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### From wiping out of the meaning to over-interpretation: The translator as covert co-author in the rewriting of Istanbul<sup>1</sup>

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#### Abstract

In *The Light of Day*, Eric Ambler creates a dysphoric Istanbul through the opposition of East and West. However, its Turkish translation *Gün Işığ* by Adnan Semih Yazıcıoğlu tends to create a very different narrative by transforming signs related to Istanbul and some Orientalist clichés. In this study, the image of the East as constructed by the West is analyzed through Edward Said's concept of *Orientalism* (1979). The novel is divided into segments to highlight the parts taking place in Istanbul, and the clash between East and West is analyzed through the concept of isotopy and the semiotic square (Greimas & Courtés, 1982). The author's perception of the city is treated through Sündüz Öztürk Kasar's (2012) concept of "watermark translation", defining the representations of Istanbul as a translation executed in the author's mind (p. 267). To highlight the traces of the translator as covert co-author and evaluate the consequences of this interference, the meaning transformations in the target text are analyzed using the "Systematics of Designification in Translation" by Öztürk Kasar (2020a, p. 160). In connection with this, the importance of placing semiotics in the instruction of literary translation is stressed, with an emphasis on the function of the comparative analysis of the source and target texts, which may provide translation and interpretation students with an awareness that can enable them to avoid unintended meaning transformations, as well as stand behind their translation decisions of all kinds, including intended meaning transformations.

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**Keywords:** Eric Ambler; *The Light of Day*; *Gün Işığ*; watermark translation; semiotics of translation

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Translation is, of course, a rewriting of an original text. All rewritings, whatever their intention, reflect a certain ideology and a poetics and as such manipulate literature to function in a given society in a given way (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1992, p. vii).

## 1. Introduction

The novel used to be considered as a genre particular to Western culture until it entered the Turkish literary system via translation in the Tanzimat period (1839-1876) in the Ottoman era. It enjoyed great popularity in a short time, while also acquiring an essential role in the translated literary system of the Turkish literary and cultural polysystem (Karadağ, 2015, p. 114). ‘Polysystem’ is a term coined by Itamar Even-Zohar (1990), who conceives “of translated literature not only as an integral system within any literary polysystem, but as a most active system within it” (p. 46). According to Even-Zohar (1990), “since a young literature cannot immediately create texts in all types known to its producers, it benefits from the experience of other literatures, and translated literature becomes in this way one of its most important systems” (p. 47). This was the case for the novel as a new genre in Turkish literature, which brought translated works into prominence as the origins of the Turkish novel.

*The Light of Day* by Eric Ambler (1962), also known as *Topkapi*, which constitutes the corpus of this study, became a part of Turkish literary system through its translation *Gün Işığı* by Adnan Semih Yazıcıoğlu in 1963 – about a century later than *Terceme-i Telemak*, the first novel to enter the system, translated by Yusuf Kamil Paşa from *Les Aventures de Télémaque* penned by François de Salignac de la Mothe-Fénelon. Ambler, who is known worldwide for his espionage-thriller novels and film scripts, set most of his novels in different Turkish cities. *The Light of Day*, which takes place in Istanbul, received the Best Novel Award in 1964 at the Edgar Awards, organized by the Mystery Writers of America (MWA) in memory of Edgar Allan Poe, and many famous crime writers praised its author. In this novel, Ambler creates a dysphoric Istanbul narrative through the opposition of East and West. However, its Turkish translation *Gün Işığı* tends to create a very different narrative, since the signs related to Turks, Turkey, and Istanbul, as well as some Orientalist clichés, are not reflected as they appear in the original text. Transformations of these specific signs, ranging from wiping out of the meaning to over-interpretation, almost seem to make the target text covertly co-authored under the mask of translation, as a result of which a manipulated reading of Istanbul is provided in the target text. In this study, the image of the city, as well as of its citizens, as formed through a literary text and rewritten by its translator, is examined, to provide an example of the intentional and extreme meaning transformations that can take place in translation.

## 2. Theoretical framework and analysis

In this study, the image of the East, as constructed by the West, is examined through Edward Said’s concept of *Orientalism* (1979) to provide a basis for the dysphoric Istanbul depicted in the source text. For analysis purposes, the novel is divided into segments “that can be handled more easily” (Greimas & Courtés, 1982, p. 270) by highlighting the parts taking place in Istanbul and thus making it easier to concentrate on the discourses produced primarily therein. The clash between East and West, as reflected by the representations in the source text, is analyzed through the concept of isotopy, a term borrowed by Algirdas Julien Greimas from the fields of physics and chemistry for the purpose of semiotic analysis (Greimas & Courtés, 1982, p. 163), and the semiotic square that he designed as “a means of refining oppositional analyses by increasing the number of analytical classes stemming from a given opposition from two [...] to four [...], to eight or even ten” (Hébert, 2006, para. 1). The author’s perception of the

city and its citizens is treated via Sündüz Öztürk Kasar's concept of "watermark translation" (*traduction en filigrane*), defining the representations of Istanbul and its inhabitants as a translation accomplished in the author's mind (2012, p. 267) in the form of a "psychic operation woven into the text" (p. 268). The aim of this study is to scrutinize the image of Istanbul as formed by a literary text and ascertain how its translator dealt with this image. For this purpose, the transformations of meaning in the target text are analyzed using the "Systematics of Designification in Translation" by Öztürk Kasar (2020a, p. 160) to highlight traces of the translator as the covert co-author and evaluate the consequences of this interference.

### 2.1. *Watermark translation in the source text as a product of Orientalism*

In his book titled *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*, Edward Said (1979) explains how the West constructed the Orient, and indeed itself, and how it manipulates the East for its own interests (p. 12). This involves not only the image of the East through the eyes of the West; it is how the West actually creates its own image through the East. Said's concept of Orientalism is of paramount importance for this study, not only because his research provides a critique of the image of the East, but also in terms of the questions he asks. Said (1979) mostly focuses on the subject of representation in his study, asking how one represents other cultures; what another culture is; whether the notion of a distinct culture, race, religion, or civilization is a useful one; whether it always indulges either in self-congratulation for one's own and hostility and aggression for the "other"; and how ideas acquire authority, normality, and even the status of natural truth (pp. 325–326). Said (1979) suggests that this is not a problem of the East; in fact, Orientalism is about the West. Hence, Orientalism is a concept that is both political and cultural (p. 13).

Said, whose study is also based on Islam, the Arab world, and India, focuses on the Orientalism practiced by England, France, and the United States. The fact that these Western countries built and are constantly renewing their knowledge of the East within their own framework reflects Karl Marx's idea in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*; "They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented" (as cited in Said, 1979, p. 293). With this argument, the West finds itself empowered to represent and depict the Orient. This delusive image of the East constructed by the West contains certain stereotypes. According to Said (1979), the Orient contained Europe's most significant colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, one of its most profound and recurring images of the Other, in addition to helping to define Europe as its contrasting image (pp. 1-2).

Said (1979) claims that this image is created altogether, and one of the reasons is "a growing systematic knowledge" (p. 39) that the West has obtained. Moreover, Said finds a "sizable body of literature produced by novelists, poets, translators, and gifted travelers" (1979, p. 40) effective in implementing this intention. Thanks to the undeniable power of the West, its definition of the Orient and derogatory discourses exist now, and are almost irrevocable.

Said (1979) attributes one of the reasons for the construction of this image to a fear of the obscurity of the Orient. This fear first manifested itself at the time when Islam was spreading. According to him, "where Islam was concerned, European fear, if not always respect, was in order" (p. 59), which led Muslim people to be seen as "terror, devastation, the demonic, hordes of hated barbarians" (p. 59). In this way, the West defined an image "whose subject is not so much the East itself as the East made known, and therefore less fearsome, to the Western reading public" (Said, 1979, p. 60).

The most important tradition in portraying the Orient is composed in two ways. One is by not going there, not seeing it with one's own eyes, and the other is by observing the Orient and living there. Fixed depictions emerge from these two traditions, and the representations in these narratives are adopted and preserved for years and continue to be transferred. That is why, for Said (1979), the attainment of

objectivity is not possible because fields of learning and works of art are compelled and manipulated by society, and learned or imaginative writing are not free since they are constrained in their imagery, presumptions, and motives (pp. 201–202).

The West has constructed an identity for the East, and most of the West collectively maintains this identity. There are specific sources of forms of representation, not only in politics, academic studies, military fields, or history books, but even in literary texts or works of art. These ideas and discourses do not constitute new information, but are repetitions. According to Said, the Oriental are predetermined as fixed and stable, in need of investigation and even knowledge about themselves. The Oriental is the source of information, and the Orientalist is the source of knowledge, and the connection between them is a power relationship (Said, 1979, p. 308).

In *Orientalism*, Said does not focus on Turkey; however, as a geographical region, the East includes Turkey. According to Ali Şükrü Çoruk, Turkey's place in the spectrum of this image produced by the West about the East is no different from that of other countries. Therefore, even though Orientalism does not directly address Turkey, it indirectly concerns it, because Istanbul is the last stop of the Orient Express. Especially after the 19th century, the Oriental and the Turkish have assumed identical images in literary and political texts, as well as in examples of Orientalist paintings. By looking at some examples in the Western press, it is possible to observe that this image persists today (2007, p. 194).

*The Light of Day* by Eric Ambler (1962) is a product of the Occident, and may be said to be representative of the Orient in patches in its own way, by reflecting a rather Oriental Istanbul. The creation of Istanbul as such can be explained through Öztürk Kasar's concept of "watermark translation" (*traduction en filigrane*), which she uses to talk about an act of translation accomplished in the mind of the author. This type of "translation" is, in fact, an original text penned in the language of the context in which it is published. However, this language is not the language of the setting presented in the text. The text is therefore considered to be primarily generated by a "translation" operation realized in the mind of the author. This is a psychic translation operation woven into the text, leaving its mark on it, just like a watermark on a banknote, which may make readers believe that what they are reading is a translation, rather than an original work (2012, pp. 267-268).

Öztürk Kasar (2020b) distinguishes between two types of watermark translation:

1) Watermark translation going from the context of home to the context of abroad, in which the authors, living in the diaspora or abroad, bring their own – faraway – land to the context of the foreign language and culture in which they live. These texts have gone through a mental translation process from the mother tongue to a foreign language.

2) Watermark translation going from the context of abroad to the context of home, produced by authors who want to recount the realities of a foreign land to those sharing the same language and culture as themselves. These texts have undergone a mental translation process from foreign language to mother tongue. At the point of departure of these products, there may be positive motivations such as the author's admiration of this foreign land, as well as negative reactions such as disapproval and contempt; and sometimes there may be a neutral approach. (pp. 4-5)

Like *Janissary Tree* by Jason Goodwin in Öztürk Kasar's corpus, *The Light of Day* "invites its target audience – the English-speaking Western world – into a fundamentally different world based on foreign coordinates and realities little-known or entirely unknown in the context of the production. The source text thus turns out to be a "watermark translation," (2012, p. 268), "going from the context of abroad to the context of home" (Öztürk Kasar, 2020b, p. 5) as defined by Öztürk Kasar. At this point, we should also note that "en filigrane" is a polysemic expression in French. In addition to "watermarked," it also means "between the lines" or "showing just beneath the surface" (Reverso dictionnaire, 2020). True to its definitions, this translation is not an explicit one. The city is first "translated" into English in Ambler's

mind, and this particular act of translation is an “inlaid” one, “embedded” in his text, which therefore turns out to be a “pseudo-original” one (Öztürk Kasar, 2012, p. 268). At this point, Istanbul, as reflected in the source text as the product of the author’s perception and judgment, is essentially a translation in substance; it is the way he perceives, judges, and thereby “translates” the city. *Gün Işığ*, then, would be expected to provide, “a return to the origin as a retro-translation of Istanbul (Öztürk Kasar, 2012, p. 268); however, the translator realizes this would-be retro-translation by rewriting Istanbul all over again. Within the framework of her concept of watermark translation, Öztürk Kasar (2012) talks about the author as author-translator (p. 282). In the case of the translation of the image of Istanbul in *The Light of Day*, the translator can be analogically defined as translator-author, since he co-authors the text by transforming some parts of it all over again, as the product of his own perception, judgment, and ideology. At this point, the translator seems to disagree with the watermark translation of Istanbul in the author’s mind, as reflected in the source text as a product of Orientalism. The results of this are shown and discussed in the “Meaning Transformations and the Rewriting of Istanbul” section of this study, before which the source text is further analyzed through segmentation, isotopies, and the semiotic square.

## 2.2. *Segmentation of the text*

Greimas (1986) emphasizes the importance of focalization in urban studies and notes that “every topological study is obliged to choose beforehand its point of observation, distinguishing the place of enunciation from the place uttered and specifying the modalities of their syncretism” (pp. 28–29). Segmentation criteria may depend on the text to be analyzed and the perspective used in the analysis: “different disjunctions can be recognized: spatial (here/elsewhere), temporal (before/after), thymic (euphoria/dysphoria), topical (same/other), actorial (I/[s]he)” (Greimas & Courtés, 1982, p. 270). Although segmentation seems to have a flexible nature, it is one of the best ways to define spatial changes. In this study, a partial space limitation is provided by segmenting some of the texts. Since the novel is set in Athens and Istanbul, the novel is divided into two segments based on the segmentation criterion. Since Istanbul is the focus of analysis in this study, segmentation makes the place more distinct. The segments below also serve as the summary of the novel.

### 2.2.1. *Segment 1: Athens*

In this first segment (Ambler, 1962, pp. 1-75) which encompasses the beginning of the text, the reader learns how the main character, Arthur Abdel Simpson, is involved in the actions that constitute the plot of the book. In this segment, there are two main settings: Athens and Edirne. However, this study chooses to cover both locations in a single segment because these locations serve as the reasons for the characters needing to travel to Istanbul. The segment is entitled “Athens” due to the beginning of the story being set in Greece.

A journalist named Arthur Abdel Simpson, whose father is a British officer and whose mother is an Egyptian, is a married man living in Athens. Arthur, who has committed petty crimes, is following a man named Harper at the airport this time. Since Arthur has his eye on Harper’s wealth, he breaks into his hotel room after taking him to *maison de rendezvous*, stealing traveler’s cheques worth three hundred dollars from him. However, Harper understands what has happened, catches Arthur, and beats him up. As a threat, Harper prints a document exposing Arthur’s other crimes, which he intends to use to blackmail him. A brand-new Lincoln car is about to arrive. This car belongs to Elizabeth Lipp, the daughter of a business associate of Harper. He wants Arthur to take this classy car to Istanbul, to act as Miss Lipp’s driver there, and to bring the vehicle back if necessary. Miss Lipp travels by boat because she prefers not to journey by car. He is required to go directly to the Park Hotel in Istanbul on a Thursday. Arthur understands that he is transporting something into Turkey illegally in the Lincoln, but is unable

to identify the illicit cargo. At the Turkish border in Karaagac, an officer notices that Arthur's passport has expired. Although Arthur was unable to find anything in the car, the police discover some explosives concealed inside the vehicle's doors. They take Arthur to a prison in Edirne, where he is kept waiting. Major Tufan, Deputy-Director Second Section, later tells Arthur that the police have learned that prior statements he made were false and therefore do not believe his more recent testimony either. Moreover, the British government does not see Arthur as a fellow Briton. He is a man with no country. Suspecting a coup is being planned, they offer Arthur a job requiring him to obtain further information about Harper's activities. Later, Arthur arrives in Istanbul.

### 2.2.2. *Segment 2: Istanbul*

In this segment (Ambler, 1962, pp. 75-246), Istanbul is the only location; the story continues in Istanbul, and later concludes in the same city. Arthur leaves his Lincoln in a garage in Taksim and then proceeds to the Park Hotel. Harper and Miss Lipp's plane lands in Yesilköy. Meanwhile, Arthur calls the major and gives him reports. Miss Lipp and the others approve Arthur's offer to be Miss Lipp's driver because he knows Istanbul thoroughly and has tried to obtain a license as an official guide. Later, Arthur travels to Dolmabahçe Palace with the police officers following behind in a Peugeot. Before Tufan appears, a man talks about the Bayar-Menderes government and the necessity of national unity. Incidentally, Arthur tries on occasion to dismantle the car's door, but he cannot manage to do so.

Later, Harper asks Arthur to stay with them in The Kösk Sardunya, the villa in which Harper and the others stay. Arthur sends messages to Major Tufan about what he hears in the villa. One day, Arthur sees a map, but he cannot understand where it is. Then, Harper's friend Fischer and the villa's Cypriot cook Geven argue, and Geven slashes Fischer. After seeing a doctor, Harper and his friend Miller ask Arthur to move a settee in the villa. Although he is flabby, he moves it, and they offer Arthur two thousand dollars in return for performing a task. The next day, they show the map to Arthur. This is the map of the Seraglio area in the ancient Topkapı Palace and the roads surrounding it, and their actual aim is to rob the Treasury museum therein. With all of their equipment, they successfully rob the palace and try to run away. However, on the road, they become suspicious about the car following them and decide to change their route. When the group arrives at the airport, Arthur takes the Lincoln and runs away. When he notices an Opel behind him, he stops and talks to Tufan. Tufan, however, is unhappy about Arthur's actions. The others probably leave the country successfully, while Arthur is now accused of stealing the vehicle and bringing it into Turkey illegally. Fortunately, however, the police have arrested Giulio and Enrico- Harper's friends who provided the boat for them. Tufan's director is satisfied with this turn of events, and they award Arthur five thousand Turkish Liras. Arthur is still worried about the documents Harper possesses, but Tufan suggests that Harper will be too afraid of Arthur revealing what he knows about his activities to dare to approach the police.

### 2.3. *Isotopy as a key term and an operation analysis*

Ideas that are continually repeated in texts often serve a particular purpose: "As an operational concept, isotopy at first designated iterativity along a syntagmatic chain of classemes which assure the homogeneity of utterance-discourse" (Greimas & Courtés, 1982, p. 163). This concept was introduced into semiotics by Greimas and has contributed thereafter to text analysis studies.

There are several layers of meaning in literary texts. Isotopies can reveal the ideas in the deep structure (Greimas & Courtés, 1982, p. 69) and help us reach the semantic universe of a text. The concept of isotopy is also fruitful in forming semiotic squares, which are to be used later in this study as a part of the analysis.

### 2.3.1. *Isotopies in The Light of Day*

The protagonist Arthur Abdel Simpson is a citizen of both Egypt and Britain. This in-between character is not accepted as a citizen by either country and he has an identity problem. However, in the passage at the end of the novel, the character defines himself as British and declares that he does not consider himself Egyptian. Simpson, as the narrator of the novel, is the producer of discourse in depictions of Istanbul. It could be argued in this respect that Simpson's discourse must be a reflection of his Western identity and perception, based on his self-definition; "Euphoria is the positive term of the thymic category, which serves to valorize semantic micro-universes by transforming them into axiologies. *Euphoria* is opposed to *dysphoria*" (Greimas & Courtés, 1982, p. 109). Simpson has visited Istanbul many times and knows it well. His feelings and negative depictions of places indicate that he views Istanbul as a dysphoric place. The most noticeable words that reflect his perception are "deafening," "prison," "uncomfortable feeling," "depressing," "the smell of moth-balls," "heavy metal doors," "dingy," "yellow-brownish color," "disgusting," "B.O.," "odor," "unpleasant," "bacteria," "stained," "greasy," "dilapidated," "patch of dirt," "disease," "dirty," "smell," "bored," "broken," "dust," "germs," "cholera," "bubonic," "*la vérole*," "not interested" and "not wanting".

As soon as Simpson arrives in Istanbul, he complains about the muezzin's "deafening" voice coming from the loudspeakers of the mosque and calling the faithful to prayer (Ambler, 1962, p. 76). After that, he visits the Dolmabahçe Palace, which he says was built in the last century when the Sultans gave up wearing robes and turbans and took to black frock-coats and the fez. For Simpson, the palace has an illusionary effect, since it looks like a lakeside grand hotel imported from Switzerland to the sea; whereas from the road it seems like a prison because of its very high stone walls running about half a mile along the side of the road, which give him an uncomfortable feeling (Ambler, 1962, pp. 97–98). His response is a typical emotional reaction to the environment he perceives and reflects as dysphoric. The palace's resemblance to a prison is especially important because his experience in prison in Edirne before coming to Istanbul was particularly dark.

Simpson feels the same way when he enters the palace, as he thinks that there is nothing palatial about it. The walls are covered with oil paintings of cattle or battle scenes with the same yellowish-brown color, which he describes as dingy and depressing, like the smell of moth-balls (Ambler, 1962, p. 99), thereby making it clear that he finds the palace somewhat disturbing. Simpson's choice of words while depicting some of the pictures is also noteworthy. He describes a group of nymphs in a picture as "most un-Turkish," while calling another picture, in which three bearded men look at a bearded man in a frock-coat and fez as if he has B.O. or has said something disgusting, "undoubtedly Turkish" (Ambler, 1962, pp. 100–101). "Nymph" means "any of the minor divinities of nature in classical mythology represented as beautiful maidens dwelling in the mountains, forests, trees, and waters" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). If these spirits, primarily known for their beauty, are un-Turkish, we can assume that what Simpson describes as "undoubtedly Turkish" should be an ugly image. Moreover, "B.O." is body odor, "an unpleasant smell on a person's body that is caused by sweat" (Cambridge dictionary, 2020). In an attempt to further denigrate the Turkish figures in the painting, Simpson adds that the man appears to have said something "disgusting." Although Simpson's derogatory approach seems to refer to a painting, his word choices, and especially his distinction between "Turkish" and "un-Turkish," demonstrate a discriminatory attitude.

Simpson makes another comparison, this time between the Seraglio and Greece, stating that in Greece, the old buildings still look clean even when they are in ruins and not restored. The Seraglio, on the other hand, is stained, greasy, and dilapidated; the trees and shrubs are neglected, and the "so-called Tulip Garden" is a scrubby dirt patch (Ambler, 1962, p. 118). Simpson not only implies that the Seraglio is a dysphoric place but explicitly uses the phrase "rather depressing" to describe it.

Another example is when Miller calls Turkish people peasants who deny the existence of machinery (Ambler, 1962, p. 201). This expression is a discourse worthy of further discussion. The West often tends to describe the East as ignorant, backward, uncivilized, and anti-scientific. In this respect, the image of the East as inferior is reproduced through Miller's discourse. Towards the end of the segment, Simpson makes a personal comment about Istanbul and states that others admire the city. However, he criticizes these people, who waste hundreds of feet of film for this so-called beautiful landscape, where he says he hopes never to return.

Simpson expresses his discomfort with Istanbul at different points throughout the segment we have entitled "Istanbul." Although Istanbul is famous for its beauty, Simpson is not interested in this. Apart from Simpson, other characters make statements highlighting the dysphoric atmosphere of the city. Before the robbery at the Seraglio, for instance, Miller exaggerates his discomfort with the dirt of Istanbul. After examining the steps of the iron staircase, he complains that everything is filthy. For him, the idea that Turkish people do not all die of disease is unbelievable, something which he correlates with immunity. For two thousand years or more, this old city has experienced many several diseases, which he says are all waiting in the dust. His exuberance is gone as he imagines germs and bacteria (Ambler, 1962, p. 209). Miller's enumeration of the diseases in Istanbul not only indicates how dysphoric he finds the city but also suggests his discomfort at being there.

Furthermore, while the Seraglio and the Topkapi Palace which encompasses it are highly important historical buildings, the characters repeatedly emphasize the disrepair of these structures. Nevertheless, they are partly interested in the history that lies within the city. In particular, Miss Lipp's interest in history is clearly expressed in the text, although it is intimated that she is not interested in sightseeing. This is not Miss Lipp's first time in Turkey, and all she remembers from the first visit is mosques, which she says she does not want to see any more. Every woman tourist is always interested in the harem, and Miss Lipp is no different (Ambler, 1962, p. 113). Since Miss Lipp is tired of viewing mosques, and the harem is her primary interest, in the parts of the book concerning the palace, the focus is on the harem as well as on violence. The lieutenant explains that steel doors guarded the harem, in which each woman had her own suite of rooms (Ambler, 1962, p. 100). The Golden Road, the passage that the chosen girls went along to get from the harem to the Sultan's bed, is another detail that is mentioned (Ambler, 1962, p. 115). The Ortakapi Gate, where the Sultans used to stand to watch the weekly executions, the block where the beheading was done, and the little fountain built in the wall for the Executioner to wash the blood off himself are described as signs of violence. Other instances of murder are also mentioned, such as when a new Sultan had all his younger brothers killed – they were strangled with a silk cord because their blood could not be shed. Women to be killed, on the other hand, were tied up in weighted sacks and dropped into the Bosphorus, according to the description (Ambler, 1962, p. 117).

These examples seem to be set within the framework of an Orientalist Ottoman narrative. However, the place preferences in this text are mostly luxurious locations in Istanbul in the 1960s. The characters often board yachts, dine at the Hilton Hotel or Divan Hotel, visit chic places with terraces, have their meals prepared for them by a chef, and even stay in a villa which belongs to the widow of a former minister of President Inönü (Ambler, 1962, p. 104). These characters socialize in the city and usually spend their time at seaside locations. In this respect, they experience a luxurious life in Istanbul to some degree.

Ambler prefers not to present geographical descriptions of Istanbul because the city does not attract the attention of the characters. On the contrary, the book includes depictions that highlight the history and historical texture of Istanbul. However, these descriptions consist of largely negative statements. In general, the text creates an inferior and uncivilized image of Turkey. In this context, the isotopies detected in Ambler's novel constitute an Orientalist image of Istanbul. The fact that the text is written from Arthur Simpson's point of view is particularly important since he does not accept his Eastern

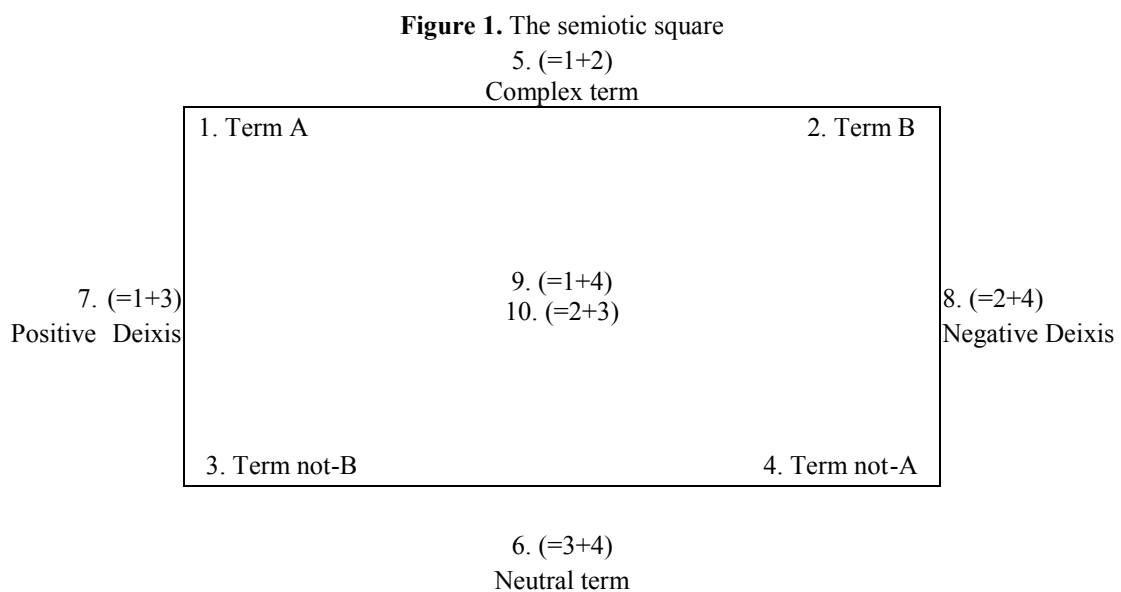


identity and emphasizes instead that he is British. As the protagonist of the text, Simpson is the principal character to experience Istanbul. He describes the places in Istanbul that he travels to and resides in, focusing primarily on what these locations make him feel, and his depictions and narratives reiterate the idea that Istanbul is a dysphoric place. The depressing atmosphere of the city is reinforced by the Orientalist image and motifs and the gloominess of the Oriental aspects of Ottoman history. The text creates a frightening and depressing representation of Istanbul and its Eastern heritage that seems to be intended to portray Turkey as inferior to the West.

#### 2.4. The semiotic square as a tool of oppositional analysis

The semiotic square is a tool of oppositional analysis, the basics of which first appeared in an article by Greimas (1964), later also published as a book chapter (1966). The concept was then further developed as a constitutional model in another article by Greimas and Rastier (1968). The semiotic square, which is normally actually rectangular in shape, is a tool that elucidates the meaning in a text in a comprehensible way, thanks to the visual representation it creates. According to the definition in *Semiotics and Language: An Analytical Dictionary*, a semiotic square is “the visual representation of the logical articulation of any semantic category” (Greimas & Courtés, 1982, p. 308). The elementary structure of signification is a relationship between at least two terms set in binary opposition, which is adequate for the establishment of a paradigm composed of  $n$  terms (Greimas & Courtés, 1982, p. 308). Through the semiotic square, this initially provided binary opposition may be further extended “from two (life/death, for instance) to four (for example, life, death, life and death (the living dead), and neither life nor death (angels) to eight or even ten” (Hébert, 2006, para. 1). As Frederic Jameson suggests in his foreword to Greimas’ *On Meaning: Selected Writings in Semiotic Theory*, this visual device can be very properly used to map out and articulate a set of relationships that is much more confusing, and much less economical to convey in expository prose (Greimas, 1987, p. xv).

The constituent elements that form a square are “relation of contradiction, relation of contrariety, relation of complementarity, the axis of contraries, axis of sub-contraries, positive schema, negative schema, positive deixis and negative deixis” (Greimas & Courtés, 1982, p. 309). The structure of the semiotic square is given in the figure below (Hébert, 2006):



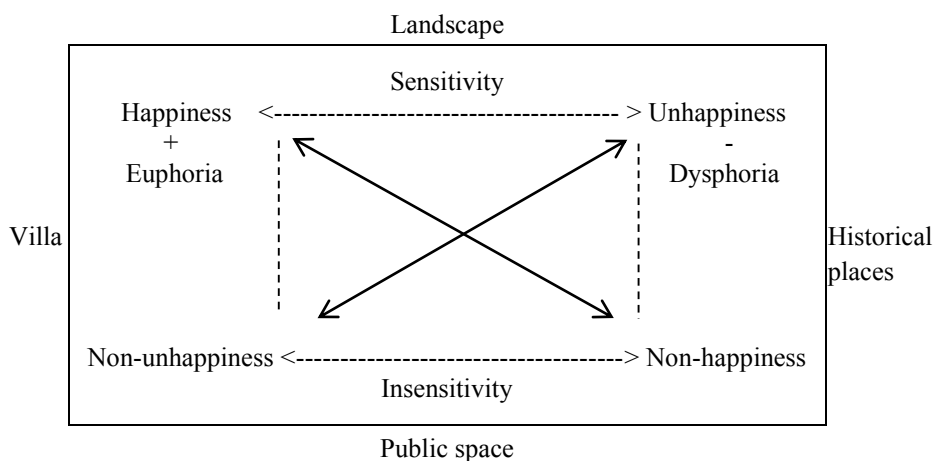
The first step in forming the binary relations contained in the semiotic square is to depart from a concept. According to Eziler Kiran and Kiran (2011), to form the square, the same group of words, the same semantic field, and the adoption of a certain point of view are necessary (pp. 334–335). The square can bring into view the meaning of a sign within the deep or abstract structure of the text, which seems to be perhaps not of any importance to the text when it is in the surface structure. Accordingly, the semiotic square can also be used to reveal the value and meaning of space throughout the narrative.

2.4.1. *The semiotic square of The Light of Day*

The depictions of Istanbul presented in the text indicate that Istanbul is a dysphoric place for Simpson in terms of its relation to the history of the Ottoman Empire. To better understand these features, semiotic analysis is conducted to form a semiotic square related to this aspect of the text. Simpson’s unhappiness in famous historical places creates the idea that Istanbul is not a euphoric place for him. However, the villa in Istanbul where the characters stay is not such a discomforting space for Simpson. According to the description in the novel, it is one of the Bosphorus villas, ranging from small waterfront holiday spots to royal residences, a considerable number of which used to be palaces – before the capital was relocated from Istanbul to Ankara (Ambler, 1962, p. 88).

The characters, who visit fancy restaurants in the city stay in a villa, spend long periods in the Istanbul traffic, and seldom express their feelings and thoughts about the city’s public spaces. In this respect, there seems to be a general insensitivity to public space. Simpson’s response to the views of Istanbul, on the other hand, is important because he remarks that these prospects are found beautiful by “others,” so others are sensitive to this view. As to himself, he does not want to see them again. These negative feelings, discussed within the framework of isotopies, are especially noticeable when Simpson visits the historical sites of Istanbul. Thus, these places are described as dysphoric because of Simpson’s perceptions of the darkness of Istanbul’s Ottoman-era history. This relationship is shown in the semiotic square below:

Figure 2. The semiotic square of *The Light of Day*



Overall, when scrutinizing the thematic elements of different locations in the novel from Simpson’s perspective, Istanbul is found to symbolize a dysphoric space.

2.5. *Designification in translation*

For many reasons, and perhaps primarily because of the differences and asymmetry between languages, a translation may contain signs that are transmitted differently from the source text. Besides, a translator is both “the receiver of the source text and the producer of the target text” (Öztürk Kasar & Tuna, 2017,

p. 171) and shapes the text based on her or his perception, sometimes for particular purposes. A text can also be considered as a medium through which the translator can exhibit creativity. As a result, some signs may be transferred to the target text differently; willingly, or unintentionally.

To prevent undesired transformations of meaning, the translator should first be aware of the possible transformations of meaning that may occur in translation at various levels. Semiotic analysis may enable the translator to approach the text more carefully and thus help her or him to avoid unintended transformations as much as possible; “Systematics of Designification in Translation”, propounded by Öztürk Kasar (2020a), illustrates different levels of semantic degradation through nine steps: over-interpretation of the meaning, darkening of the meaning, under-interpretation of the meaning, sliding of the meaning, alteration of the meaning, opposition of the meaning, perversion of the meaning, destruction of the meaning, and wiping out of the meaning (p. 160). The systematics, going from the fullness of meaning to its total emptiness provide a more objective basis for evaluating meaning transformations (Öztürk Kasar & Tuna, 2017, p. 171) while at the same time enabling translators to “develop an awareness of the indispensability of textual analysis for translation and the possibility of different types of meaning transformations” (Tuna & Avaz, 2019, p. 533).

### 2.5.1. Meaning transformations and the rewriting of Istanbul

The translation of the novel *The Light of Day* has had three different editions published in 1963 and 1964 in Turkey. This study uses the 1963 edition by Bahar Printing, translated by Adnan Semih Yazıcıoğlu and published under the title *Gün Işığı (Topkapı)*. In this part of the study, certain excerpts from the translation are evaluated within the framework of Öztürk Kasar’s “Systematics of Designification in Translation” (Öztürk Kasar, 2020a, p. 160).

#### Example 1

<b>S.T.</b>	If I had not been arrested by the Turkish police, I would have been arrested by the Greek police (Ambler, 1962, p. 1).
<b>T.T.</b>	Türk polisi tarafından tevkif edilmeseydim <b>kurtulmuş olmayacaktım</b> . Zira bu defa beni Yunan polisi tevkif edecekti (Ambler, 1963, p. 3).

The statement “*kurtulmuş olmayacaktım*” (I would not have been saved) added in the target text is an over-interpretation of the meaning (Öztürk Kasar & Tuna, 2017, p. 172).

#### Example 2

<b>S.T.</b>	My previous encounters with the Turkish police had been uncomfortable only in the sense that they had been inconvenient and humiliating (Ambler, 1962, p. 48).
<b>T.T.</b>	Daha evvel birkaç defa Türk polisinin eline düşmüştüm, o seferlerde bana yaptıkları iyi muamele karşısında küçülmüştüm (Ambler, 1963, pp. 50-51).

Simpson has been arrested multiple times, and his previous experience with the Turkish police was negative in only one way. However, this situation is rendered differently in Turkish. A back-translation from the Turkish translation would be as follows: “I had fallen into the hands of the Turkish police several times before. I felt small because of their good treatment towards me at that time.” The statement in the source text clearly describes a negative situation with the use of the words “inconvenient” and “humiliating,” but its translation suggests that Turkish police’s treatment was good. Therefore, this can be considered as opposition of the meaning (Öztürk Kasar & Tuna, 2017, p. 172) because it creates an opposite meaning in general.

#### Example 3

<b>S.T.</b>	Almost level with the window and about fifty yards away was the top of a minaret belonging to a mosque lower down the hill. It had loudspeakers in it to amplify the voice of the <i>muezzin</i> and his call to prayer was deafening (Ambler, 1962, p. 76).
<b>T.T.</b>	

One of the significant parts in the text that shows Simpson’s feelings about Turkey is his first reaction to Istanbul in his hotel room, where the dysphoric atmosphere of Istanbul is described with the word “deafening” while talking about the muezzin’s call to prayer coming from the minaret of the mosque. This depressive impression, created through religious symbols, is not carried over into the Turkish translation. This is an example of wiping out of the meaning (Öztürk Kasar & Tuna, 2017, p. 172).

#### Example 4

<b>S.T.</b>	[...] from the road, because of the very high stone wall enclosing the grounds, it looks like a prison (Ambler, 1962, pp. 97- 98).
<b>T.T.</b>	-

In this example, the likening of Dolmabahçe Palace to a prison, and the resultant uncomfortable feeling, create a dysphoric image. The failure to translate this part is another example of wiping out of the meaning (Öztürk Kasar & Tuna, 2017, p. 172).

#### Example 5

<b>S.T.</b>	I suppose they must have been valuable, or they would not have been in a palace; but I found them depressing, like the smell of moth-balls (Ambler, 1962, pp. 99-100).
<b>T.T.</b>	-

This excerpt, describing paintings of an unpleasant yellowish-brown color, reinforces the negativity created around Dolmabahçe Palace. This part is again not translated, thus providing another example of wiping out of the meaning (Öztürk Kasar & Tuna, 2017, p. 172).

#### Example 6

<b>S.T.</b>	On one wall was a Dutch fishing-boat in a storm; facing it, alongside a most un-Turkish group of nymphs bathing in a woodland stream, was a Russian cavalry charge (Ambler, 1962, pp. 100-101).
<b>T.T.</b>	-

According to this example, nymphs cannot be Turkish, probably because of their beauty. This non-translation is another example of wiping out of the meaning (Öztürk Kasar & Tuna, 2017, p. 172).

#### Example 7

<b>S.T.</b>	The painting over the fireplace, however, was undoubtedly Turkish. It showed a bearded man in a frock-coat and fez facing three other bearded men who were looking at him as if he had B.O. or had said something disgusting (Ambler, 1962, pp. 100-101).
<b>T.T.</b>	-

Another Orientalist cliché in the text is provided through the paintings. This part describes bearded men, fez, body odor, and disgusting discourse as “undoubtedly Turkish.” We do not encounter this part in the Turkish translation, which causes a further wiping out of the meaning (Öztürk Kasar & Tuna, 2017, p. 172).

#### Example 8

<b>S.T.</b>	The Seraglio is stained, greasy and dilapidated. Even the trees and shrubs in the main courtyards are neglected, and the so-called Tulip Garden is nothing but a scrubby patch of dirt (Ambler, 1963, p. 118).
<b>T.T.</b>	-

This part, where the cleanliness of the old buildings in Greece is contrasted with the Seraglio, is eliminated in the translation. This is yet another example of wiping out of the meaning (Öztürk Kasar & Tuna, 2017, p. 172).

**Example 9**

<b>S.T.</b>	That these people do not all die of disease is incredible. Immunity, perhaps. There was a city here even before Constantine's. Two thousand years or more of plague are in this place- cholera, bubonic, la vérole, dysentery. (Ambler, 1962, p. 209).
<b>T.T.</b>	-

As discussed in the section concerning isotopies, this part not only creates a depressing atmosphere through a list of the biggest known epidemics but also insults Turkish people. This part is not transferred into Turkish, which again causes a wiping out of the meaning (Öztürk Kasar & Tuna, 2017, p. 172).

**Example 10**

<b>S.T.</b>	He snorted 'They are <b>peasants. They deny the existence of machinery</b> ' (Ambler, 1962, p. 201).
<b>TT.</b>	Harper burnundan soludu: <b>Köylü herifler! Otomobilden, makineden zerre korktukları yok</b> (Ambler, 1963, p. 218).

The word "peasant" is translated as "*köylü herifler*" (peasant guys), which provides an example of over-interpretation (Öztürk Kasar & Tuna, 2017, p. 172) because the word "guy" is not used in the original text. In addition, "deny the existence of machinery" is translated as "*otomobilden, makineden zerre korktukları yok*" (they do not have the slightest fear of cars or machines). This translation does not transfer the Orientalist context at all because not being afraid of something is not a derogatory idea; on the contrary, it portrays Turkish people as fearless, whereas denying the existence of machinery has to do with ignorance—a clear perversion of the meaning (Öztürk Kasar & Tuna, 2017, p. 172).

**3. Conclusion**

Ferdinand de Saussure draws a distinction between language (*langue*) and speaking (*parole*), emphasizing that separating language from speech is separating the social from the individual. For Saussure (1959), language is passively assimilated by the speaker and exists in the brain almost like a dictionary, whereas speaking is an individual, wilful and intellectual act, whereby speakers use different combinations from the language to form their discourse (p. 14). At this point, an individual discourse can be compared to a mosaic, since it is formed by collecting, combining, and inlaying exclusively chosen pieces from language, as is the case with a mosaic, made of small pieces of colored material. In a discourse, every individual choice of word may function as a different color, playing a role in the creation, transmission, reception, and impact of the message. In this sense, both source and target texts may be considered collages of words, creating textual mosaics as individual products of the author and translator as subjects and producers of discourse. In addition, "[i]nsofar as semiotics wants to account for the subject considered as producer and as consumer of space, the definition of space implies the participation of all senses, requiring that all sensible qualities (visual, tactile, thermic, acoustic, etc.) be considered" (Greimas & Courtés, 1982, p. 305). In this sense, like individual discourses produced by the author and translator (as subjects), the space in narration may also be compared to a mosaic produced by the author and reproduced by the translator by combining visual, tactile, thermic, acoustic and other elements. Thus, both source and target texts may be considered as collage works, made of lingual and qualitative pieces as choices. However, sometimes source and target texts may be made of profoundly different mosaic patterns as a result of the elimination, addition, or transformation of some pieces in the process of translation, which may reshape the intended meaning of the source text.

The "space" in which a story is set plays a crucial role in the construction of the image of a geographical location, culture, or identity. Istanbul is a city that attracts the attention of the world with its geographical location, its rich history and historical structures, its unique beauty, and its picturesque shores lining the Bosphorus. However, Istanbul's identity and location have sometimes caused the city to be defined as

the Orient, and its image in the eyes of the West is thence problematized. *The Light of Day* by Eric Ambler, also known as *Topkapi* (1962), which we have read and analyzed within the framework this study, similarly creates a dysphoric Istanbul environment related to historical features and structures of the city, as well as its people, culture, religion, and politics.

In this study, Edward Said's concept of *Orientalism* (1979) has been used to provide a basis for the image of this dysphoric and otherized Istanbul, as constructed in the source text. The source text has been divided into spatial segments to concentrate on the parts taking place in Istanbul. The clash between East and West, as created in the source text, has been analyzed through the concepts of isotopy (Greimas & Courtés, 1982, pp. 163-165) and the semiotic square (pp. 308-311). The author's perception of the city and the citizens has been treated through Öztürk Kasar's concept of watermark translation (2012 & 2020b). To examine the image of Istanbul in the source text in comparison with that of the target text, "Systematics of Designification in Translation" by Öztürk Kasar (2020a, p. 160) has been used to identify meaning transformations. At this point, the importance of placing semiotics in the instruction of literary translation should be underscored, since comparative analysis of the source and target texts may provide translation and interpretation students with an awareness that can enable them to avoid unintended meaning transformations, as well to stand behind their translation decisions of all kinds, including intended meaning transformations, as was the case with the target text, *Gün Işığı*, in our corpus.

As a result of the analysis of, and comparison between, source and target texts, an obvious softening of the former's negative denotations and connotations has been noticed in the translation by Yazıcıoğlu (1963), in which many of the signs that make this environment dysphoric are converted or erased in translation, leading to various transformations of meaning, ranging from wiping out to over-interpretation. Consequently, the target text can be said to have both deconstructed and reconstructed the city through the choice of different mosaics than those used in the source text. All in all, this study has laid bare the translator's interference as covert co-author in the rewriting of Istanbul, and demonstrated that he was unable to remain indifferent regarding the image of the city created in the source text, as revealed in the "watermark translation" accomplished in the author's mind (Öztürk Kasar, 2012, p. 267). As a result, the target text can be considered as a "retro-translation" (Öztürk Kasar, 2012, p. 268), giving the message that the image produced by the West needs to be treated with caution and further discussed.

#### 4. Ethics Committee Approval

The author(s) confirm(s) that the study does not need ethics committee approval according to the research integrity rules in their country (Date of Confirmation: 21.01.2021).

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## Anlamın yok edilmesinden aşırı yoruma: İstanbul'un yeniden yazımında gizli ortak yazar olarak çevirmen

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### Özet

Eric Ambler, *The Light of Day* başlıklı eserinde Doğu ve Batı karşıtlığı üzerinden esenliksiz bir İstanbul yaratmaktadır. Ancak, Adnan Semih Yazıcıoğlu'nun *Gün Işığı* başlıklı Türkçe çevirisinde İstanbul'a ait göstergelerin ve bazı Şarkiyatçı klişelerin dönüştürülerek farklı bir anlatı yaratılması eğilimi söz konusudur. Bu çalışmada Batı tarafından inşa edilen Doğu imgesi Edward Said'in *Şarkiyatçılık* (1979) kavramı üzerinden çözümlenmektedir. İstanbul'da geçen bölümlere ışık tutmak için roman kesitlere ayrılmakta ve Doğu ve Batı arasındaki çatışma, yerdeslik kavramı ve göstergebilimsel dörtgen (Greimas & Courtés, 1982) kullanılarak değerlendirilmektedir. Yazarın kent algısı Sündüz Öztürk Kasar tarafından geliştirilen "özde çeviri" (2012, s. 267) kavramı ışığında incelenmekte ve İstanbul temsilleri yazarın zihninde gerçekleşen bir çeviri işlemi olarak ele alınmaktadır. Çevirmenin gizli ortak yazar olarak izlerini vurgulamak ve bu müdahalenin sonuçlarını değerlendirmek için Öztürk Kasar'ın geliştirdiği "Çeviride Anlam Evrilmesi Dizgeselliği" (2020a, s. 160) kullanılmakta ve erek metindeki anlam evrilmeleri bu doğrultuda değerlendirilmektedir. Bundan hareketle, kaynak ve erek metinlerin karşılaştırmalı çözümlenmesinin hem istenmeyen anlam evrilmelerinden kaçınma hem de planlı anlam evrilmeleri de dahil her tür çeviri kararının arkasında durabilme noktasında Mütercim Tercümanlık öğrencilere farkındalık kazandıracağına değinilmekte ve yazınsal çeviri öğretiminde göstergebilime yer verilmesinin önemi vurgulanmaktadır.

*Anahtar sözcükler:* Eric Ambler; *The Light of Day*; *Gün Işığı*; özde çeviri, çeviri göstergebilimi

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