears burned in silence, they troubled me more with every day. (Ali, 2016, p. 108)

Source Text:

Bu hareketsizliğin, korkuya dayanan bu tereddüdün daha zararlı olduğunu, insan münasebetlerinde bir noktada taş kesilmiş gibi kalınamayacağını, ileriye atılmayan her adımın insanı geriye götürdüğünü ve yaklaştırmayan anların muhakkak uzaklaştırdığını karanlık bir şekilde seziyor ve içimde sessizce yanan, fakat günden güne büyüyen bir endişenin yer etmeye başladığını hissediyordum. (Ali, 2012, p. 108-109)



[Source Text in My Translation:

I ominously sensed that this stillness and fearful hesitation was more damaging, that one could never be frozen in a certain point in human relations, that every step not taken forward led to one falling behind, and that the moments that do not allow us to draw closer would inevitably drive us further apart, and I felt that a fear that burned in silence but that was growing day by day had started to occupy a place deep inside me. (Ali, 2012, p. 108-109)]

These two examples demonstrate that the translation challenge posed by Sabahattin Ali's characteristically long sentences was met by Freely and Dawe by dividing them into shorter sentences. Moreover, considering the fact that textual cohesive conjunctions facilitate reading comprehension (Chapman, 1983; Innajih, 2006), the translators resorted to conjunctions through which they (re-)constructed a logical relationship between sentences and offered an easier reading experience for the English-speaking readers.

In addition, there are many long paragraphs in the source text consisting of just a couple of sentences overly packed with clauses, as Dawe stated in the questionnaire. Below is one specific example of these long paragraphs, which consists of only three sentences in the source text.

Target Text:

The only women I knew were the creatures that stirred my imagination. They might feature in the thousand and one fantasies I concocted as I lay under olive trees on hot summer nights, far from material concerns, but they all had one thing in common: they were beyond my reach. I had, of course, been secretly in love with our neighbour Fahriye for many years. In my dreams, I had explored improprieties that bordered on the shameful. Whenever I passed her on the street, my face would turn so red and my heart beat so fast, that I'd soon be ducking for cover. On Ramadan nights, I would steal away from the house and find myself a hiding place near their front door, to watch her come out with her mother, who'd be holding a lantern. But once the door was open, I could barely make them out in their long, dark coats, cocooned in that soft yellow light. Turning away, I would tremble for fear that they might see me, as they left for the Tarawih prayers. (Ali, 2016, p. 55)

Source Text:

Kadın, benim için, muhayyilemi kamçılayan, sıcak yaz günlerinde zeytin ağaçlarının altına uzandığım zaman yaşadığım bin bir türlü maceraya iştirak

eden, maddilikten uzak, yaklaşılmaz bir mahluktu. Uzun seneler kimseye haber vermeden âşık olduğum komşumuz Fahriye ile, hayalen, çok kere hayâsızlığa kadar varan münasebetlerim olduğu halde, kendisiyle sokakta karşılaştığım zaman yerlere yıkılacak kadar şiddetli çarpıntılara uğrar, yüzüm ateş gibi kesilerek kaçacak yer arardım. Ramazan geceleri onun, annesiyle beraber, elinde bir fenerle, teraviye gidişini seyretmek için evden kaçıp kapılarının karşısına gizlenir, fakat bu kapı açılıp, dışarı vuran sarımtırak ışıktaki siyah feraceli vücutlar görünür görünmez başımı duvara çevirerek, benim burada olduğumu fark edecekler diye titremeye başladım. (Ali, 2012, p. 58-59)

[Source Text in My Translation:

For me, women used to be unapproachable, unworldly creatures that stirred my imagination and accompanied various fantasies that occurred to me on hot summer days while I lay under the olive trees. Even though our neighbour, Fahriye, with whom I had been secretly in love for years, occupied my imagination to the extent of the most shameful of acts, whenever I saw her on the street, my heart would beat so fast I felt I would collapse and, my face on fire, I would look for a place to hide. On Ramadan nights, I would steal out of my house and hide in a place across from their front door to watch her, lantern in hand, as she left for the Tarawih prayers with her mother, but once the door was open and their long, dark-coated bodies came into view in the yellowish light coming from inside the house, I would turn my head to the wall and tremble for fear that they would realize I was here. (Ali, 2012, p.58-59)]

In the example above, Freely's and Dawe's translational style can be clearly seen once again, in which the sentences overly packed with clauses were divided as much as possible. They also changed some of the clauses. For instance, the sentence, "Ramazan geceleri onun, annesiyle beraber, elinde bir fenerle, teraviye gidişini seyretmek için evden kaçıp kapılarının karşısına gizlenir, [...]" ["On Ramadan nights, I would steal out of my house and hide in a place across from their front door to watch her, lantern in hand, as she left for the Tarawih prayers with her mother, [...]" was divided in the target text, and the clause referring to their leaving from the house for the Tarawih prayers was moved to the end of the paragraph. Since matricial norms can also be observed in the changes of "location", as indicated at the beginning of this chapter, the passage above can be considered an example of such a change.

All the examples given in this chapter clearly demonstrate Freely's and Dawe's translational style and strategy, which mostly provide an easier, fluent and smooth reading experience for the English-speaking readers. As Eker Roditakis puts it, from the perspective of translation studies, such an approach is problematic because "it is considered a way of domesticating the authors and their works to the interests of the receiving system instead of showing an effort to assess them in their own right" (Eker Roditakis, 2015, p. 301).

In this respect, it would not be wrong to conclude that in translations of the novels especially from minor(ity) languages it is highly necessary to work with two translators one of whom should be the native speaker of the source language and the other the native speaker of the target language. Additionally, the outcome needs to be read comparatively and edited by a copy editor who is competent in both source and target languages in order to be able to prevent the mistranslations, over-interpretations and over-interventions indicated above.

CHAPTER 6  
(RE-)CONTEXTUALIZING *MADONNA IN A FUR COAT*  
IN THE ANGLOPHONE WORLD

This chapter will focus on the (re-)contextualization and (re-)presentation of *Madonna in a Fur Coat* in the Anglophone world. My purpose is to examine the ways the book is (re-)presented and received in the Anglophone world, especially by the publisher, booksellers, and reviewers. I will also explore the representational power of the reviews. For this reason, I will present and analyze the discourses on *Madonna in a Fur Coat* formed by the reviewers in the Anglophone world. Furthermore, I will investigate how the popularity of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* has influenced the (re-)presentation and (re-)contextualization of *Madonna in a Fur Coat* in the target culture.

6.1 Reception and (re-)presentation of *Madonna in a Fur Coat* in the Anglophone world

As Venuti puts it, the linguistic and cultural values of the target culture (1998a, p. 67) play a significant role on not only the use of specific translation strategies but also other stages of the translation process such as the selection of the work, the cover of the book, and its reception and (re-)presentation.

According to Maria Tymoczko, translation is “by and large a subset of representation” and therefore “any consideration of the nature of translation must include representation” (Tymoczko, 2007, p. 111). In this respect, we can examine “what a particular translation represents or what it is expected to represent; or, how the product is represented (by the publisher? by the reviewers? by the author

himself/herself?)” (Akbaturo, 2010, p. 47-48). Through this examination, we can conclude about whether the cultural values of the target culture shape translations in accordance with the norms of the receiving culture.

As indicated above, publishers and reviewers play a determining role in the reception and (re-)presentation of writers and their work(s) in the target culture. The discourse they constitute determine the future of these writers and their work(s) in that culture. Publishers, for instance, promote writers and their work(s) through blurbs, cover designs, excerpts, and advertisements. Reviewers, on the other hand, contribute to the reception and (re-)presentation with their comments and criticisms. Accordingly, in this section, I will carry out a descriptive analysis of the reception and (re-)presentation of *Madonna in a Fur Coat* in the Anglophone world by examining and problematizing the discourses formed by Penguin Random House UK and various reviewers.

#### 6.1.1 The role of the publisher in the reception and (re-)presentation of *Madonna in a Fur Coat*

*Madonna in a Fur Coat* was published as a Penguin Modern Classic by Penguin Random House UK, which is undoubtedly one of the most significant publishing houses in the world. In 2016, the novel was first published in hardback to be followed by the paperback edition as shown in Figure 5 and Figure 6 below.

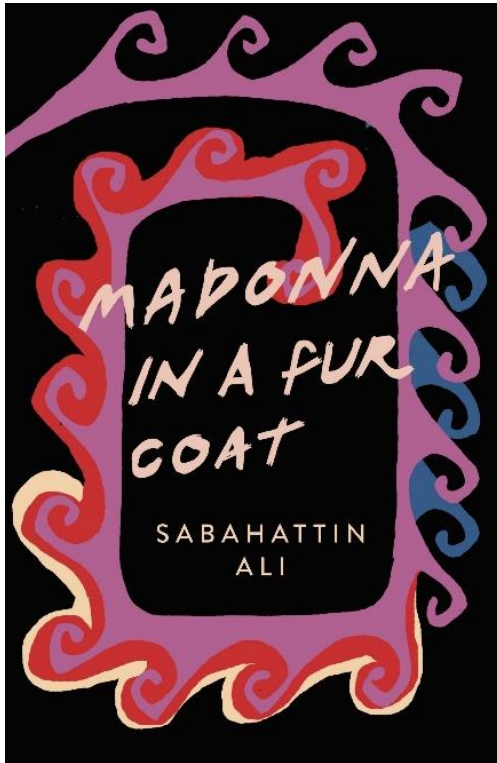


Figure 5. The front cover of the hardback edition of *Madonna in a Fur Coat*

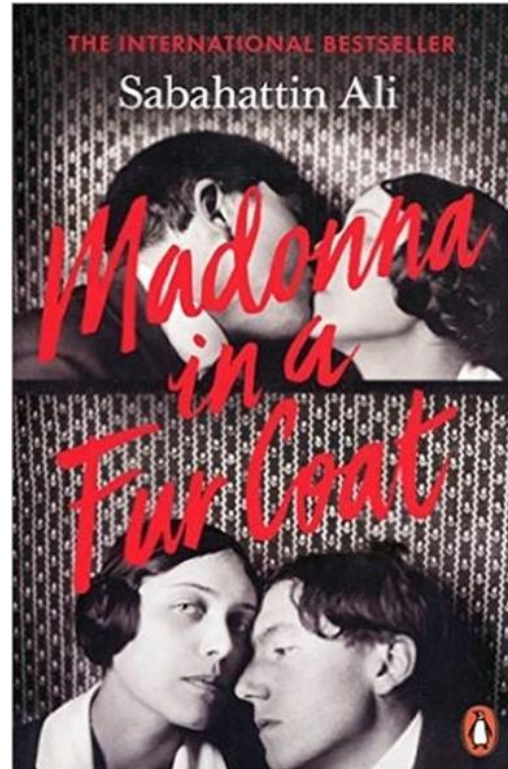


Figure 6. The front cover of the paperback edition of *Madonna in a Fur Coat*

Although hardbacks are much more expensive than paperbacks, some works are generally printed first in hardback in the Anglo-American world. In an article published in *The Economist* in 2014, the reason for this is thoroughly explained:

*Titles which are expected to sell well are often printed first in hardback.* Known as “windowing”, this sales strategy is also used in the film industry, where titles are released in the cinema several months before being sold on DVD. Like cinema tickets, hardcover books generate more profit per unit than paperbacks. And just as cinephiles like to see films on the big screen, collectors enjoy the hardback’s premium quality. [...] Hardbacks’ durability means they are also popular with libraries. And they hold a certain snob value, too: *literary editors traditionally do not review paperbacks.* Once hardback sales have slowed, a paperback edition is released. (“Why books come out,” 2014; emphasis added)

Considering especially the italicized sentences in the quotation above, it may be argued that *Madonna in a Fur Coat* had been expected to generate considerable

interest in the UK before it was published. This might be the reason why it was first published in hardback and then, in 2017, printed in paperback.

Interestingly enough, Penguin UK has been conducting a large scale marketing and publicity campaign for the paperback edition of the novel in particular. The reason why I find this sort of a large scale campaign interesting is the fact that *Madonna in a Fur Coat* is a translated novel from a minor(ity) language and Sabahattin Ali is not an acknowledged Turkish author in the Anglophone world unlike Orhan Pamuk and Elif Şafak, for instance.<sup>47</sup>

Within the scope of this marketing and publicity campaign conducted by Penguin UK, oversized advertisements featuring the book's striking black and white cover were plastered across the London Underground (Day, 2017) as shown in Figure 7, which I think plays an important role in the (re-)presentation of the novel, because it demonstrates that the publishing house strove for making a book from a minor language visible within the target literary system and moving the book to the center within the system of translated literature of the target culture.



Figure 7. The poster of *Madonna in a Fur Coat* in the London Underground (with the courtesy of Rengin Arslan Howson, June 13, 2017)

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<sup>47</sup>Although I tried to reach someone who is responsible for this publicity campaign in Penguin Random House UK via email, I received an answer stating that they do not have the resources to assist in my research.

Similar to the case in the source culture which is explained in detail in Chapter 4, the excerpts from the novel have been published by the publishing house on both its official website and its Facebook page, which gives us significant clues about the (re-)presentation of the novel. On the web page of Penguin UK prepared for *Madonna in a Fur Coat*, two extracts from the book have been published into which several photographs from Sabahattin Ali's personal archive have been inserted.<sup>48</sup> Besides, an excerpt from the novel was published on the Facebook page of Penguin Classics UK on February 27, 2017, which can be seen in Figure 8. This might not be considered unusual because Penguin Classics UK mostly resort to this marketing strategy to promote the books it published. The interesting point, however, is that looking at the other excerpts published on the same page, it is clearly seen that most of them are quoted from classic writers such as John Steinbeck, Oscar Wilde, Franz Kafka, George Orwell, etc.<sup>49</sup>

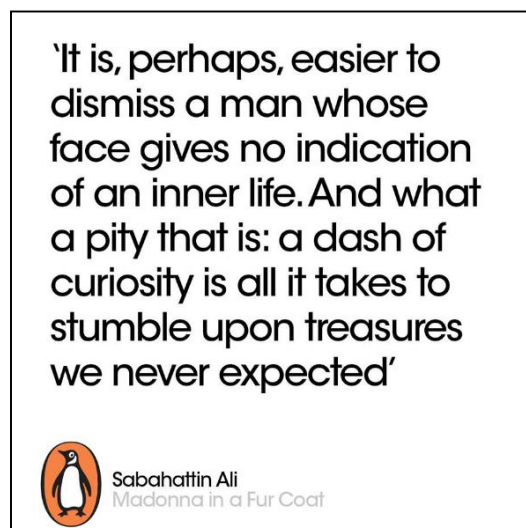


Figure 8. The excerpt from *Madonna in a Fur Coat* (Facebook page of Penguin Classics UK, February 27, 2017)

<sup>48</sup> For further information about extracts, please visit <https://www.penguin.co.uk/articles/find-your-next-read/extracts/2016/may/madonna-in-a-fur-coat-by-sabahattin-ali/> and <https://www.penguin.co.uk/articles/find-your-next-read/extracts/2016/jul/berlin-madonna-in-a-fur-coat-sabahattin-ali/>.

<sup>49</sup> For more detail, please see [https://www.facebook.com/pg/penguinclassicsuk/photos/?tab=album&album\\_id=358344767630324](https://www.facebook.com/pg/penguinclassicsuk/photos/?tab=album&album_id=358344767630324).



Moreover, *Madonna in a Fur Coat* is the only Turkish book promoted on that page, even though Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar's *The Time Regulation Institute* was also published as a Penguin Modern Classic in 2014. In this respect, we might assume that Penguin UK has carried out a different strategy for the (re-)presentation of *Madonna in a Fur Coat* in the target culture, the possible reasons of which will be explained in detail in the following section.

In addition, *Madonna in a Fur Coat* has been added into two reading lists prepared by the editors of Penguin UK. One of them is entitled "7 Books to Delight Every Kind of Valentine" in which it ranks first, and the other is "The Penguin Team Pick Their Favourite Books of 2016."<sup>50</sup>

In 2016, the book was also included in a campaign named "Penguin Random House launches a Penguin summer reading campaign: #ByBook" whose aim was to highlight how books can be the perfect companion for people's summer holiday, but can also be their summer holiday, allowing them to visit places from the comfort of their armchair.<sup>51</sup> Among the different types of the works such as children's books, contemporary fiction, dystopian novels, and young adult books, *Madonna in a Fur Coat* is the only translated book in the list.

As indicated above, the Facebook page of Penguin Classics UK also provides significant data regarding the (re-)presentation of the novel because, interestingly enough, it seems that the way it has been promoted in the source culture has influenced its publicity in the target culture. For instance, the photo composition of

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<sup>50</sup> You may find those reading lists at <https://www.penguin.co.uk/articles/find-your-next-read/reading-lists/2017/feb/7-books-for-every-kind-of-Valentine/>, <https://www.penguin.co.uk/articles/find-your-next-read/reading-lists/2016/oct/penguin-staff-favourite-books-of-2016-so-far/>.

<sup>51</sup> For more information and the full list of 22 titles in the campaign, please see <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.co.uk/media/news/2016/august/penguin-random-house-launches-a-penguin-summer-reading-campaign-/>.

the hardback edition of the book alongside spring flowers was published on this page on May 17, 2016 as shown in Figure 9 below.

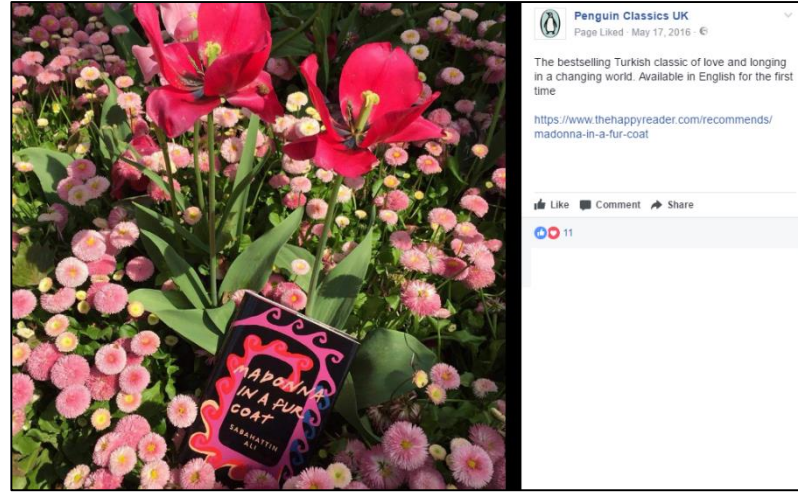


Figure 9. The photo composition of *Madonna in a Fur Coat* (Facebook page of Penguin Classics UK, May 17, 2016)<sup>52</sup>

As stated in Chapter 4, the photo composition of the book alongside a cup of coffee or tea has become a social media phenomenon in Turkey and it can be assumed that it influenced the popularity of the novel positively. Therefore, Penguin UK might resort to the same strategy while publicizing the novel.

#### 6.1.2 The booksellers' marketing strategies to promote *Madonna in a Fur Coat*

It would not be wrong to state that translated novels are not read widely in Britain (Tekgül 2012, p. 116). The sales figures also prove this assumption because translated fiction accounts for barely 1% of the UK publishers' sales (Alberge, 2010). Translated books, therefore, rarely become bestsellers in the UK. Book industry professionals have devised ways to increase sales in this category which

<sup>52</sup> To access this share, please visit <https://www.facebook.com/penguinclassicsuk/photos/a.358344767630324.1073741825.248982375233231/826600700804726/?type=3&theater>.

include publishers' marketing strategies with respect to packaging, and booksellers' marketing activities in terms of display arrangements (Tekgöl, 2012, p. 134).

Within the scope of the booksellers' marketing strategies, the display arrangements play a significant role in introducing books to readers. According to the research conducted by *The Bookseller* in 2010, 16.60% of the readers typically find out about new books or new authors by being influenced by the displays in bookshops (Tekgöl, 2012, p. 134).<sup>53</sup>

As mentioned in Chapter 2, even though there is a noticeable increase in the number of translations from Turkish into English, the interest in Turkish literature in the British book market is still limited. However, when looking at the booksellers' display arrangements to promote *Madonna in a Fur Coat* in the UK, we can see that the paperback edition of the novel alongside the excerpts from the book was displayed in the window of the Daunt Books in London, which can be seen in Figure 10.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> For further information about this research, please see Duygu Tekgöl (2012).

<sup>54</sup> During my stay in London, I got the chance to visit the Daunt Books and ask the reason why they prepared such a display arrangement for *Madonna in a Fur Coat*. One of the employees in the bookstore told me that considering the fact that this "masterpiece" was translated into English 73 years after its first publication, they thought it should have been known and read by British people as immediate as possible. Calling the novel "Turkish Great Gatsby", he also added that the Daunt Books, unlike other bookstores in the UK, cares about translated books and tries to promote them as much as possible. However, interestingly enough, I noticed that *Madonna in a Fur Coat* was being displayed in the German section, not in the Turkish section. When I asked the reason of this, he answered me that it is because the story is set in Germany. I think this is another evidence illustrating the minority position of Turkish language and literature, because it is highly likely that (and the people in the Daunt Books must have thought the same) this "masterpiece" would have become invisible in the Turkish section, which was located in the basement floor of the bookstore.

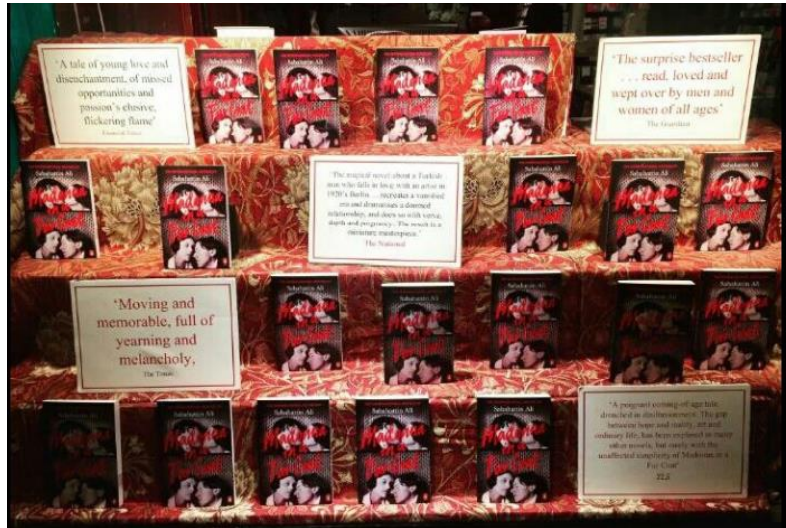


Figure 10. The display arrangement of the window of the Daunt Books in London (with the courtesy of Pınar Büyükbacı, June 12, 2017)

*Madonna in a Fur Coat* is also included in the book bundle of Translated Fiction Collection, which is a selection of some of the favorite translated novels of the last few months according to Daunt Books.<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, a review about the novel written by Iona Dudley was also published on the website of Daunt Books, which will be examined in detail in the following section.

Despite the important role of the display arrangement by Daunt Books in the presentation of *Madonna in a Fur Coat*, it should be noted that this is not sufficient reason to conclude that the novel has been well promoted by the booksellers in the UK. I think Daunt Books is an exception in promoting translations in this way. If that were not the case, we would expect translated fiction to account for much more than 1% of the UK publishers' sales.

<sup>55</sup>For more detail, please see <https://www.dauntbooks.co.uk/products-page/bundles/translated-fiction-collection/>.

## 6.2 The discourses on *Madonna in a Fur Coat* formed by the reviewers

- i. Filiz Ali (February 19, 2017). ‘My father Sabahattin Ali is being rediscovered.’ *theartsdesk*.
- ii. Tim Arango (February 26, 2017). A Once-Forgotten Novel Unites Turkish Readers in Troubled Times. *The New York Times*.
- iii. Eileen Battersby (August 13, 2016). Madonna in a Fur Coat review: What keeps Raif breathing. *The Irish Times*.
- iv. Eileen Battersby (March 13, 2017). I believe my father was murdered by Turkish secret police. *The Irish Times*.
- v. Lydia Beardmore (September 26, 2016). Madonna in a Fur Coat. *Reorient*.
- vi. Elizabeth Day (February 25, 2017). Madonna In A Fur Coat: the Turkish love story that’s newly relevant. *The Pool*.
- vii. Iona Dudley (February 22, 2017). Madonna in a Fur Coat. *Daunt Books*.
- viii. Malcolm Forbes (May 3, 2016). Book review: Sabahattin Ali’s magical tale of Turkish love and loss in Berlin. *The National*.
- ix. Maureen Freely (May 21, 2016). Sabahattin Ali’s Madonna in a Fur Coat – the surprise Turkish bestseller. *The Guardian*.
- x. Peter Gordon (March 17, 2017). “Madonna in a Fur Coat” by Sabahattin Ali. *Asian Review of Books*.
- xi. Emma Jane Kirby (May 8, 2016). The mysterious woman who inspired a bestselling novel. *BBC News*.
- xii. Toby Lichtig (May 20, 2016). ‘Madonna in a Fur Coat’, by Sabahattin Ali. *Financial Times*.
- xiii. Meredith Whitmore (May 20, 2016). ‘Madonna in a Fur Coat’ Arrives. *LifeZette*.
- xiv. Fiona Wilson (May 21, 2016). Classic read: Madonna in a Fur Coat by Sabahattin Ali. *The Times*.

Looking at the number of the reviews listed above and considering the novel’s minority position in the target culture as a translation from a minor language, it is possible to conclude that *Madonna in a Fur Coat* has drawn considerable attention in

the Anglophone world in just one year. It is also possible to infer that this might be one of the outcomes of the marketing and publicity campaign run by Penguin UK mentioned above.

Most of the reviews' titles hint at the way the reviewers will position Sabahattin Ali's first novel in the Anglophone world. It is clearly seen that they mostly focus on the latest revival of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* in the source culture ("The surprise Turkish bestseller", "A Once-Forgotten Novel", "The Turkish love story that's newly relevant").

When describing and (re-)presenting the novel in the Anglophone world almost all reviewers primarily concentrate on the book's 'extraordinary' accomplishment by becoming a national bestseller almost 70 years after its publication. Moreover, they frequently compare Sabahattin Ali with Orhan Pamuk, Turkey's first Nobel laureate, underlining the fact that Ali has "outsold" Pamuk in recent years. Let us look at a couple of examples:

[...] That is the basis of "Madonna in a Fur Coat," a once-forgotten Turkish novel written nearly 75 years ago that has improbably become a best seller, outselling, these days, even Orhan Pamuk, Turkey's Nobel laureate. (Arango, 26.02.2017)

If you asked most people to name a Turkish author, they might say the Nobel laureate Orhan Pamuk. But the author that Turks are reading right now is Sabahattin Ali, even though he died in 1948. (Wilson, 21.05.2016)

It was not an immediate success. But, after Sabahattin's death in 1948, it gained wider acclaim. *Madonna in a Fur Coat* is now Turkey's most celebrated love story and a set text in schools. Young people respond in their droves to the tale of a young man's affair with a bohemian artist in 1930s Berlin and, for the past three years, it has topped the bestseller lists in Turkey, outselling even Orhan Pamuk. (Day, 25.02.2017)

The belated success of the novel seemed to come out of nowhere, its message resonating with a new generation in Turkey. It topped the bestseller lists, where it has remained, outselling Orhan Pamuk, the Nobel prizewinning author. (Battersby, 13.03.2017)

Yet in the past few years, the final novel of dissident Turkish author Sabahattin Ali has come into its own: this melancholic story of a doomed romance has for three years topped the Turkish bestseller lists, outselling—according to an account in the Turkish newspaper *Hürriyet*—Nobel Laureate Orhan Pamuk’s recent *A Strangeness in My Mind* by 50%. (Gordon, 17.03.2017)

Since 1998, over a million copies have been sold, 750,000 of them in the last three years alone. To put things into perspective, that means that it has outsold even Nobel Prize winner Orhan Pamuk’s latest novel, *A [Strangeness] in My Mind*. (Beardmore, 26.09.2016)

It was just a love story, they said – the sort that schoolgirls fawned over. And yet, for the past three years, it has topped the bestseller lists in Turkey, outselling Orhan Pamuk. (Freely, 21.05.2016)

Another point upon which the reviewers focus is Sabahattin Ali’s life as a political journalist and his tragic death. For instance, in his review Tim Arango states that “The death of Mr. Ali remains, almost 70 years later, as mysterious as his newfound popularity” (Arango, 2017). Furthermore, most of the reviewers have drawn a parallelism between Sabahattin Ali’s life and the current political atmosphere in Turkey. Eileen Battersby explains this similarity in her review published in *The Irish Times* as follows:

There are also the parallels between Sabahattin Ali’s life and the current political climate in the country. Since a failed coup attempt in July 2016, President Recep Erdogan has shut down more than 170 media outlets, including a newspaper, magazines, TV stations and news agencies. According Turkey’s journalists’ association, 150 journalists have been jailed and press accreditation of more than 700 journalists revoked. (Battersby, 2017)

Given the fact that Turkey is ranked as low as 155th out of 180 countries in the 2017 report of the World Press Freedom Index compiled by Reporters Without Borders (RSF),<sup>56</sup> it would not be irrelevant to draw this parallelism between the political oppression Sabahattin Ali experienced and the current political hardship the journalists have been suffering.

Moreover, Filiz Ali agrees upon this view in the interview with Emma Jane Kirby from *BBC News*, claiming that Sabahattin Ali's spirit also influenced the youth in the Gezi Park protests in 2013:

Nothing has changed in Turkey. The heavy censorship of the press, the imprisonment of journalists ... now it's maybe even worse. His spirit is alive with the young. We see it in the students of the Gezi Park protests in 2013. It was Sabahattin Ali who gave them courage and he reminds them to protest without losing their sense of the surreal or forgetting how to love. (Kirby, 2016).

Last but not least, the reviewers draw attention to the love story *Madonna in a Fur Coat* narrates. For instance, Toby Lichtig from *Financial Times* states that "This is above all a tale of young love and disenchantment, of missed opportunities and passion's elusive, flickering flame" (Lichtig, 2016). According to Battersby's review in *The Irish Times*, the novel is a "gorgeously melancholic romance" (Battersby, 2016). Both statements also appear as blurbs on the back cover of the paperback edition of the book.

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<sup>56</sup> For detailed information, please visit <https://rsf.org/en/turkey>.



### 6.3 The role of the popularity of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* in (re-)contextualizing *Madonna in a Fur Coat*

Given the fact that *Madonna in a Fur Coat* was translated into English after the “surprise” revival of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*, it can be safely claimed that the success of the novel in the source culture has led to be its publication in English.

In the online questionnaire I conducted with Meriç Güleç, the managing director of ONK Copyright Agency, I asked him whether the big success of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* led it to be published in English by the world’s leading publishing house, Penguin Random House. Güleç responded that the unexpected accomplishment of the novel in Turkey has definitely aroused interest abroad.

In terms of its timing, the unanticipated and unexpected sale success of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*, the masterpiece written by Sabahattin Ali, in our country and the fact that its success has sustained its continuity for more than five years have been a definite factor in arousing curiosity abroad and attracting intensive attention. (M. Güleç, personal communication, May 2, 2017; my translation)<sup>57</sup>

Alexander Dawe, the co-translator of the novel, also agrees that this success led the novel to be published in English. However, Dawe points out another issue which Penguin might have taken into consideration when deciding to buy the translation rights of the book in English:

Such success is a key factor when publishers choose a book - of course there is a purely market-based aspect to this i.e. the pub[lishing] house wants to guarantee returns on their investment. But I think that Penguin was also committed to bringing such a book to the English-speaking world. In the current political climate in Turkey in which voices are increasingly censored, and countless journalists and authors are being jailed, I think they felt it was

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<sup>57</sup> [...] Sabahattin Ali’nin başyapıtı *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*’nın, son yıllarda ülkemizde, zamanlaması gereği beklenmedik, öngörülemez bir satış başarısı yakalamış ve bu başarının beş yılı aşkın süre boyunca sürekliliğini korumuş olması, kitabın yurt dışında merak uyandırmasına ve yoğun ilgi görmesine kuşkusuz önemli bir etken olmuştur. (M. Güleç, personal communication, May 2, 2017)

important to promote a book that underscores open-mindedness, acceptance, cross-cultural understanding and compassion. (A. Dawe, personal communication, May 5, 2017)

As indicated above, one of the points on which the reviewers focus while (re-)contextualizing *Madonna in a Fur Coat* is Sabahattin Ali's life as a political journalist. Moreover, most of them have drawn a parallelism between his life and the current political climate in Turkey. In this respect, it would not be wrong to state that Dawe's argument regarding Penguin's commitment to bring this novel to the English-speaking world because of the present political climate in Turkey might be correct. Or, it might be more apt to assume that this was one of the motivations of the publisher.

Furthermore, Penguin UK presented the novel as an "International Bestseller" by putting this expression on the front cover of the paperback edition of the book which can be seen in Figure 6 above. I think this definition is quite problematic. Since I have no access to all the languages into which the novel was translated, I cannot state an opinion regarding the situation of the book in the international arena. However, when looking at the reviews published in French and German, the other two major languages, I have found out that the reviewers mostly focus on the novel's recent success in Turkey and they do not state anything about the fact that the book became a bestseller in France or Germany. For instance, in France, both Anthony Bellanger from *France Inter* and Ségolène Houdaille-Hoc from *Lepetitjournal* concentrate on the high sales of the novel in Turkey by comparing it with Orhan Pamuk's latest novel:

*Madonna in a Fur Coat* sold 350,000 copies last year while the greatest Turkish author and the winner of the 2006 Nobel Prize in Literature, Orhan Pamuk's latest novel sold only 240,000 copies. In total, the sales of *Madonna*

*in a Fur Coat* have reached over one million copies. This is a record! (Bellanger, 2017, translated from French by Songül Bakar)<sup>58</sup>

*Madonna in a Fur Coat* written by the acknowledged author Sabahattin Ali made a glorious comeback among the young Turkish readers. [...] The novel written more than 70 years ago has recently become one of the most popular books in Turkey. According to *Hürriyet Daily News*, almost one million copies of the book have been sold since 1998. [...] *Madonna in a Fur Coat* attracted more than 350,000 readers last year while Orhan Pamuk's latest novel *Kafamda Bir Tuhaflık* (*A Strangeness in My Mind*) sold almost 230,000 copies. (Houdaille-Hoc, 2016, translated from French by Songül Bakar)<sup>59</sup>

On the other hand, the reviews published in Germany in 2008, when the novel was translated into German, mostly concentrate on the Turkish-German love story set in Berlin. For instance, Irmtraud Gutschke from *Neues Deutschland* states the following: “With quiet cunning Ali draws us into a love story that is stirring and disconcerting because it is so unusual”<sup>60</sup> (translated from German by Michael Ustaszewski). Moreover, Dörlamann, the publishing house of the novel's German edition, presents it as follows: “An enchanting German-Turkish love story and an ode to Berlin of the wild twenties”<sup>61</sup> (translated from German by Michael Ustaszewski).

However, when looking at the recent reviews which are highly limited, we can clearly see that the focus has shifted to the novel's latest success in Turkey. The review published on *Die Zeit Online* in 2016 was written by Can Dündar and

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<sup>58</sup> L'année dernière, il s'en est vendu 350 000 alors que le plus grand écrivain turc, Orhan Pamuk, prix Nobel de littérature 2006, n'a vendu que 240 000 copies de son dernier livre. En tout, plus d'un million d'exemplaires de *La Madone* se sont écoulés. Un record. (Bellanger, 2017)

<sup>59</sup> *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* (en français, *La Madone au manteau de fourrure*), du célèbre écrivain Sabahattin Ali, fait son grand retour parmi la jeune génération de lecteurs turcs. [...] Ce roman écrit il y a plus de 70 ans est l'un des plus prisés dans les librairies et bibliothèques de Turquie ces dernières années. Depuis 1998, près d'un million d'exemplaires ont été vendus, rapporte le *Hürriyet Daily News*. [...] L'année dernière, alors que l'un des derniers livres du célèbre Orhan Pamuk (*Kafamda bir tuhaflık*) a été vendu à quelque 230.000 exemplaires, *La Madone au manteau de fourrure* a séduit plus de 350.000 lecteurs en librairie. (Houdaille-Hoc, 2016)

<sup>60</sup> Mit stiller Raffinesse zieht Ali uns in eine Liebesgeschichte hinein, die aufwühlt und befremdet, weil sie so gar nicht alltäglich ist. (Gutschke, 2008)

<sup>61</sup> Eine hinreißende deutsch-türkische Liebesgeschichte und eine Ode an das Berlin der wilden Zwanziger. (Retrieved from <http://doerlemann.com/?id=444&k=2&sk=3&tb=&bioid=247>)

translated from Turkish into German by Sabine Adatepe. It is generally about the faux pas made by the host of a Turkish morning show as mentioned in Chapter 4. However, when describing the novel, Dündar states that *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* has still occupied the top spot on the bestseller lists:

For weeks, Turkey has been talking about a faux pas on TV. It is about Madonna in the Fur Coat, one of the main works of the great Turkish writer Sabahattin Ali, who was murdered in 1948. The novel, which has also been translated into German, is still on the bestseller list. (Dündar, 2016; translated from German by Michael Ustaszewski)<sup>62</sup>

It is evident that in fact *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* has not “internationally” become a bestseller even though Penguin UK preferred to (re-)present the novel in this way. I think this might be related to the fact that Turkish is a minor language and the expression “International Bestseller” is more ‘catchy’ than the saying “Turkish Bestseller.” Furthermore, since translated fiction accounts for barely 1% of the UK publishers’ sales (Alberge, 2010) as stated above, Penguin UK might have avoided putting emphasis on the fact that the novel was translated from Turkish, because when it is called as “Turkish Bestseller,” the fact that the novel is essentially a translated fiction is apparently ‘unveiled

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<sup>62</sup> Seit Wochen redet die Türkei über einen Fauxpas im Fernsehen. Es geht um Die Madonna im Pelzmantel, eines der Hauptwerke des großen türkischen Schriftstellers Sabahattin Ali, der 1948 ermordet wurde. Dieser auch ins Deutsche übersetzte Roman steht noch heute auf der Bestsellerliste. (Dündar, 2016)

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION

The purpose of the present thesis was to explore the reason(s) why Sabahattin Ali's novel, *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*, was translated into English after 73 years and how it has been (re-)presented and (re-)contextualized in the Anglophone literary system. Aside from the Anglophone world, I investigated the way Sabahattin Ali and his work have been re-created and re-contextualized in Turkey which was required because of the recent 'unexpected' and 'surprise' popularity of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* in the source culture.

In the introduction of the thesis, I presented the literature review on Turkish literature in English translation in order to be able to indicate the recent situation of Turkish literature particularly in the Anglophone world. Additionally, I briefly touched upon the works on Sabahattin Ali's life and books to point out his place in Turkish literature which was needed in (re-)contextualizing his place both in Turkish and in the Anglophone context.

In Chapter Two, I offered my theoretical and methodological framework. Within the theoretical framework, I benefitted from the polysystem theory devised by Itamar Even-Zohar, so that I could position Turkish literature within the international literary polysystem and to show its peripheral position compared to English. Additionally, the core-periphery model applied by sociologists helped me to refer to the peripheral position of Turkish language compared to English which is undoubtedly the most central language in the international translation system. Also the notion of "minority" within the context of translation enabled me to contextualize *Madonna in a Fur Coat* as a translation from a 'minority' language and

literature. Another theoretical perspective from which I benefitted from in the study was Pierre Bourdieu's field theory and his concept of agency. This perspective was instrumental in illustrating the significant role of the publishers and the editor of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* as social agents in the (re-)contextualization of the book both in the source and target cultures. In Chapter Two, I also presented my methodology and briefly mentioned my primary sources, i.e. questionnaires and interviews.

In Chapter Three, my focus was on the historical background of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* by Sabahattin Ali in Turkey. Considering the fact that Sabahattin Ali's books generally include autobiographical features, I briefly presented his biography in which I aimed to touch upon almost all the turning points in his life. Additionally, I offered the historical overview of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* by concentrating on the reviews and criticisms of particularly by his Marxist and socialist friends, and the literary critics after the book was first published in 1943, which was necessary in drawing attention to the change of the views about *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* during the past decades in Turkey.

Chapter Four concentrated on the 'surprising' revival of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* in recent years in Turkey. Therefore, I traced the reasons why the novel has recently generated a considerably increased interest in Turkey and so has become a national bestseller after almost 70 years. I found out that there have been various initiatives and incidents to commemorate and appreciate Sabahattin Ali over the last two decades in Turkey. The findings revealed that several documentaries, exhibitions, projects and events have been carried out in accordance with this purpose. Moreover, I focused on the importance of the agents who played a major role in the (re-)creation and (re-)contextualization of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* in the

source and target cultures. After touching upon the role of social media in the popularization of the novel in recent years, in the last part of this chapter, I looked at the translational journey of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* to find out when and into which languages it has been translated so far. My research revealed that although the novel has recently become a national bestseller, it was actually translated into several languages many years ago. In fact, the novel has been translated into 19 different languages and published in 21 countries so far, and it will also be published in USA and Spain at the end of this year. This is also suggestive of the fact that *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* has taken a similar journey both in the source culture and in the international arena. In the way it has generated a noticeable interest in Turkey after so many years, the novel has also drawn more attention in the international arena decades later, when it has been translated into English through which it entered into “the world republic of letters” (Casanova, 2004), even if it was already translated into various other languages many years ago.

What I aimed to do in Chapter Five was to present a comparative and critical analysis of *Madonna in a Fur Coat* and *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* by focusing on mistranslations, the Ottoman-Turkish words, and domestications in the target text to show which translation strategies were used in the translation of this “once-forgotten” bestseller from a minor(ity) language. Before the comparative analysis, I briefly outlined the stylistic features of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* in order to examine both the source and the target texts properly. The findings of the comparative analysis of the Turkish original and its English translation revealed that the translators, Maureen Freely and Alexander Dawe, mostly opted for providing the English-speaking readers with an easier, fluent and smooth reading experience. It seems this is probably due to commercial reasons, because the agents in the

Anglophone world (publishers, cover designers, etc.) generally prefer to present the ‘non-Western’ books as less ‘foreign’ as possible, which is also evident in the way the publisher, Penguin, has presented *Madonna in a Fur Coat* as an “international bestseller”. I also found out that Freely and Dawe have used the same style and strategy in their other translations from Turkish into English, which also resulted in many mistranslations, over-interpretations and interventions.

In Chapter Six, I focused on not only the (re-)contextualization but also the (re-)presentation of *Madonna in a Fur Coat* in the Anglophone world. What I aimed to do was to analyze the way(s) the book has been (re-)presented and received in the Anglophone world, especially by the publisher, booksellers, and reviewers by exploring the representational power of these agents. In accordance with this purpose, I offered and examined the discourses on *Madonna in a Fur Coat* formed by the reviewers in the target culture, and investigated how the popularity of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* has influenced the (re-)presentation and (re-)contextualization of *Madonna in a Fur Coat* in the Anglophone world.

Against the backdrop of the findings of the present thesis, it can be claimed that the ‘surprise’ popularity of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* did not occur as a result of a coincidence, but thanks to the efforts of the agents such as the publisher and editor of the novel and the daughter of the author whose aim was to appreciate and commemorate Sabahattin Ali. The finding of this study has, therefore, shown that translation agents (publishers, editors, critics, etc.) play a major role in (re-)creating and (re-)contextualizing books in both source and target cultures. These agents can shape the way translations will be (re-)presented and received in both cultures through the discourses they form. For this reason, it can safely be argued that the recent revival of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* has led the novel to be translated into and



published in English, in 2016, i.e. 73 years after its publication in Turkish. The translational journey of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* has revealed that a minor(ity) language book should occupy a central position in a peripheral literature in order to be translated into English, which has shown that the findings of the thesis have validated the hypothesis I have offered in the Introduction. It was hypothesized that one of the factors determining whether a book written in a minor language would be translated into English was that the book shall occupy a central position in a peripheral literature. It was also hypothesized that the ‘surprise’ revival of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* in the source culture led it to be published in English after 73 years.

Moreover, the findings of the thesis have demonstrated that the translators of *Madonna in a Fur Coat* seem to have subjected themselves to the norms and expectations of the Anglophone world, which resulted in many domestications and sometimes interventions in the translated text. Also, since both translators are not native speakers of Turkish and the outcome, most probably, was not read comparatively and edited by a copy editor who is competent in both the source and target languages, several mistranslations and misunderstandings have occurred in the target text, which can also be considered an outcome of the minor(ity) position of Turkish language compared to English.

Even though this thesis focused on *Madonna in a Fur Coat* in particular, future studies can focus on the whole corpus of Sabahattin Ali within the context of translation studies, because the literature on the translations of his works is highly limited as stated before. In this respect, this can also be considered as a requirement in order to be able to reach a more comprehensive and complete analysis regarding the (re-)contextualization of Sabahattin Ali and his works in the international arena

considering the fact that the novel has been translated into 19 different languages so far. Besides, these translations can be examined within the scope of paratexts; i.e. cover designs, prefaces, and blurbs. Also, a diachronic and synchronic study that will embrace all translations of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* can be conducted in order to be able to analyze the translational journey properly.

# APPENDIX

Table 2. Translations of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*

Year	Title of the Translation	Translated into	Published in	Translated by	Published by
1949	Madonna v mehovom manto	Russian	USSR	Radi Fiş- L. Medvedko	Hudožestven naja literatura
1959	Women xinzhong de mogui	Chinese	China	Guang Shi	Renmin wenxue chubanshe
1982	Hüz Paltolu Madonna	Azerbaijani	Azerbaijan	Näriman Balakişijev	Jazyči
1982	Madona cu haină de blană	Romanian	Romania	Viorica Dinescu	Editura Univers
1983	Madonata s koženoto palto	Bulgarian	Bulgaria	Hubavinka Filipova	Narodna kultura
1983	Madonna v mehovom manto	Russian	USSR	R. Fiž, - L. Medvedko	Hudožestven naja literature
1986	Đức Mẹ Mặc Áo Choàng Lông	Vietnamese	Vietnam	Đào Minh Hiệp	Nhà xuất bản Đà Nẵng
2007	La Madone au manteau de Fourrure	French	France	Jean Descat	édition du Rocher Le Serpent à Plumes
2008	Die Madonna im Pelzmantel	German	Switzerland	Ute Birgi-Knellesen	Dörlemann Verlag
2010	Madonna v mehovom manto	Russian	Russia	Apollinaria Avrutina-Aleksey Pilyev	Ad Marginem Press
2010	Madona me mantel gëzofi	Macedonian	Macedonia	Ahmed Qazimi	Shkupi
2012	Madona u krznenom kaputu	Croatian	Croatia	Durja Novasel	Hena Com
2012	مادونا	Arabic	Egypt	Hacer Hayri	Sphinx
2014	Madona u krznenom kaputu	Bosnian	Bosnia	Dunja Novasel	Šahinpašić
2015	La Madonna col cappotto di pelliccia	Italian	Italy	Rosita D'Amora	Scritturapura Casa Editrice
2015	Madonna w futrze	Polish	Poland	Piotr Beza	Rebis
2015	مادونا	Arabic	Lebanon	?	Dar Athar
2016	Madonna in a Fur Coat	English	United Kingdom	Maureen Freely-Alexander Dawe	Penguin Popular Classics

Year	Title of the Translation	Translated into	Published in	Translated by	Published by
2016	Maduna-yi ba Palto	Persian	Persia	Mahla Mansouri	İntişarat-ı Nigah
2016	Geddise-ye Palto-Puş	Persian	Persia	Hassan Akbari Banner-Zainab Abdi Golzar	İntişarat-ı Furuzeş
2017	Madonna met Bontjas	Dutch	Holland	Erdal Balci	Gennep B.V.
2017	მადონდა ბეწვის ქურქში	Georgian	Georgia	Nana Janashia	Ustari
2017	Arbsa Xurèmtèj Madonna	Mongolian	Mongolia	G. Cugirragçaa	Monsudar

(with the courtesy of Sevengül Sönmez, April 29, 2017)

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